THE AFFRONT OF OTHERNESS IN D. H. LAWRENCE'S WRITINGS ON TRAVEL

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the affront of otherness in D. H. Lawrence's writings on travel. It offers the first extended study of Lawrence's writings in relation to the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism. It demonstrates how literary impressionism, as a way of engaging with the world, can illuminate the generative affront of otherness in these works. The thesis provides an effective and necessary framework for linking up existing critical approaches to the problem of otherness in Lawrence's writings. It is structured around three methods for approaching otherness in Lawrence's travel writings. The first method establishes how Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness can be usefully situated in relation to Ford Madox Ford's ideas concerning the nature of the impression, and the theory and practice of impressionism. The second method addresses Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writings. It illustrates how his open-ended responses to otherness reflect an underlying hopefulness through comparison with Ernst Bloch's notion of the not-yet conscious. It shows how Lawrence anticipates, in rendering the impression of otherness, the possibility of determining a more intuitive understanding of the relationship between the self and the circumambient universe. The third method considers Lawrence's Etruscan sketches and demonstrates how his attitudes towards historiography illuminate the imaginative and educative value he attaches to the encounter with otherness. In its synthesis of critical approaches, the thesis breaks new ground in two ways. Firstly, it uses the term 'the affront of otherness' to theorise how Lawrence's writing productively mediates the relationship between self and other. Secondly, it demonstrates how the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism can aid us in tracing the developing nature of Lawrence's ideas, and his sustained interest in the suggestive and educational power of otherness.

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‘I am finite, and my understanding has limits.’

D. H. Lawrence, ‘The Spinner and the Monks’, in *Twilight in Italy*, ed. by Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 103-113 (p. 107).

‘I cannot say that I liked Lawrence much. He remained too disturbing even when I got to know him well.’

Ford Madox Ford, *Portraits from Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1937), p. 85.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis addresses the affront of otherness in D. H. Lawrence's writings on travel. It contributes an effective framework for linking up existing approaches to otherness in these works by drawing comparisons with literary impressionism. Fundamentally, the thesis argues that Lawrence's responses to otherness estrange the relationship between perception and representation in order to better understand the relationship between the self and the world, and to explore what it means to be other to oneself. To do this it identifies three methods for approaching otherness in a selection of (what can be loosely termed) Lawrence's travel writings and considers how rendering otherness allows his narrators to decipher the bewildering strangeness of the world about them.

The first method uses the idea of literary impressionism to illuminate and decipher the complex depictions of otherness in his early travel sketches. The chapter takes Ford Madox Ford's writings as a contemporary exemplar of literary impressionism and demonstrates how his ideas can be used to situate and unpack Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness in *Twilight in Italy* (1916) and *Sea and Sardinia* (1921). The second method explores the affront of otherness in relation to utopian notions of becoming in his Mexico and New Mexico writings. To do so the chapter examines the changing representation of otherness in *Quetzalcoatl*, *The Plumed Serpent* (1926), and *Mornings in Mexico* (1927) in light of Ernst Bloch's notion of a utopian not-yet conscious. The third method considers the influence of Lawrence's historiographical ideas on his representation of otherness. Focusing primarily on *Sketches of Etruscan Places* (1932), but also making reference to *Movements in European History* (1921), the chapter explores Lawrence's belief in the educational need for history to retain its affrontive and often terrifying otherness. Though much scholarship has addressed

otherness in Lawrence's works, there has previously been no coherent framework for situating the quite different approaches taken by scholars. This thesis contributes an effective model for linking up and advancing existing critical approaches to otherness in Lawrence's travel writings.

This thesis is framed by what I shall term the affront of otherness. I use this phrase atypically to show how the encounter with otherness in Lawrence's writings is identified not just as a source of existential shock and challenge, but also as an opportunity for personal transformation and renewal. Using the term 'affront' in this way diverges significantly from its conventional usage. Dictionary definitions for the term commonly invoke ideas of shock, opposition, and antagonism; the experience of being affronted is, as a result, widely linked to negative feelings of insult or offence. According to such conventional definitions, to be affronted by otherness implies, firstly, that otherness necessarily represents something wrong, corrupting, or malign. Secondly, it promotes the idea that to be affronted by otherness is to necessarily marginalise that which appears other, and to assume the moral superiority of the self to be an ontological given. Thirdly, it entails that the affront of otherness reflects the inescapable subjectivism of the observer, with their repulsion from otherness being demonstrative of their inability to look beyond the self.

In contrast, I introduce the term unconventionally to highlight the positive value Lawrence identifies in the shock or challenge of being affronted by otherness. His writings suggest that, in being affronted by the otherness of the world, the individual can anticipate alternative forms of knowing and being on account of their habitual expectations and assumptions becoming disturbed. I argue that, while it may be discomforting to realise the relative and subjective nature of one's world, Lawrence suggests the affront of otherness is a necessary part of the process of apprehending the reality of alternative modes of being and knowing beyond the present self. Thus, where conventional negative definitions of the term can be

broadly understood to treat affront as a discrete and arresting experience, I suggest a more positive consideration of the term can help us better appreciate how Lawrence identifies the affront of otherness as a key part of the process of coming to better understand one's situation in the world. I use this generative formulation of affront to demonstrate how Lawrence suggests the encounter with otherness can produce both the shock of existential challenge, but also an awareness of the possibility of transformation.

Characterising the encounter with otherness a form of generative affront also links two significant areas of emphasis in the thesis. The first is Ford Madox Ford's emphasis on the idea of disturbance in Lawrence's writing, by which Ford suggests the power of Lawrence's writing to upset habitual modes of knowing and thus suggest opportunities for new understanding. The second is Ernst Bloch's emphasis on discomfort as a source of existential challenge but also the realisation of different ways of being. By identifying the affront of otherness as a source of both disturbance and transformation, I demonstrate how Lawrence suggests that truthfully rendering the discomforting strangeness of the world exterior to the self anticipates the reality of coming through to a transformed state of understanding and being.

Critics have made passing reference to the impressionistic quality of Lawrence's early travel sketches. However, there is a surprising absence of any in-depth studies addressing the significant similarities between their depictions of otherness and the ontological issues explored in works of literary impressionism. This thesis thus represents the first full-length study to read Lawrence's travel writings in relation to the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism. The first chapter uses the idea of literary impressionism, as a way of engaging with the world, to show how Lawrence's sketches reflect a sustained mediation between the subjective reality of the individual and the otherness of the surrounding universe. As an author whose project was always unfolding and forever being

revised, Lawrence in his early travel writings displays an acute impressionistic awareness of the generative relationship between perception and expression. Like Ford, Lawrence was acutely conscious of the role of writing in deciphering the perplexity of one's impressions and instinctual feelings. While the chapter does not suggest that Ford directly influenced Lawrence's travel writings, it does demonstrate how reading these works in light of Ford's ideas concerning impressionism can illuminate the issues of perception and representation explored in Lawrence's own responses to otherness.

There is a broad consensus in scholarship that both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* represent significant moments in the development of Lawrence's travel writing. Catherine Brown, for example, has written that 'The binarism which characterizes much of Lawrence's philosophy ... took one of its earliest forms in the North-South European binary of *Twilight in Italy*,' while Neil Roberts has identified *Sea and Sardinia* with the crucial 'rejection of Europe' which ultimately came to define Lawrence's 'search for the other of European civilization'.[1] However, while there is consensus regarding the significance of both works, it remains surprisingly uncommon for them to be compared directly at a textual level. This is perhaps in part because both texts appear superficially different in terms of form and content. The texts also have very different compositional histories, with *Twilight in Italy* comprising individual travel sketches written discretely and subsequently revised, and *Sea and Sardinia* being the product of a relatively contained and intense period of composition following Lawrence's and Frieda's brief investigative 'dash' across Sardinia in 1921.[2] Yet, despite these differences, both texts demonstrate a sharp awareness of writing as a mode of seeing which negotiates one's impressions and aids in deciphering their intuitive truth. In both

[1] Catherine Brown, 'Climbing Down the Alpine Pisgah: Lawrence's Relationships with the Alps', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 39.1 (2014), 67-78 (67); Neil Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 3.
[2] D. H. Lawrence, 'To Robert Mountsier, 31 March 1921', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson, 8 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), III, pp. 696-7 (p. 696).

works, the affront of otherness prompts individuals into more vital and intuitive engagements with their subjects – engagements which are revealed and deciphered through the process of rendering the impression. In recognising the mediative quality of language, both texts contain an impressionistic awareness of the disconnect between the subjective reality of the individual and the strange actuality (and otherness) of the universe which surrounds them.

Drawing parallels with Ford's impressionistic ideas, the chapter begins by exploring the idea of mobility in relation to the metaphor of transport, before going on to consider how Lawrence uses writing to mediate between physical and psychological forms of travel. It demonstrates through close textual analysis how the vacillatory quality of his style represents an unfolding series of negotiations between the individual and the world, a process which reflects the intermingled impulses of perception and representation. The chapter suggests that this aspect of Lawrence's prose discloses a desire to identify and better understand the intersection between the microcosm of the individual and the macrocosm manifest in the surrounding universe. Finally, the chapter draws further comparison between Lawrence's emphasis on the transformative affront of otherness and Ford's suggestion that rendering one's impressions anticipates the disclosure of otherwise inaccessible truths.

The second chapter begins by contextualising Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness in his Mexico and New Mexico writings in relation to his wider attitudes to race and cultural difference. Influenced by genetic studies of Lawrence, it demonstrates how his responses to otherness reflect a process of continual change, adjustment, and revision. The chapter focuses upon the idea that Lawrence's subtly changing responses to the affront of otherness represent a sustained effort to produce meaningful engagements with places and modalities of life which initially appear immediately accessible, and yet remain unreachably other. Following this, the chapter explores how Lawrence investigates the power of language to both reveal and conceal the actuality of others' lives. In turn, it demonstrates how his

emphasis on ideas of translation and estrangement when rendering otherness suggests that one can only appreciate the reality of other modalities of being by learning how to not-know. Finally, the chapter explores how Lawrence's attempts to render and decipher the perplexity of otherness reflect a form of future-orientated utopian longing. Drawing parallels with Bloch's notion of the not-yet conscious, the chapter shows how the affront of otherness in these writings anticipates the possibility of understanding the experience of others while recognising that one's own subjective reality and experience in the present is finite.

The similarities between Lawrence's approaches to travel writing and historiography have yet to be directly addressed in scholarship. The third chapter rectifies this by situating his depictions of otherness in the Etruscan sketches in relation to the historiographical ideas he set out previously in *Movements in European History*. The chapter draws parallels between the affront of otherness in the travel writings and the vast reality of history in Lawrence's historiography. It explores how, in both cases, the impression of radical difference is identified as a source of suggestive education. Both his travel writing and historiography encourage imaginative and empathetic engagements with the question of what it means to be other to oneself. On this basis, the chapter considers how Lawrence identifies the possibility of realising a more intuitive and vital relationship between the self and the surrounding universe through the impression of affrontive otherness.

The chapter explores Lawrence's critical engagement with contemporary ideas concerning the theory and practice of modern archaeology. By situating his sketches in relation to these ideas, the chapter shows how Lawrence uses archaeology (as a way of giving order to the world) to consider how one might better render the affrontive otherness of the Etruscan remains. In the Etruscan sketches, to travel in space is simultaneously to travel in time. For Lawrence, the affrontive otherness of the tombs reflects the possibility of coming into contact with other lives which are not only physically but also temporally removed from oneself. By

excavating impressions, just as one excavates the past, Lawrence suggests that the individual can reveal (and imaginatively inhabit) the reality of otherness. The chapter argues that Lawrence's renderings of the Etruscan sites demonstrate how the impression of history can enable the individual to engage more intuitively and vitally with realities unknowably other to their own.

It is important to note that while the works addressed in this thesis all respond to the activity of travel as a subject and theme, they are not all travelogues or works of conventional travel writing. Similarly, while some of the works are more recognisably impressionistic, some such as *Quetzalcoatl* and *The Plumed Serpent* are less so. However, in reading such different texts alongside one another, the thesis demonstrates how Lawrence's impressionistic responses to the affront of otherness exist across arbitrary distinctions of genre and form. Informed by the growing critical appreciation of Lawrence as a multi-medial writer and critic, this aspect of the thesis explores how we can illuminate and better understand the patterns of intuition reflected in his instinctive combining of different aesthetic ideas and techniques.[3] This thesis therefore does not treat the affront of otherness as a singular idea in Lawrence's travel writings, but instead as a locus for his impressionistic investigation of the relationship between the self and the other. Across all the texts examined here, Lawrence uses the process of writing to decipher and derive meaning from the perplexity and affrontive otherness of the world, as well as to better understand what it would be like to be other than oneself.

The three different methods for approaching otherness this thesis explores are connected by the notion that Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness disclose a strong desire to fully comprehend the reality of other modes of being. In the context of his wider oeuvre, all three chapters also connect the affront of otherness to his longstanding belief in the

[3] See: Catherine Brown and Susan Reid, 'Introduction', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 1-8 (p. 4).

intersection of aesthetics and ethics, and the possibility that encountering the world through writing can provide a unique form of holistic education. The conclusion identifies some points of departure for further comparison with Ford and his belief in the value of suggestion rather than instruction.

Alongside its synthesis of critical approaches to otherness, the thesis also employs a combination of methods. In the initial chapter, examining the impressionistic ontologies of *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia*, the approach is largely comparative and textual. The second chapter, addressing otherness, cultural difference, and utopianism, draws upon genetic readings of Lawrence's writings to suggest parallels between the open-ended, revisionary nature of his writing process and Bloch's formulation of the not-yet. Finally, Chapter Three draws upon discourse analysis in its consideration of how Lawrence responds critically and creatively to the ontological and epistemological assumptions of modern archaeology. This combination of methodologies demonstrates how reading Lawrence's travel writings in relation to literary impressionism contributes an effective strategy for deciphering the various impulses which arise in his responses to otherness.

The thesis addresses the extended period in which Lawrence undertook most of his foreign travel, stretching from May 1912 up to his death in 1930 and the posthumous publication of *Sketches of Etruscan Places*. Lawrence's initial travels in Europe in 1912 provided him with the material for his earliest travel sketches and they have also provided the basis for the popular characterisation of his subsequent journeys as forms of escape. Sharon Ouditt and Loredana Polezzi, for example, have described Lawrence's travels as an 'escape' from 'Northern European militarism'; Stefania Michelucci has similarly referred to 'the author's wish to escape from the wasteland of mechanisation and industrialisation'; and Sam Wiseman has noted Lawrence's intense need for 'a final escape from a "diseased", "accursed and

blasted" culture and landscape'.[4] Despite their subtle variations in emphasis, these critics all accept the narrative, succinctly summarised by Andrzej Gąsiorek, that Lawrence's travels, particularly during the 1920s, are best understood as combining 'a desire to escape from an ostensibly dying civilisation with a quest for a different modality of being.'[5] The thesis complicates (or at least adds nuance to) this narrative, by arguing that while Lawrence's desire for newness and frustration with British society were key influences on his motivation to travel abroad and on his literary output during this period, the idea of 'escape' risks distorting and sentimentalising the intense ambivalence he expressed towards notions of home. Therefore, while the thesis recognises that Lawrence was motivated by a professed desire to identify what Michelucci has called 'an ideal place for re-birth, a palingenesis, a place ... where humankind could establish a harmonious relationship with Nature, with the Other and with the Self', it resists characterising his travel writings in terms of escape.[6] Instead it places its primary emphasis on how Lawrence's renderings of otherness in these works reflects a long-standing desire to better understand the nature of the relationship between the subjective reality of the individual and the surrounding universe.

In the case of the travel writing, this approach challenges the longstanding critical misconception, voiced here by Michael Bell, that it is 'in the novels that Lawrence most fully thematises problems specifically of language and expression.'[7] Bell argues that while Lawrence's 'responsiveness to Being … finds some of its most memorable expression in his poetry and … "travel writing"', these works lack the contemporary resonance of the novels as

[4] Sharon Ouditt and Loredana Polezzi, 'Introduction: Italy as place and space', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 16.2 (June 2012), 97-105 (100); Stefania Michelucci, 'L'Espace Perdu: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writings', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 8.1 (2004), 35-48 (35); Sam Wiseman, *The Reimagining of Place in English Modernism* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), p. 38.
[5] Andrzej Gąsiorek, 'War, "Primitivism," and the Future of "the West": Reflections on D. H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis', in *Modernism and Colonialism: British and Irish Literature, 1899-1939*, ed. by Richard Begam and Michael Valdez Moses (London: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 91-110 (p. 100).
[6] Michelucci, 'L'Espace Perdu: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writings', 35.
[7] Michael Bell, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 11.

they 'are forms which allow Lawrence to express and explore this vision largely in his own terms.'[8] This argument is unsatisfactory for two primary reasons. Firstly, Bell asserts that it is overwhelmingly in the novels that Lawrence's '[ontological] vision is brought into mutually testing conflict with the conventional sensibility and the society of his day.'[9] To me, this position seems to ignore much of the content of the travel writing which engages at length on multiple occasions with the conventions and attitudes of contemporary society both at home and abroad. Secondly, Bell's approach suggests that the travel writing is somehow less complex, and more immature, in its aesthetic experiments than the novels. In both its selection of works and approach, this thesis demonstrates how Lawrence's writings on travel are both as aesthetically complex and as engaged as the novels in responding to the contemporary context of their composition.

By beginning with *Twilight in Italy*, the thesis also challenges the view that the early travel sketches should be treated separately from the more cohesive body of the later works. Roberts, for example, has argued that it was only from 1921 that Lawrence truly anticipated and began to produce 'a coherent and developing body of work in which the travelling protagonist searches for and attempts to come to terms with the cultural and religious alternatives to European civilisation.'[10] In fact, it is on this basis that Roberts himself chooses to focus primarily on Lawrence's travels from February 1922 to the publication of *The Plumed Serpent* in 1926, asserting that it was only during this time that Lawrence's 'travelling life entered a more extreme phase'.[11] However, what makes one period of travel 'more extreme' than another is unclear. After all, Lawrence's earlier epic trans-alpine wanderings not only demonstrate an extreme enthusiasm and commitment to travel, but also

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[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 1.
[11] Ibid.

provide early responses to ideas revisited in his later works. Supporting the argument for taking a broader view of the travel writing, L. D. Clark firmly roots Lawrence's 'wanderings' in 1911 and the 'two interconnected choices' – to travel to Germany with Frieda and to search for 'a new way of life abroad'.[12] Challenging Roberts' argument, the thesis builds upon this alternative attitude by demonstrating that Lawrence develops 'a coherent and developing body of work' much earlier in 1912, when he explores the possibility of new modalities of being and understanding anticipated in the affront of otherness.

Lawrence's travel writings contribute to a tradition of modernist travel writing which challenges the notion of objective reportage. These works centre on the issue of how to negotiate the relationship between the subjective reality of the travelling narrator, and the unreachable actuality of the world being visited. David G. Farley describes how 'rather than rendering truth, the travel genre asks the question, What is truth?'[13] This tradition of modernist travel writing displays an overt self-awareness regarding the subjective nature of the realities represented. It challenges the omniscience of the narrator and emphasises the role of the author in mediating between reality and representation. This sentiment is exemplified in Norman Douglas' observation that 'the reader of a good travel-book is entitled not only to an exterior voyage, to descriptions of scenery and so forth, but to an interior, a sentimental or temperamental voyage'.[14] In Lawrence's travel sketches the idea of travel becomes similarly dual; the physical journeys he describes also anticipate and enact spiritual journeys. Roberts has argued that 'what distinguishes this tradition of travel writing is precisely that the writers do not confine themselves to what they "really saw".'[15] In this context, the tendency for

[12] L. D. Clark, *The Minoan Distance: The Symbolism of Travel in D. H. Lawrence* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1980), p. 4.
[13] David G. Farley, *Modernist Travel Writing: Intellectuals Abroad* (London: University of Missouri Press, 2010), p. 21.
[14] Norman Douglas, *Experiments* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1925), p. 5.
[15] Neil Roberts, 'Travel Writing, and Writing about Place', in *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, ed. by Andrew Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 141-50 (p. 143).

Lawrence's travelling narrators to imagine the alternative realities reflected in their subjects suggests that rendering one's impressions not only helps decipher the perplexity of impulses and feelings they contain but also allows one to anticipate the reality of the world beyond the self. The affront of otherness in his travel writing contains both a hopeful desire to connect with others and an awareness that the subjective experience of the individual remains forever isolated.

Yet unlike other modernist travel writers, Lawrence resists dismissing or disregarding the living actuality of his subjects. Drawing comparisons with Norman Douglas' *Old Calabria* (1915) and Aldous Huxley's *Along the Road* (1925), Roberts has observed how Lawrence at times seems to typify 'the privileged traveller with the world at his disposal, free to observe and pass on.'[16] However, unlike Douglas, Huxley, and Evelyn Waugh, Lawrence 'never writes in such a way as to distance himself from his subject', as he resists approaching his subjects 'through the prism of [his] art.'[17] Douglas, in particular, evokes the impression of place through the use of extensive intellectual references and associations. Yet, when considered in relation to Lawrence's belief in the need for both mental and instinctual forms of understanding, such a method produces an overly knowing, mentalised representation of place, that also fails to recognise the possibility of other modes of being existing independently of the observer's own. It fails to appreciate the radical difference which Lawrence repeatedly imagines to be at the root of all being.[18]

A central concern of this thesis is thus how Lawrence uses the impression of otherness as a means of estranging and better understanding the mediative nature of representation. In part, it develops Paul Eggert's argument that Lawrence's writings reflect upon the question of how

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[16] Neil Roberts, 'Time, Place and History in D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writing', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, 4.3 (2017), 7-32 (13).
[17] Roberts, 'Travel Writing, and Writing about Place', p. 144.
[18] The word 'radical' stems from the Latin *radix* or root.

'representation [is] possible in a situation where speech lies, where conventions of artistic form betray, where social living deforms, [and] where civilization renders barbarous'.[19] It shows that though Lawrence's attempts to render the impression of otherness often highlight the barbarousness of language as a basis for understanding, they also suggest an appreciation of the role of representation in generating meaning. In the case of otherness, Lawrence uses the perceived failure or frustration of language to highlight the mediative nature of the impression, using it as a subject through which to investigate the relationship between the self and other. Fiona Becket has argued convincingly that Lawrence should not be read as a writer 'struggling with problems of expression' but instead as 'understanding ... the limitations, as well as the potentialities, of language.'[20] Lawrence's interest in both the limitations and possibilities of language is evident in his sustained investigation of how writing manifests understanding. The open-endedness which characterises his impressions is repeatedly identified as a reminder of the finitude of individual understanding, but also the possibility which extends beyond it as otherness. The thesis suggests that Lawrence's travel writings anticipate the possibility of realising other, alternative modes of being and knowing in their emphasis on the transgressive and mediative aspects of the impression.

The affront of otherness exemplifies the wider significance of transgression as a subject and theme in Lawrence's travel writings. Catherine Brown, for example, has noted the symbolic importance of the Alps, observing that in this border zone Lawrence locates 'specific points of transition' between the North and South.[21] While travel might allow one to transgress such boundaries physically, the impression of such a crossing also anticipates an opportunity to psychologically transgress the boundaries between the self and the other. Hyde notes that, for

[19] Paul Eggert, 'C. S. Peirce, D. H. Lawrence, and Representation: Artistic Form and Polarities', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 28.1/2 (1999), 97-113 (106).
[20] Fiona Becket, *D. H. Lawrence: The Thinker as Poet* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 2.
[21] Brown, 'Climbing Down the Alpine Pisgah: Lawrence's Relationships with the Alps', 67.

Lawrence, such moments of transition 'invited entry into other dimensions of experience, "junctures" of place, history, and cultural change.'[22] This attitude forms the basis for another key claim of this thesis: that Lawrence suggests parallels between such moments of transition and the in-between, mediative nature of the impression. Lawrence's impressionistic style demonstrates a reaction against the impersonal finality of objective representation. After all, as Michael Hollington has written, 'It is clear that the man who wrote "if anything is detestable, it is hard, stupid fixity, that doesn't know how to flicker and waver and be alive," could not be in sympathy with the idea of fixed frontiers.'[23] In Lawrence's travel writings, the affront of otherness prompts ever closer investigations of the nature of the impression which not only anticipate but effectively enact a more holistic and intuitive mode of understanding.

The common idea of transgressing the boundary between the self and the world, or the me and the not-me, signals Lawrence's interest in the question of how one might come to appreciate the reality of something which exists other to oneself. Travel brings Lawrence's narrators into proximity with others and leads to complex engagements with the question of what it feels like to both be and not be oneself. In the case of Lawrence's prose, Rachel Murray has observed that 'when an individual is forced to consider their perspective in relation to someone else'—or in the case of this thesis, the other—'telescopic vision, which apprehends the vast expanses of the world and the distances beyond, is recalibrated as microscopic vision, in which the individual realises with horror that reality is actually smaller and more oppressively immediate than was previously thought.'[24] In Lawrence's travel writing the affront of otherness produces a similar effect, as it prompts his narrators to further

[22] Virginia Crosswhite Hyde, 'Questing Through the Plural "Suns" of *Mornings in Mexico*', in *"Terra Incognita": D. H. Lawrence at the Frontiers*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde and Earl G. Ingersoll (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), pp. 72-95 (p. 72).
[23] Michael Hollington, 'Boundaries, Frontiers, and Cross-Pollination in *Movements in European History*', in *"Terra Incognita": D. H. Lawrence at the Frontiers*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde and Earl G. Ingersoll (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), pp. 26-36 (p. 35).
[24] Rachel Murray, '"Who cares a button?" *Women in Love* and the Question of Scale', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, 3.3 (2014), 111-28 (115).

investigate how the imagination extends the processes of perception, while also inspiring an awareness that one's reality and understanding is in fact far more limited than such imaginings would suggest. For Lawrence's narrators, otherness is a perpetual reminder of the possibility of alternative modalities of being, even if an understanding of their actuality remains unreachable and illusory.

This aspect of the thesis adds nuance to Roberts' argument 'that Lawrence the travel writer was neither a personal nor a cultural solipsist.'[25] For Roberts, Lawrence's writings were not 'private' works of solipsism, but instead demonstrate a desire to get 'Outside the circuit of civilisation.'[26] However, while correct, this characterisation of Lawrence's travel writings does not convey the extent to which he engaged with issues of perception and representation, or suggest the importance of empathetic acts of imagination as a key source of personal education and growth in these works. Fiona Fleming has described how Lawrence, 'being naturally extra-sensitive to others, sees through the looking-glass' as he explores the possibilities of other points of view.[27] Yet while Fleming too is right to recognise Lawrence's use of the subject of otherness as a means of looking outside the self, her argument similarly does not capture how this process of empathetic imagining influences and is influenced by his impressionistic understanding of writing as a way of seeing through and deciphering the perplexing feelings inspired by otherness. Writing allows Lawrence's narrators to see through the strangeness of the world to the radical difference and possibility which underlies it.

This principle is reflected in an additional claim of this thesis: that the affront of otherness is educational in Lawrence's travel writings because it prompts imaginative and empathetic engagements with the realities of others. Margaret Storch writes of Lawrence's 'sympathetic

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[25] Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 1.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Fiona Fleming, 'Encountering Foreignness: a Transformation of Self', *Études Lawrenciennes* [Online], 47 (2016) <https://journals.openedition.org/lawrence/271> [Accessed 15/06/21] (para. 13).

ability to enter into the world and imagination of different cultures, including, as well as the Celtic and Mesoamerican, peasant cultures of Southern Europe, and the Etruscans.'[28] There is, however, a distinct difference between being sympathetic and empathetic; the two terms are not coterminous. Being sympathetic implies that one can simply share a feeling with another person, while empathy implies that one can project oneself into the another's position or experience, inhabit it, and thus come to understand it. While Lawrence's writings demonstrate a desire to sympathise with others, the affront he often feels in these encounters suggests the denial of easy sympathy. Instead, such encounters encourage and draw his narrators into empathetic acts of imagination. This is distinctly impressionistic as it highlights how the individual not only projects significance and value upon the world but finds their understanding to be changed as a result. This idea is exemplified in Ford's *Provence* (1935), and I develop this comparison in the first chapter.

For Lawrence, the awareness of how the individual projects meaning upon the world, and how in turn the world inspires and affects change in the individual, is inherently political. His writings suggest that such aesthetic principles challenge the perceived egoism of modernity. Amit Chaudhuri has evidenced Lawrence's awareness that 'the functions of "creativity" and "the imagination" are seen to be located in Western culture in a Cartesian consciousness which takes itself to be prime originator.'[29] While the imaginative engagement with otherness and others may be generative and may develop one's understanding of the exterior world, the notion that one can accurately and completely conceive the actual reality of another's experience implies, as Chaudhuri suggests, that one occupies a god-like relationship with the world. By imagining the alternative realities concealed in their subjects, Lawrence's narrators

[28] Margaret Storch, 'From Cornwall to New Mexico: Primal Cultures and Belief in Lawrence', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, 4.3 (2017), 111-29 (127).
[29] Amit Chaudhuri, *D. H. Lawrence and "Difference": Postcoloniality and the Poetry of the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 155.

aim to produce the illusion of understanding between the self and other, whilst recognising that such understanding lacks the objectivity associated with knowing.

Lawrence is not alone in his desire to look beyond the self; in fact, Masashi Asai characterises his relation to other European modernist writers in terms of his writings reflecting a 'struggle with the fundamental human predicament of how to have meaningful relationships in the face of egoism.'[30] Lawrence's travel writings are characteristically self-aware. They sustain a dual mode of expression, being both immediately outward-looking and simultaneously self-conscious and ironic. In the case of *Sea and Sardinia*, Michelucci has noted how 'A striking leitmotif of the book, in spite of the problems and difficulties Lawrence and Frieda encountered during their journey, is a vein of irony and self-irony, as if the author were trying to turn the whole experience into a sort of drama with himself and his wife … as the main characters.'[31] Such self-consciousness is exhibited in Lawrence's awareness of, and interest in, the role narrative plays in the generation of meaning. Lawrence uses self-conscious modes of narration to explore how narrative itself produces an illusory form of reality through which one can respond indirectly to the actuality of the world outside of the self. The self-conscious irony here is that his narrators' responsiveness to the otherness and foreignness of the places they visit only further highlights the limitations of conscious, or rational, understanding.

Impressions of perplexing foreignness require Lawrence's narrators to reconsider how they respond to the world outside of the self. Fiona Fleming has argued that Lawrence's 'travel writing did not focus on recording observations about the land or people he encountered, so much as his *experience* of travel and his characters' responses to foreignness.'[32] The

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[30] Masashi Asai, 'How to Have Meaningful Relationships with the Other: Lawrence, Sade, Bataille', in *D. H. Lawrence: New Critical Perspectives and Cultural Transition*, ed. by Simonetta de Filippis (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2016), pp. 11-38 (p. 12).
[31] Michelucci, 'L'Espace Perdu: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writings', p. 41.
[32] Fleming, 'Encountering Foreignness: a Transformation of Self', para. 2.

impression of foreignness in Lawrence's travel writings conceals deeper shades of meaning which must be excavated and deciphered through writing if they are to be understood. Foreignness is not, after all, a static or necessarily pejorative concept in Lawrence's writing, but a reminder of the complex and perplexing relationship between the self and the world. Chaudhuri writes of Lawrence's responsiveness to foreignness as a 'complex and sophisticated matter, raising … questions about cultural identity, otherness, and the imagination'.[33] This thesis demonstrates how such questions concerning the nature of otherness highlight Lawrence's wider interest in understanding how the subjective reality of the individual comes into contact with the bewildering impersonality of the surrounding universe.

In his travel writing, Lawrence emphasises the impression of touch to explore how the affront of otherness suggests such moments of contact between the self and the exterior world. Virginia Crosswhite Hyde has written that, for Lawrence, 'The aim of a venture into the unknown … is the contact itself, amounting simply to this: "We have seen, we have touched."'[34] Lawrence uses the metaphor of touch to explore the instinctual responsiveness to otherness, but also to probe its seemingly tangible yet persistently elusive nature. In the experience of being in proximity with otherness and others, Lawrence anticipates the possibility of having one's understanding or mind-frame changed. While the reality of this contact may prove to be illusory and its nature indefinable, he suggests the feeling of being close to that which is other represents a more intuitive apprehension of the relationship between the self and the surrounding universe. Attempting to explain this effect, Hyde argues that 'Lawrence's constant travel mystique implies an open-ended goal that resists finality'.[35]

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[33] Chaudhuri, *D. H. Lawrence and "Difference"*, p. 115.
[34] Virginia Crosswhite Hyde, '"Terra Incognita": D. H. Lawrence at the Frontiers', in *"Terra Incognita": D. H. Lawrence at the Frontiers*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde and Earl G. Ingersoll (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), pp. 13-25 (p. 13).
[35] Ibid., p. 14.

Yet, she adds, ‘this goal is not simply utopian and imaginative’ but instead explores ‘the main process by which the “unknown” interacts with people experientially.’[36] While the main thrust of Hyde’s argument regarding the experiential focus of Lawrence’s writings is perceptive, her formulation of their potential utopianism is unsatisfactory. The ‘utopian and imaginative’ are neither ‘simple’ nor coterminous.

To better illustrate how the open-endedness of Lawrence’s responses to otherness suggests an underlying utopianism, the thesis draws comparison with Ernst Bloch’s formulation of the utopian instinct and the not-yet conscious. Bloch’s argument is rooted in the premise that though the conception of a utopia requires some degree of imaginative capability, it does not mean a utopia is entirely imagined. He argues that a utopia anticipates, in the concrete conditions of the present, very real possibilities for the future.[37] This thesis argues that Lawrence’s attempts to express the impression of otherness similarly anticipate the real possibility of a renewed understanding between the self and other, even if it cannot be rationalised. His works reflect the principle that, by rendering the affront of otherness truthfully, the writer can estrange the relationship between the self and the world, and suggest new forms of understanding and being

The thesis contends that Lawrence’s efforts to render the affront of otherness estrange the present in order to investigate and better comprehend the not-yet conscious aspects of one’s impressions. In the selected texts, the narrators repeatedly anticipate in the affront of otherness new forms of understanding and alternative modes of being, despite the fact that they are not only unknowable but unthinkable. The affrontive power of otherness acts to estrange the habitual processes of perception and representation by which they attempt to

[36] Ibid.
[37] See: Ruth Levitas, ‘Educated Hope: Ernst Bloch on Abstract and Concrete Utopia’, in *Not yet: Reconsidering Ernst Bloch*, ed. by Jamie Owen Daniel and Tom Moylan (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 65-79 (p. 67).

reproduce their impressions. Sam Wiseman has written that 'The epistemological value [of travel] often takes the form of defamiliarization, as Lawrence's characters experience previously familiar places with a new strangeness or intensity.'[38] By bringing the individual into contact with otherness and producing feelings of estrangement, Lawrence suggests that the act of physically travelling into unfamiliar regions enacts a similar journey into strange and unfamiliar areas of the self.

This thesis demonstrates how Lawrence uses the problem of rendering the impression of otherness to estrange the relationship between perception and representation.[39] While his travel writings have traditionally been identified with a geographical quest for new modalities of being, the thesis explores how Lawrence effects a similar search through his attempts to decipher the impression of otherness. Michael Squires has written that the 'deeper patterns of coherence' which emerge in Lawrence's writings lie 'below the level of conscious planning or structuring' but 'reveal the structural components of intuition … [and] manifest themselves in narrative choices.'[40] The thesis uses the idea of literary impressionism to demonstrate how such 'structural components of intuition' enact the sustained emergence of a more vital mode of vision at the level of the impression. It investigates how Lawrence's impressions of otherness negotiate the interrelated processes of perception and expression in their attempt to decipher the individual's bewildering situation in the world. In rendering otherness, and reproducing the experience of not-knowing, Lawrence attempts to look afresh at the relationship between the self and the exterior world.

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[38] Wiseman, *The Reimagining of Place in English Modernism*, p. 17.

[39] Robert Burden argues that estrangement is key to Lawrence's representation of otherness because 'otherness is always recognized and acknowledged but never really known'. See: Robert Burden, 'D. H. Lawrence: Travel, Otherness and the Sense of Place', in *Travel, Modernism and Modernity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 107-54 (p. 120).

[40] Michael Squires, 'D. H. Lawrence's Narrators, Sources of Knowledge, and the Problem of Coherence', *Criticism*, 37.3 (1995), 469-91 (470).

The impression of otherness serves as a persistent reminder of the strangeness and perplexity which characterises the individual's experience and reality. Bell has observed how Lawrence's 'capacity to respond to the otherness of other forms of life, and to feel the moment-by-moment strangeness of his own existence, was the premise of his fictional worlds.'[41] The immediate strangeness of feeling in Lawrence's travel writings forever contests the assumptions of rational and mentalised forms of knowing. Just as the literary impressionist mediates a range of often conflicting impulses, Lawrence's travel writings forever negotiate the boundary between the knowable and the unknowable. In this context, Lawrence's efforts to represent the affront of otherness suggest that the relationship between the self and other, or the me and the not-me, is reflected in the mediative relationship between perception and expression.

Neil Roberts' Bakhtinian reading of the travel books is recognised as the foundational critical account of the function of travel in Lawrence's writings. Roberts' work draws on Bakhtin's formulation of the chronotope and suggests that Lawrence's travel writings centre upon dual notions of questing and adventuring.[42] His approach illuminates the complex entanglement of space and time in the writings on travel and provides a foundational understanding of the function of travel in generating meaning. Yet, importantly for this thesis, this approach also emphasises the hopefulness which motivates so many of Lawrence's narrators. Andrew Humphries has argued that travel as a frame for Lawrence's writings 'suggests a carrying of ideas, hope, [and] aspirations'.[43] For Humphries, in Lawrence's works, 'Moments of epiphany' are '"enframed" by transport experience or can be signified, in the sense of being carried, by transport metaphor [*sic*].'[44] The thesis develops Humphries' argument by

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[41] Bell, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being*, p. 6.
[42] See: Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 15.
[43] Andrew F. Humphries, *D. H. Lawrence, Transport and Cultural Transition* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p. 2.
[44] Ibid.

introducing the idea of literary impressionism to demonstrate how the process of writing about travel reflects a process of engagement between the individual narrator and world through which arises open-ended 'moments of epiphany'.

Yet Lawrence also treats such moments of epiphanic insight and understanding with notable ambivalence; his impressions are sustained by the strange attraction and repulsion of otherness. Jeff Wallace has noted how in the early travel writings Lawrence attempts to locate 'an alternative model of how to be elsewhere', and yet from such a model one only ever 'learn[s] to be disappointed.'[45] One's hopes are forever thwarted by the actuality of a world which exists independently of, and other to, the self. Just as the literary impressionist often finds that the attempt to decipher impressions only causes them to become more fragmented and obscure, this thesis demonstrates how Lawrence's attempts to realise other modes of being and understanding similarly prompt further perplexity and uncertainty. Yet, for him, the unknowability of otherness, and its tendency to elude complete expression is a source of hope.

The idea that Lawrence uses the representation of travel and otherness to resist the finality of the present and instead anticipate, with some ambivalence, an alternative future is particularly apparent in his conceptualization of place. Roberts has described how 'Place is an ideological concept for Lawrence because it insists on diversity, resisting the homogenising drive of modernity.'[46] For Lawrence, place also signifies the actuality of other lives and experiences existing outside of, and independently of, his own. In its intangible and unreachable otherness, place in his travel writing becomes emblematic of the opportunities for individual transformation. Succinctly capturing the essence of this idea, Paul Smethurst argues that:

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[45] Jeff Wallace, 'The Death of Interest: D. H. Lawrence, Geoff Dyer and literary Tourism', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 43.1/2 (2018), 4-24 (17).
[46] Roberts, 'Time, Place and History in D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writing', 7.

> Place-writing allows us to reconcile our own sense of this intimate space of individuation with both prevailing macroscopic views and the imagined intimate spaces of others. Through such imaginative cartographies, the body is its own anchor in the immensity of global cartographies, the body is its own anchor in the immensity of global space. But the body in the mind – the image of ourselves in space – is essentially *heterotopic*, occupying multiple spaces simultaneously.[47]

A heterotopia is a space that really exists, and yet opposes and contests the pre-existing ideas and associations comprising lived space. It is a space of otherness, the real manifestation of the utopian instinct, and yet – unlike an imaginary utopia – it exists. Crucially, for this thesis, it is a space of exploration and encounter. It is no coincidence that Foucault identifies the ship as the exemplary heterotopia.[48] It is the place where one encounters and is exposed to alternative modes of being, understanding and living. In Lawrence's writings on travel, the affront of otherness is similarly heterotopic in that it provides his narrators with the opportunity to explore alternative modalities for living. Drawing on Smethurst's argument, the thesis suggests that Lawrence's narrators engage imaginatively with the 'intimate spaces of others' while recognising that one cannot simultaneously inhabit one's own subjective reality and that of another. Otherness contests and challenges Lawrence's idealisation of other modes of being, whilst simultaneously being a persistent and hopeful reminder one could come to be other to oneself.

Lawrence's heterotopic evocations of place allow his narrators to contest the distinction between being at home and being abroad, as a means of exploring more widely what it means to move beyond one's subjective self. But, as is particularly significant to the third chapter of

[47] Paul Smethurst, 'Habits of a Landscape', in *New Directions in Travel Writing Studies*, ed. by Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 108.
[48] See: Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', trans. by Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics*, 16.1 (Spring, 1986), 22-7.

the thesis, notions of home and abroad in Lawrence's travel writings are often distinguished temporally. Home is repeatedly identified with ideas of pastness, sometimes resurgent in the present, while the future is foreign and abroad. Sam Wiseman notes how 'Throughout his life … Lawrence seeks to reconcile conflicting desires for rootedness and exploration, by examining the possibility that the latter may ultimately facilitate a richer, more conscious understanding of the former.'[49] While it forms only a small part of his argument, Wiseman's phrasing perceptively identifies rootedness as something previous, and exploration as something ensuing and subsequent. The thesis extends this line of argument in order to offer a better understanding of how the act of journeying abroad in Lawrence's travel writings sustains a constant open-ended passage into the future. The idea that travel brings his narrators into contact with otherness, whether in places or in modalities of being, is intrinsically future orientated. The affront of otherness thus serves as a subject through which Lawrence explores the relationship between the self and the other, but it also calls attention to his ambivalence regarding the relationship between the present and the future. The act of writing reflects not only a means of exploring one's relationship with one's surroundings but of orientating oneself in perplexing and bewildering times.

The thesis demonstrates how the narrators' responsiveness to the affront of otherness in Lawrence's travel writings reflects a sustained attempt to orientate the self in a vast, and impersonal, changing world. The experience of travelling to places that are other provides his narrators with the opportunity to investigate their relationship not only to the present, but to the past and the future. Stefania Michelucci has characterised Lawrence's travel writing as 'a kind ... in which the interaction with "other" places offers an occasion for meditations on Western Civilisation and its present state of corruption and decay.'[50] But while Michelucci is

[49] Wiseman, *The Reimagining of Place in English Modernism*, p. 17.
[50] Michelucci, 'L'Espace Perdu: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writings', 38.

correct to note Lawrence's fascination with notions of societal and industrial degeneration, she underplays his interest in how such impressions of degeneration also enable individuals to orientate themselves in chaotic times.

Lawrence's writings share a desire to decipher the significance of individual life and being. It is a search for meaning enacted through the process of writing. His responsiveness to what Bell terms 'the irreducible individuality of experience' reflects an awareness of the complex and nuanced nature of subjective reality, and yet this attentiveness to the inherent variousness of feeling is also demonstrative of a desire to better understand why one's experiences matter amidst the bewildering onrush of modernity.[51] For Lawrence, significance arises, and is deciphered, through a series of successive engagements with the otherness of the world outside the self. His travel sketches respond to modernism's crises of subjectivity and representation in two significant ways. Firstly, they anticipate a vital link between the subjective reality of the individual and the material universality of the circumambient universe. Secondly, the open-ended and unfinished nature of his impressions sustains the possibility of alternatives modes of being and understanding. These twin emphases, epitomised in the affront of otherness, offer his narrators hope amidst the bewilderment of modernity.

[51] Michael Bell, 'The Absolute, the Relative and the Novel', *Études Lawrenciennes* [Online], 51 (2020) <https://journals.openedition.org/lawrence/1524> [Accessed 15/06/2] (para. 3).

1. THE IMPRESSION OF OTHERNESS IN *TWILIGHT IN ITALY* AND *SEA AND SARDINIA*

This chapter situates the affront of otherness in Lawrence's early travel sketches in relation to the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism. It focuses on *Twilight in Italy* (1916) and *Sea and Sardinia* (1921) and demonstrates how the idea of literary impressionism, as a way of engaging with the world, can illuminate the mediative quality of these early sketches, particularly in their attempts to render otherness. There has been no previous in-depth consideration of Lawrence's travel writings in light of the concerns of literary impressionism despite their significant impressionistic quality. This chapter seeks to address this situation by introducing the idea of literary impressionism as a way of understanding Lawrence's responses to otherness.

Recent scholarship has investigated Lawrence's interest in the theory and practice of art as a source of creative and critical inspiration. Interventions in this area have stressed both his intense interest in contemporary aesthetic ideas and their influence on his own creative output. The contributors to the recent *Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts* have consolidated much of the existing critical understanding in this regard.[1] However, despite the critical appreciation of his engagement with contemporary aesthetic ideas, in the field of Lawrence studies there has not been any in-depth consideration of his travel writings in relation to literary impressionism. While there have been critical interventions regarding Lawrence's critical and creative responses to impressionism in painting, literary

[1] For discussion of Lawrence's broader engagement with the idea and practice of art, see: Michael Bell, 'The Idea of the Aesthetic', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 11-22.

impressionism has, at best, only been superficially addressed.[2] Critics primarily working in the field of literary impressionism have given some consideration to Lawrence as an impressionistic writer but this too has been limited, with their primary focus being upon the novels and the idea of life-writing.[3] While there is a degree of overlap between travel writing and life-writing, approaching the travel writing solely from the perspective of life-writing can only reveal so much. By considering how Lawrence mediates the generative affront of otherness, this chapter establishes a critical basis for the wider consideration of the travel writings in relation to literary impressionism. It suggests that, in rendering otherness, Lawrence sustains both an awareness that the individual cannot objectively know the world beyond the self, and an appreciation of the vast actuality of the surrounding universe.

The chapter begins by exploring how Lawrence's emphasis on mobility reflects the mediative nature of the impression. It then moves on to explore how both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* problematise the idea of vision and probe the limits of visuality as a means of rendering the totality of one's impressions. The chapter goes on to compare Lawrence's and Ford Madox Ford's ideas concerning the nature and importance of form, placing particular emphasis on the intuitive hybridity of Lawrence's travel books. It begins to suggest how Lawrence's sketches respond to the processes of recollection and association, described by Ford as those 'queer effects of real life'.[4] From there it compares Lawrence's vision and approach in the travel sketches to Ford's ideas regarding the important effacement of the self and necessary impersonality of the author. Finally, it shows how Lawrence anticipates in the

[2] For discussion of Lawrence's engagement with impressionism in painting, see: Jack Stewart, 'Color, Space, and Place in Lawrence's "Letters"', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 29.1 (2000), 119-36.

[3] Both Max Saunders and Paul B. Armstrong provide some preliminary consideration of Lawrence in their respective works on literary impressionism. See: Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) and Paul B. Armstrong, *The Challenge of Bewilderment: Understanding and Representation in James, Conrad, and Ford* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1987).

[4] Ford Madox Ford, 'Appendix C: Ford Madox Ford, "On Impressionism"', in *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion*, ed. by Kenneth Womack and William Baker (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2003), pp. 260-80 (p. 267).

act of rendering the impression the possibility of new and transformative forms of understanding. Underlying these comparisons is the idea that works of literary impressionism often reflect a desire to decipher the powerful (yet seemingly unutterable) forms of intuitive truth anticipated in the otherness of one's impressions, or as Henry James terms it 'the mocking, elusive souls of things'.[5] The chapter offers a new method for understanding how Lawrence anticipates in the impression's otherness a renewed and more vital relationship between knowing and being.

Through the impression, literary impressionists attempt to render the totality of perception at a given moment. Yet, despite the deceptive simplicity of this aspiration, the closer one looks, the more complex and ambiguous it becomes. Jesse Matz has noted how impressionists seek 'To get in the impression not just sense perception but sense that is thought, appearances that are real, suspicions that are true and parts that are whole'.[6] In these terms, the impression can be better understood to reflect a complex entanglement of impulses and associations, which are immediately interrelated and yet simultaneously divergent and fragmentary. Therefore, while works of literary impressionism may aspire to render the impression as a whole the attempt to do so often achieves the opposite, as the impression fragments into an increasingly vast and incongruous assemblage of diverging impulses. Through the impression, impressionists thus mediate – and hope to make sense of – subjective reality as an amalgam of different perceptual impulses, be they sensory, associative, and recollective.[7]

As a result, works of literary impressionism can be broadly understood to recognise that writing enacts a form of vision – albeit problematically. Michael Fried identifies writing as

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[5] Henry James, *Italian Hours*, ed. by John Auchard (London: Penguin, 1992), p. 52.
[6] Jesse Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 1.
[7] For context, compare with Lawrence's formulation of the 'under-conscious' in his essay 'Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*' in *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923).

'an exalted mode of *seeing*' for literary impressionists because it is through the process of writing that authors come to see more than they initially might.[8] From this perspective, writing provides authors with a means of potentially deciphering the otherwise invisible heterogeneity of impulses and associations which remain concealed within the apparent homogeneity of the impression. Unpacking the paradox of this attitude, Max Saunders observes that the compelling problem is that while 'impressionism is supposed to concentrate on the visible world ... it does this in order to get at something that cannot be perceived visually: the "truth" "underlying" the "visible universe"'.[9] By rendering the form of the world, impressionists seek to decipher the intuitive truths and logic which underly its constituent relations.

However, even this definition of literary impressionism struggles to fully convey the variety of approaches and attitudes adopted by impressionists. For this reason, the chapter takes Ford Madox Ford, Lawrence's early mentor, as the contemporary exemplar of literary impressionism. It shows that though Lawrence did not identify himself as a literary impressionist, unlike Ford, their writings demonstrate a similar appreciation of the potential for language to decipher the truths intuited and anticipated in one's impressions. The chapter investigates how reading Lawrence's early travel sketches in relation to the work of an impressionist, like Ford, can help decipher how he attempts to look outside of the self, and to engage meaningfully with the world at large. Though the chapter does not suggest that there is a direct line of influence from Ford to Lawrence, it does argue that Lawrence's works share with Ford's an appreciation of the generative role of writing in mediating one's impressions.

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[8] Michael Fried, *What Was Literary Impressionism?* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2018), p. 19.
[9] Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 267.

Lawrence first became personally acquainted with Ford, then editor of *The English Review*, in 1909. Ford recalled Lawrence remarking on their first meeting, 'But you are, aren't you, everybody's blessed Uncle and Headmaster?'[10] Despite the performative and often unreliable nature of Ford's recollections, this evocative reminiscence offers some suggestion of the respect the pair initially had for one another. Following this first encounter, Lawrence wrote to Louie Burrows: 'The editor, Ford Madox Hueffer, says he will be glad to read any of the work I like to send him – which is a great relief, is it not?'[11] This 'great relief' clearly prompted Lawrence's determination to get on with writing. Only two months later, writing again to Burrows, he reports: 'Hueffer is reading my novel [*The White Peacock*]. He says it's good, and is going to get it published for me. He also says I ought to get out a volume of verse, so you see how busy I am.'[12] Such letters offer a limited insight into the early influence Ford exerted on both the quantity of Lawrence's output and on its subject and form.

John Worthen has hypothesised some examples of Ford's influence on Lawrence's output during their immediate acquaintance, arguing that the play *A Collier's Friday Night* and the short story 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' were probably written 'specifically because Hueffer suggested he [Lawrence] should do something of the kind.'[13] Worthen's characterisation of Ford's relationship with Lawrence is concerned primarily with class; he notes that, in his early years, Lawrence had 'come to inhabit a kind of intellectual border country between what Ford Madox Hueffer called "the high things of culture" and the realities of the everyday.'[14] Yet this period of Ford having particular influence over the relatively young Lawrence was rather short-lived, with Lawrence professing resentment toward the 'Hueffer-

[10] Ford Madox Ford, *Mightier Than the Sword* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1938), p. 107.
[11] D. H. Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 11 September 1909', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by James T. Boulton, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), I, pp. 137-8 (p. 137).
[12] Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 20 November 1909', *Letters*, I, pp. 144-5 (p. 144).
[13] John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years 1885-1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 217.
[14] Ibid., p. 346.

Pound faction[‘s]’ apparent inclination ‘to lead me round a little as one of their show-dogs.’[15] The relatively short duration of their initial literary relationship, combined with the limited evidence of their interactions, is perhaps the reason why very little critical consideration has been given to the larger comparisons which can be drawn between their writings.

However, as an active critic of his own work and the work of others, and given the available evidence, it is highly likely that Lawrence reflected upon the similarities between Ford’s writings and his own. In the early days of his acquaintance with Ford, writing to Blanche Jennings, Lawrence asked, ‘What do you think of Ford Madox Hueffer’s “A Call”? I think it has more art than life.’[16] The significance of this reflection is evident when, having been introduced to Ezra Pound by Ford, he again conceptualized his aesthetic concerns in relation to art and life, writing to Louie Burrows ‘He [Pound] is 24, like me, – but his god is beauty, mine, life.’[17] While noting the aesthetic preoccupations of his contemporaries, Lawrence’s comments, particularly in the case of Ford, suggest an appreciation of their shared belief that the act of writing offers a means of connecting art and life. In this context, the chapter argues for the utility of considering Lawrence’s travel sketches as impressionistic, as they present writing as the best means of linking life and ideas, being and knowing, the self and the other. Reflecting this preoccupation with life, Lawrence’s sketches demonstrate a characteristically impressionistic responsiveness to the elusive otherness which one intuits in being. They problematise language in order to probe, decipher, and better understand, the relationship between subjective reality and the world exterior to the self.

The idea that writing has the potential to illuminate the expanse of reality beyond the visual is one which Lawrence was likely made conscious of from the travel writing of his immediate

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[15] Lawrence, ‘To Edward Garnett, 30 December 1913’, in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), II, pp. 132-3.
[16] Lawrence, ‘To Blanche Jennings, 1 November 1909’, *Letters*, I, pp. 140-2 (p. 141).
[17] Lawrence, ‘To Louie Burrows, 20 November 1909’, *Letters*, I, pp. 144-5 (p. 145).

predecessors and contemporaries. Robert Louis Stevenson, whose works Lawrence is known to have admired, writes in 'Forest Notes' (1875-6):

> Men are so far sophisticated that they cannot take the world as it is given to them by the sight of their eyes. Not only what they see and hear, but what they know to be behind, enter into their notion of a place.[18]

Stevenson captures a typically impressionistic awareness that visuality alone offers only the means of conveying the superficial details of one's impressions. This idea is also explored by Ford in *The Soul of London* (1905), when he writes: 'You live only with your eyes, and they lull you'.[19] And later, Aldous Huxley declares in *Jesting Pilate: The Diary of a Journey* (1926) that 'To see things—really to see them—one must use the legs as well as the eyes. Even a vicarious muscular effort quickens the vision'.[20] Lawrence too demonstrates a desire to see beyond the visual, and to probe the radical difference which underlies human experience. His attempts to render otherness reflect a sustained interest in probing those under-deeps of human experience which manifest themselves in the elusive and fragmentary quality of one's impressions.

The idea that there are depths of subjective experience which are not immediately accessible is recurrent across Lawrence's oeuvre, but it achieves a particular prominence in the travel sketches. In the essay 'New Mexico' (1928), he evokes the image of the ocean as a metaphor for sight, noting that 'It's all very well skimming across the surface of the ocean, and saying you know all about the sea. There still remain the terrifying under-deeps, of which we have

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[18] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'Forest Notes', in *Essays of Travel* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1905), pp. 144-74 (pp. 172-3).
[19] Ford Madox Ford, *The Soul of London*, ed. by Alan G. Hill (London: Dent, 1995), p. 80.
[20] Aldous Huxley, *Jesting Pilate: The Diary of a Journey* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1926), p. 82.

utterly no experience.'[21] Like works of literary impressionism, Lawrence's travel sketches seek to reveal these 'under-deeps' of experience which underlie, and give substance to, one's reality. These 'under-deeps' are comparable, I argue, to the underlying patterns of intuition which literary impressionists attempt to reveal. While the experience of travelling and being mobile might loosen the bond between interior and exterior worlds, in Lawrence's case, it also heightens the sense that unknowability and otherness lie at the heart of one's reality. In his travel sketches the encounter with otherness becomes a locus for deeper investigation of the patterns of intuition which sustain the relationship between the subjective reality of the self and the actuality of the exterior world.

In addition to recognising writing as a means of engaging with the world, Lawrence's works also recognise bewilderment as a source of new and potentially transformative understanding concerning the individual's situation in the world, though this understanding may deny final comprehension. This is particularly the case in the travel writing as the experience of being abroad and encountering otherness allows Lawrence to suggest parallels between the radical difference which underlies human life and the elusive otherness which characterises the individual's impressions. In his pioneering account of literary impressionism, Paul B. Armstrong argues that impressionists, like the Romantics, 'view bafflement not only as a temporary loss of direction but also as an opportunity to acquire a new understanding of oneself and one's world.'[22] However, he adds, where the Romantics find a wondrous and revelatory union of self and nature in this bewilderment, impressionists find fragmentation.[23] In bewilderment both Romantics and impressionists anticipate the possibility of deriving new understanding from the world, and yet for the impressionists this understanding remains

[21] D. H. Lawrence, 'New Mexico', in *Mornings in Mexico*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 173-81 (p. 175).
[22] Paul B. Armstrong, *The Challenge of Bewilderment: Understanding and Representation in James, Conrad, and Ford* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1987), p. 3.
[23] Ibid.

ultimately fragmentary, elusive, and lacking in finality. This is true for Lawrence too who, despite being drawn into increasingly close engagements with the bewildering otherness of his subjects, ultimately finds his understanding to be incomplete and fragmentary.

This chapter argues that Lawrence uses the form of the travel sketch not merely for the purpose of reportage, but instead more purposefully as (to draw upon Michael Bell's terminology) a 'heuristic' model for working out a new, impressionistic understanding of one's forever changing relationship with the world.[24] Bell argues that criticism reacting against (and seeking to avoid) the apologia typified by F. R. Leavis has positioned Lawrence not as 'a man struggling to communicate a truth' but instead as 'a man consciously problematising his vision.'[25] Yet, as Bell acknowledges, while 'the perception underlying this reading is true', it has a tendency to produce 'largely empty or trivial' readings of Lawrence's writings.[26] The problematising of vision, after all, still reflects an attempt to 'communicate a truth', albeit one which, like the idea of the impression, is prone to contradiction, fragmentation, and dissolution. The chapter, in examining the attempt, suggests how the idea of literary impressionism can be used to connect existing critical attitudes to otherness in Lawrence's travel writings, whilst also underscoring the importance of the travel sketches within his larger oeuvre.

Travel, Mobility, and Seeing for Oneself

[24] Michael Bell, *D. H. Lawrence: Language and Being* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 2.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

In a letter sent two weeks prior to his departure on his first great walk across the Alps, Lawrence declares: 'I *don't* want to go back to town and civilisation. I want to rough it and scramble through, free, free.'[27] This statement highlights his conviction that by transgressing the historic southern boundary of northern Europe one might discover alternative modalities of being. It also pre-empts the idea that travel, and writing about travel, offered the possibility of a renewed understanding of one's relationship with the world outside of the self. L. D. Clark has noted the importance of *Twilight in Italy* as a 'turning point', after which Lawrence began to conceive of 'the journey abroad as the primary means to the discovery of new being.'[28] In many of his works, Lawrence anticipates in travel the possibility of achieving a more vital understanding of one's situation in the world – though the precise nature of such understanding varies. While Neil Roberts agrees that '*Twilight in Italy* was the point at which travel became integral to Lawrence's writing', he has argued in favour of differentiating *Twilight in Italy* from *Sea and Sardinia* on account of Lawrence's later writings being 'driven' by a more overt 'rejection of Europe'.[29] While Roberts is correct to note Lawrence's markedly different motivations for undertaking these journeys, this distinction is unhelpful for considering the continuities of thought which exist between the works they inspired. In this regard, the chapter clarifies Roberts' argument by demonstrating that though there may be notable differences between Lawrence's early sketches of the Alps and Italy, and the later account of Sardinia, there are also important continuities in their impressionistic responsiveness to otherness. Both texts suggest an appreciation of how rendering one's

[27] Lawrence, 'To Edward Garnett, 22/07/1912', *Letters*, I, p. 427.
[28] L. D. Clark, *The Minoan Distance: The Symbolism of Travel in D. H. Lawrence* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980), p. 159; Catherine Brown has nuanced this argument, noting how '[t]he distinction between the Teutonic North and the Dionysiac (albeit now somewhat twilit) South suggested itself to Lawrence at precisely the time of his encounter with the Alps, which obtrusively mark the boundary between them.' See: Catherine Brown, 'Climbing Down the Alpine Pisgah: Lawrence's Relationships with the Alps', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 39.1 (2014), 67-78.
[29] Neil Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 2, 4.

impressions reflects a sincere engagement with the otherness of the world and illuminates the relationship between subjective reality and the material actuality of the surrounding universe.

In this context, Lawrence's travel sketches typify the contemporary idea that travel, and travel writing allow for a closer exploration of one's everchanging situation in the world by heightening one's sensitivity to the fleeting, incongruous nature of reality. Stevenson, for example, writes in *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévannes* (1879): 'For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move; to feel the needs and hitches of our life more nearly'.[30] For Lawrence, like Stevenson, travel and the experience of being mobile encourage one to *feel* life more keenly. Mobility in Lawrence's early travel writings promotes receptivity, heightening the narrator's sensitivity to the rich and complex under-deeps of human experience. Paul Smethurst notes how walking, in particular, 'loosens correspondence between inner and outer worlds, making pedestrian travel a model for philosophical meandering without purpose and destination.'[31] It is on this basis that Smethurst suggests the travel narrative reflects the relationship between the world and the self.[32] While both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* combine pedestrian travel with other modes of transport, they too demonstrate a loosening of the link between 'inner and outer worlds' that opens up the possibility for new forms of understanding to emerge. Lawrence's early sketches also capture the latter aspect of Smethurst's argument. By being brought into close proximity with otherness and others, his narrators repeatedly identify not only interest and novelty, but also the possibility of determining a vital link between one's own reality and the vast otherness of the exterior world. The principle that the travel narrative

[30] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes and The Amateur Emigrant*, ed. by Christopher Maclachlan (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 35; For more detailed consideration of Lawrence's interest in Stevenson, see: Keith Sagar, 'D. H. Lawrence and Robert Louis Stevenson', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 24.2 (Summer 1992), 161-5.
[31] Paul Smethurst, 'Textual Landscapes and Disappearing Nature', in *Travel Writing and the Natural World, 1768-1840* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 181-95 (p. 191).
[32] Ibid., p. 192.

can mediate between the individual's reality and the actuality of universal being is made manifest in the form of Lawrence's impressions. His sketches suggest an awareness that one's impressions are not isolated moments, but instead fragments, or glimpses, of a larger whole.

Yet unlike the self-professed directed aimlessness of Stevenson, Lawrence places a significant emphasis on the need for the traveller (and, implicitly, travel writer) to maintain a sense of direction and purpose in travelling. In the opening lines of *Sea and Sardinia*, Lawrence's narrator notes the importance of *getting going*, but also knowing where one is headed. 'Comes over one an absolute necessity to move', he writes. 'And what is more, to move in some particular direction. A double necessity then: to get on the move, and to know whither.'[33] Likewise, the narrator in *Twilight in Italy* reflects that 'When one walks, one must travel west or south. If one turn [*sic*] northward or eastward it is like walking down a *cul-de-sac*, to the blind end.'[34] Displaying geographically Lawrence's epochal sense of history, the need to walk 'west or south' aligns here with the need to walk away from the familiar enervation of Britain. But this attitude also suggests the need for the individual to maintain a degree of exteriority or outwardness in engaging with the world. In the case of the impression, this suggests Lawrence's anticipation that the otherness of one's impressions, like the otherness of the world, holds the potential for transformational and regenerative insight. As he professed in his desire to scramble free, to travel backwards is for Lawrence to return to a stale and stagnating familiarity which promises only dissolution, and the reproduction of the most insipid of feelings.

[33] D. H. Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, ed. by Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 7.
[34] D. H. Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, ed. by Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 207.

However, the desire to travel purposefully in the works examined here often results paradoxically in a more acute appreciation of the arbitrariness with which one sets out. This is exhibited particularly in the narrator's repeated questions 'Why then must one go? Why not stay?', 'Where does one go?', 'Where then?', and beyond this, 'Where then?'[35] While the question of why one travels appears initially to have no straightforward answer, the confusion it produces sustains a tension between going and staying, between home and away, and between inertia and growth. Roberts writes that while Lawrence repeatedly emphasises the randomness and arbitrariness of a destination, such apparent bewilderment 'actually has a logic: the dialectic of the known and the other.'[36] In *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* this dialectic reflects the principle that exposure to the inherent otherness and radical difference of the world has the potential to produce new and more vital forms of understanding. In rendering the bewilderment of travel Lawrence anticipates a more intuitive relationship between self and the world whilst recognising that any attempt will result only in further feelings of perplexity, dissolution, and affront.

Central to *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* is the principle that one can only truly appreciate the bewildering otherness of the world by experiencing it for oneself. The principle that the work of literature should not describe reality but reproduce it and allow the reader to see it for themselves is typically impressionistic. Ford notes the same motivation in *Provence* (1935), writing:

> I don't know what has brought me here, now, to London. I daresay it was more than anything sheer curiosity as to prices. For the whole world now talks daily for hours of nothing but the cost of living and, each person talking always from the

[35] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, pp. 8-9.
[36] Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 43.

> depth of momentary passions, the result is a confusion that there is no deciphering at all. One must go and see for oneself.[37]

Here Ford suggests the urge to travel corresponds with a desire for primary experience. One travels, he notes, to confirm whether things actually are as they are reported to be. In this context, he presents the vicarious experience afforded by the travel narrative as intriguing, but also bewildering, questionable, and in need of decipherment. He argues simply being told what it is like to be in a place does not necessarily produce understanding but is likely to create confusion and uncertainty. One needs to see the whole impression for oneself if one is to judge the relative significance or truthfulness of details within the whole. Likewise, Lawrence demonstrates an awareness that the actuality of other modalities of being can only be fully appreciated by experiencing the bewildering affront of otherness in its entirety. However, while his travel sketches reflect a similar desire to render fully primary experience, Lawrence's works are distinctive in their tendency to anticipate in otherness the possibility of coming-to-know the reality which exterior to the self.

To briefly summarise, Lawrence's emphasis on mobility as enabling vision suggests an impressionistic appreciation of writing as a mode of mediation between the self and the otherness which surrounds one. Additionally, as a metaphor for writing, the need to know the direction in which one is travelling implies that the form of the travel sketch can help the individual make sense of their situation in the world. The mobility of Lawrence's narrators calls out to the idea of the impression as a negotiation between the self and the otherness which surrounds it. Lawrence explores how the travel sketch, like the impression, reflects an attempt to make sense of the perplexity which surrounds the self and to orientate oneself geographically, culturally, and historically. The need to see and experience the actual

[37] Ford Madox Ford, *Provence: From Minstrels to the Machine*, ed. by John Coyle (Manchester: Carcanet, 2009), p. 86.

otherness of the world for oneself underwrites the impressionism of his sketches. In rendering the impression as it is felt at the given moment, the sketches attempt to suggest and decipher the truths intuited in those aspects of life which are strange, elusive, and bewildering.

The Problem of Seeing

Staying near Baden-Baden in June 1921 and having finished the manuscript of his '*Sardinia* book', Lawrence wrote to Curtis Brown: 'It is an exact and *real* travel book: no stunt. Time will come when people will want such: when they're sick of stunts and showing off.'[38] A few days later, in a letter to Martin Secker, he reiterated this sentiment, stating 'Myself I think *Sardinia* rather a marvel of veracity. But this is not what people want.'[39] Here he aligns the exactness and precision of his sketches with their realness, and their ability to express veraciously the lived reality of travel. There is similarity between Lawrence's aspiration to produce the impression of reality through the exacting use of language, and Ford's reflection in 'On Impressionism' that the business of the impressionist is 'to produce an illusion of reality'.[40] To convey the reality of visiting a particular place, and to see it as it is, is a central concern of both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia*. Yet, like Ford, Lawrence demonstrates an acute awareness in both works that the aspiration to render reality precisely is frustrated by the infinitely regressive nature of the impression itself. Ford observes how 'Sometimes … it would appear as if for the purpose of the proper bringing out of every slight Impressionist sketch the artist would need an altogether disproportionately enormous

[38] Lawrence, 'To Curtis Brown, 7 June 1921', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by Warren Roberts, James T. Boulton, and Elizabeth Mansfield, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), IV, pp. 26-7 (p. 27).
[39] Lawrence, 'To Martin Secker, 12 June 1921', *Letters*, IV, pp. 35-6 (p. 35).
[40] Ford, 'On Impressionism', p. 269.

frame'.[41] The impressionistic writer envisions the fleeting and ephemeral nature of reality by highlighting the elusively expansive aspect of one's impressions.

This principle is evident in both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* as Lawrence's attempts to render his impressions are countered by an acute awareness of the limited power of language to convey the divergent variousness and otherness of the impression. Matz identifies the 'transmission of immediate and evanescent feelings' as one of 'literary Impressionism's specialities,' but he comments that 'the power they [literary impressionists] thereby get to "make us *see*" does not show us much more than "reduced" appearances.'[42] A prime example of this idea can be found in *Sea and Sardinia* when, looking towards Etna, the narrator reflects upon the strange dislocation of the scene, noting: 'The painters try to paint her, and the photographers to photograph her, in vain.'[43] The attempt to represent Etna singularly is futile, because its impression exists outside of the parameters of mere pictorial description. Matz reminds us that the impression 'falls somewhere between analytic scrutiny and imaginative invention.'[44] Likewise in Lawrence's sketch the narrator observes that the impression of Etna is not merely a matter of careful 'scrutiny' and reproduction, nor is it a product solely of the artistic imaginary. It exists in-between these two attitudes. Matz argues in the case of impressionism that such 'in-betweenness is essential', as 'An impression is never simply a feeling, a thought, or a sensation', but reflects instead 'a mode of experience that is neither sensuous nor rational, neither felt nor thought, but somewhere in between.'[45] In his impression of Etna, Lawrence suggests a similar interplay between both thought and feeling. In the almost anatomical dissection of the scene, the narrator declares:

[41] Ibid., p. 270.
[42] Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics*, p. 3.
[43] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 7.
[44] Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics*, p. 16.
[45] Ibid.

> sometimes, verily, one can feel a new current of her demon magnetism seize one's living tissue, and change the peaceful lie of one's active cells. She makes a storm in the living plasm, and a new adjustment. And sometimes it is like a madness.[46]

While the word 'demon' has in more modern Christian usage come to be commonly associated with the idea of a corrupting or pernicious force or entity, in the context of this passage, Lawrence seems more likely to be alluding to the ancient Greek conception of the daimon. The ancient Greek daimon represents an ambivalent intermediary entity or presence. The 'demon magnetism' Lawrence describes here thus can be better understood as a mediating force, negotiating conflicting impulses which collectively comprise the impression. Sustaining the relationship between the incongruous impulses, the narrator envisages in the impression a perpetual process of necessary 'adjustment'. Yet despite such adjustments the specific nature of the impression remains effervescent. Probing this process, Lawrence invokes the dual meanings of 'plasm' – plasm being associated both with the blood, as in blood plasma, and with the idea of a matrix, mould, or schema. Identifying the impression with the 'storm in the living plasm' he suggests it represents a sort of ever-changing, living schema for conceiving and making sense of one's reality, though it is neither entirely of the body nor of the mind. Instead, it reflects the interplay between the two, with one impulse adjusting another to give an impression of Etna which denies any final conception. The impression of the volcano is of the moment and yet it is neither singular nor unified, being sustained instead through the continual recognition and negotiation of different impulses and feelings.

The idea of the scene affecting a 'storm in the living plasm' also suggests the impression reflects a link between being and knowing at the level of intuition. The impression of Etna

[46] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 8.

denies expression in terms of the visual and prompts the narrator to adopt a more contemplative and mediative attitude in his attempt to render the scene. This is evident as he goes on to observe:

> There are so many photographs, there are so infinitely many water-colour drawings and oil paintings which purport to render Etna. ... You must cross the invisible border. Between the foreground, which is our own, and Etna, pivot of winds in lower heaven, there is a dividing line. You must change your state of mind. A metempsychosis. It is no use thinking you can see and behold Etna and the foreground both at once.[47]

The 'many photographs', 'water-colour drawings and oil paintings' all aspire to present a complete vision of Etna, and yet the impression is too diverse to be represented visually as a unified whole. This typifies Fried's observation that the impressionist pushes 'seeing to its limit'.[48] For Lawrence's narrator, visuality effectively fails as a medium for expressing the depths of association and instinctual meaning implicit in the impression. The impression of Etna is an accumulation of details but one which cannot be considered in its totality. As a 'dividing line', the 'pivot of winds' is an unsurpassable reminder that perceptual totality is not necessarily uniform, complete, or singular. In rendering Etna, Lawrence explores instead how the impression is inherently plural, contradictory, and self-subsuming. To behold the impression in its entirety, he suggests one must undergo a 'metempsychosis', and recognise the radical difference, complexity, and multifariousness it represents.[49]

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[47] Ibid.
[48] Fried, *What Was Literary Impressionism?*, p. 172.
[49] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 8.

This metempsychosis is repeated, though not reversed, at the end of the text, as arriving back on the Italian mainland Lawrence's narrator recollects his early reference to this transformation, reflecting:

> in an hour one changes one's psyche. The human being is a most curious creature. He thinks he has got one soul, and he has got dozens. I felt my sound Sardinian soul melting off me, I felt myself evaporating into the real Italian uncertainty and momentaneity. So I perused the Corriere whilst the metamorphosis took place.[50]

Where the outward journey is associated with metempsychosis, the homeward journey is one of metamorphosis. While 'metempsychosis' suggests the idea of transmigration and crossing over, 'metamorphosis' instead appeals to a more enduring sense of transformation and transfiguration.[51] Ford identifies the impressionistic 'ego' with the 'frank expression of personality' and suggests the self is ultimately manifest in the wholeness of the work.[52] Yet Lawrence's emphasis on the transmigratory and transformative aspects of the impression places a greater emphasis on the everchanging nature of the self. In his sketches, the awareness that one's impressions may change and vary also reflects an understanding of how the self is similarly changeable.

Lawrence's sketches suggest rendering an impression affects a form transformation in that it extends the process of perception and offers the possibility of reaching previously indefinable depths of association and feeling. In *Twilight in Italy*, the narrator asks: 'Does it pass away, or does it only lose its pristine quality? It deepens and intensifies, like experience. The days seem to be darker and richer, there is a sense of power in the strong

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[50] Ibid., p. 170.
[51] In theology, 'metempsychosis' describes the transmigration of the soul after death – the soul's crossing over into a new body.
[52] Ford, 'On Impressionism', pp. 260-1, 2.

air.'[53] The veracity of the impression suggests an intensity which does not 'pass away' but 'deepens', 'intensifies', and transforms itself, illuminating new understandings of the places Lawrence's narrator visits. In the case of *Sea and Sardinia*, Stefania Michelucci has argued that 'Although Lawrence the seer often intrudes heavily in the narration ... the observer nevertheless manages to penetrate into the heart of the country, to catch living images of a pristine naturalness.'[54] Penetrating 'living images of a pristine naturalness' is a good definition for the impression in Lawrence's early travel sketches. While bewildering, and at times inscrutable, the transformative power of the impression – its ability to deepen and intensify experience – allows Lawrence to 'catch' 'pristine' images of the natural relationship between the self and the other in what Michelucci terms 'the ancient, untamed and wild Sardinian land'. To achieve such insight, his sketches suggest one must adopt a broader understanding of vision as an intuitive negotiation of incongruous impulses.

The idea that to render the impression one must adopt a mediative form of vision is also suggested in Lawrence's determination that *Sea and Sardinia* should feature accompanying illustrations. Lawrence was adamant that Seltzer should publish *Sea and Sardinia* alongside illustrations produced by his friend, the artist Jan Juta. Keith Cushman notes how 'an important part of the presentation and color and space in the book is located in the interplay between Lawrence's prose and Juta's pictures.'[55] The generative interplay between different forms of vision underlies the impressionistic ontology of Lawrence's early travel writings. Jonathan Long has described Juta's illustrations as 'stylised impressions of the island, not representations of specific places'.[56] They have a muralistic, timeless quality, which, framed

[53] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 155.
[54] Stefania Michelucci, 'L'Espace Perdu: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writings', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 8.1 (2004), 35-48 (41).
[55] Keith Cushman, '[Review] Jack Stewart, *Color, Space, and Creativity: Art and Ontology in Five British Writers* (Vancouver: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2008)', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 36.1 (2011), 146-50 (para. 8).
[56] Jonathan Long, 'Book Design', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 320-37 (pp. 326).

within Lawrence's account, produces an impression of Sardinia sustained through the mediation of different forms of vision. Cushman notes how: 'Juta's stately, elegiac pictures depict a traditional civilization that will not survive modernity.'[57]

The interaction between image and text suggests a sustained negotiation between the immediacy and spontaneity of Lawrence's narrative, and the contemplative, reflective stillness of Juta's illustrations. This relationship produces a form of perceptual wholeness, which is both immediate and yet eternal. As Long notes, Lawrence's commitment to Juta's illustrations, and the increased cost of producing them in the volume, demonstrates that 'Lawrence had sufficient faith in a young artist to commission his work before either Secker or Seltzer had agreed the concept of colour illustrations', and shows 'the influence he had in the final design of the book – he even drew the map for it.'[58] While this chapter is primarily concerned with the impressionistic aspects of Lawrence's prose, the emphasis upon visuality should not be overlooked, as Cushman argues, since 'Lawrence … argued vigorously for including Juta's paintings as an integral part of the book.'[59] Lawrence's concern with including the illustrations suggests an interest in exploring through the interplay of image and text, the relationship between surfaces and the depths they conceal. There are distinct similarities here with Matz's argument that literary impressionism 'does not choose surfaces and fragments over depths and wholes but makes surfaces show depths, makes fragments suggest wholes, and devotes itself to the undoing of such distinctions.'[60] By presenting the text alongside the illustrations, Lawrence highlights the interplay between surface visuality, and the depth afforded by text. Yet, one cannot pre-empt the other, so that the flat muralistic

[57] Cushman, '[Review] Jack Stewart, *Color, Space, and Creativity: Art and Ontology in Five British Writers'*, (para. 8).
[58] Long, 'Book Design', p. 327.
[59] Keith Cushman, 'Lawrence's Dust-Jackets: A Selection with Commentary', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 28.1/2 (1999), 29-52 (43).
[60] Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics*, p. 1.

visions themselves give the text a unifying symbolic structure, in which Lawrence is not just journeying in the present, but also through time, history, and culture.

The desire to look beyond the simply visual, to the mediative nature of being in the world is similarly suggested in Lawrence's distaste for official sights. In his account of Nuoro in *Sea and Sardinia*, he declares:

> There is nothing to see in Nuoro: which, to tell the truth, is always a relief. Sights are an irritating bore. ... Happy is the town that has nothing to show. What a lot of stunts and affectations it saves![61]

Playing on the different associations of sight, Lawrence contrasts the modern, touristic notion that one travels to see the 'sights', with an impressionistic aspiration to see beyond the purely visual and superficial. For the narrator, the modern spectacle of the sight provokes only feelings of disassociation and irritation; sights are not in themselves inherently meaningful. By revelling in the lack of sights he contests the subject of the travel narrative; delighting in its own lack of such 'sights', the personified town sits 'Happy' in having 'nothing to show'. Through the personification of the town, Lawrence suggests his own authorial uninterest in the surface materiality or visuality of the places he visits. The town effectively becomes a reflection of his own aspiration to render his impressions in a manner which reveals more than a simple catalogue or brochure of sights.

This passage forms of part of a larger critique of the modern dependence on visuality as a means of understanding, which continues in the observation:

> Life is then life, not museum-stuffing. ... Life is life and things are things. I am sick of gaping *things*, even Peruginos. I have had my thrills from Carpaccio and

[61] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 141.

> Botticelli. ... I am sick of “things”, even Perugino. I wouldn’t care a straw if Attila came and demolished every bit of art in Europe. *Basta la mossa*![62]

Within his broader critique of sights, Lawrence’s distaste for museum stuffing suggests a frustration with the alienating mindlessness and arbitrariness of simply seeing more things. The ‘real travel book’, he reflects, should focus less on the materiality of ‘things’ but instead upon the mediative and intuitive processes which constitute one’s ‘life’ and reality. Ford reminds us that the subject of the impressionist text is always ‘the impression, not the correlated chronicle.’[63] Likewise, here, Lawrence too responds to the idea that the power of the travel sketch lies not in its ability to merely provide a catalogue or chronicle of material things, but instead in its ability to make sense of, and provide a schema for understanding, one’s situation in a bewildering world.

The problem of how to enact vision through writing is one to which Lawrence repeatedly returns. Like Ford, Lawrence is interested not only in describing the visual, but in enacting a mode of mediative vision which is able to look through surfaces to the complex and entangled under-deeps of individual perception. In the early travel sketches Lawrence uses the resistant otherness of things to illuminate the deeper patterns of intuition which underly perception.

Form, Control, Resistance

[62] Ibid., pp. 141-2.
[63] Ford, ‘On Impressionism’, pp. 260-80 (p. 267).

The idea of impressionistic form was a contentious point for Lawrence and Ford. Evidence of just how frustrated Lawrence became by Ford's and later by Violet Hunt's obsession with the 'form' of his writings can be found in his letters to Edward Garnett, who replaced Ford as Lawrence's primary literary mentor. In a letter to Garnett written in early April 1912, Lawrence writes of Violet Hunt: 'Form will never be my strong point, she says, but I needn't be quite so bad. "But never mind, Ford and I always call you a genius." I have thanked her for the sarcasm.'[64] Strangely, having mercilessly accused Lawrence of a lack of form throughout their acquaintance, after Lawrence's death Ford would reflect: 'I don't—and I didn't then—think that my influence was any good to him. His gift for form, in his sort of long book, was such that I could suggest very little to him and the rest of his gift was outside my reach.'[65] What at first appeared formless in Lawrence's style slowly resolved itself through Ford's conception of Lawrence's inexplicable 'genius' into something which exerted its own baffling form.[66] As Saunders has noted, 'Ford's attitude to form is characteristically dual' comprising both a 'Flaubertian insistence' upon perfection and 'formal mastery' and a simultaneous sense of the dislocation and disorientation from which the need for form arises.[67] Lawrence's own understanding of form was equally ambiguous. While decrying Ford's '[prejudice] against the inconsequential style' of *The Saga of Siegmund* Lawrence suggests that in fact the novel, with all its eroticism, 'is based on brief notes made from actuality' and 'has true form.' As he terms it here, the idea of 'true form' combines an attentiveness to the actuality of the impression and a recognition that attentiveness produces inconsequentiality and ambiguity. However, while the reality of life might be largely inconsequential, Lawrence suggests that by exactly and precisely recording one's impressions

[64] Lawrence, 'To Edward Garnett, 5 April 1912', *Letters*, I, pp. 381-2 (p. 381).
[65] Ford, *Mightier Than the Sword*, p. 121.
[66] Ibid., p. 99.
[67] Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life: Volume I: The World Before the War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 430-1.

a more intuitive form emerges. If Ford places more emphasis on the need for form to reveal the patterns of one's intuition, Lawrence can be seen instead to identify intuition and instinct as the determinant and precursor to form.

In both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence's emphasis on the inconsequentiality of travel contests Ford's suggestion of the need for formal perfection by instead emphasising formal hybridity. Ezra Pound observed that where Ford aspired to a 'French Flaubertian tradition' concerned with perfection, Lawrence offered something quite different: 'Lawrence had left works manifesting an undeniable talent, rich and all mixed together like *un civet de lièvre*.'[68] Ford too identified the hybridity of Lawrence's early writings. Having read *The Trespasser*, he declared it first 'a rotten work of genius' and later 'a thoroughly bad hybrid book.'[69] And yet, in the case of the travel sketches, Lawrence's use of diverse and hybrid forms is not haphazard or unthinking. Instead by emphasising both the inconsequentiality of the journey, and the spontaneous nature of perception, Lawrence's hybrid style suggests an alternative method for presenting the same 'lingering intuition' reflected in the impression. In this regard, despite Ford's condemnation of the hybridity of Lawrence's style, and the notable differences in style, both authors emphasise the significant link between form and the patterns of intuition, instinct, and association from which arise one's impressions.

For Ford, the production of sustained interest was the directive of form. In 'On Impressionism', he suggests that the relationship between impressionism and pattern stems from the need for impressionistic writing to 'awaken interest' in the minds of its readers. Ford argues, 'you can only keep interest awakened by keeping alive, by whatever means you may

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[68] Brita Lindberg-Seyersted, *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship*, ed. by Brita Lindberg-Seyersted (London: Faber, 1982), p. 99.
[69] Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 9 September 1910', in *Letters*, I, p. 178; Ford Madox Ford, *Portraits from Life* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1937), p. 118.

have at your disposal, the surprise of your reader.'[70] To do this the writer must maintain a perpetual pattern of 'arguing, illustrating and startling and arguing, startling and illustrating—until at the very end your contentions will appear like a ravelled skein.'[71] It seems almost axiomatic to observe that for Ford the impression must be interesting – but it is important because, in his view, the cyclical fluctuation of interest sustains the impression. He continues:

> You will do this by methods of surprise, of fatigue, by passages of sweetness in your language, by passages suggesting the sudden and brutal shock of suicide. You will give him passages of dullness, so that your bright effects may seem more bright; you will alternate, you will dwell for a long time upon an intimate point; you will seek to exasperate so that you may the better enchant.[72]

For Ford, such patterns of interest and uninterest sustain a relative contrast, through which the vividness of a particular impression can be most accurately produced. In Lawrence's early travel sketches there is a similar emphasis on the productive cycle of interest and uninterest. Jeff Wallace argues that 'the oscillation between death of interest and startled attention begins to feel like a structuring pattern in *Twilight in Italy*, often framing the encounter with people or places.'[73] Wallace observes how detached Lawrence's narrators become from their surroundings during long sustained periods of travel, with an emphasis on the temporary finality of the narrator's observation: 'Perhaps one's interest is dead'.[74] But, Wallace argues, such moments of numb uninterest open up new opportunities for understanding. One needs to be able to become uninterested in order for new interest to arise. For Lawrence, moments of dissolution and uninterest give one's memorable impressions their striking clarity.

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[70] Ford, 'On Impressionism', p. 273.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid., p. 279.
[73] Jeff Wallace, 'The Death of Interest: D. H. Lawrence, Geoff Dyer and Literary Tourism', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 43.1/2 (2018), 4-24 (4).
[74] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 91.

The struggle to express one's impressions wholly here anticipates and sustains the possibility of realising a renewed clarity of interest and understanding. The contrast between moments of interest and uninterest enables the narrator to work out, through a process of comparison and differentiation, the truthfulness manifested in the otherness of one's impressions. Ford was conscious of this probing aspect of Lawrence's style, observing that Lawrence's use of language troubled him because 'It wasn't that his words were either jaunty or offensive. He uttered them as if they had been not so much assertions as gropings for truth.'[75] This *groping for truth* sits in opposition to the controlled 'working guide' to impressionism Ford sets out in 'On Impressionism', and in particular the principle 'that the first impression with which you present him [the reader] will be so strong that it will be all that you can ever do to efface it, to alter it or even quite slightly to modify it.'[76] In opposition, Lawrence's style draws its intensity from the oscillation between moments of interest, and subsequent uninterest. The contrast between interest and uninterest allows Lawrence to stress the open-ended nature of intuition and the impression. His sketches render the successive nature of intuition in order to suggest the open-ended nature of the instinctual understanding manifest in the impression. Ford's conception of pattern reflects in part his belief in the need for (what Rebecca Bowler has termed) 'fidelity through inclusivity'.[77] By this Bowler seeks to explain Ford's belief that truthfulness is produced through the wholeness of the text. Ford himself suggests that having awoken and sustained interest, the author should draw upon 'the master-string of that seeming confusion' in order to reveal 'the whole pattern of the carpet, [and] the whole design of the net-work'.[78] From this perspective, while both Lawrence and Ford appreciate the role of pattern in helping the individual make sense of their impressions, Lawrence's sketches

[75] Ford, *Mightier Than the Sword*, p. 108.
[76] Ford, 'On Impressionism', p. 265.
[77] Rebecca Bowler, *Literary Impressionism: Vision and Memory in Dorothy Richardson, Ford Madox Ford, H. D. and May Sinclair* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 53.
[78] Ibid., p. 273.

challenge Ford's belief that such patterns of intuition can ever exist or be conceived wholly, suggesting instead that such patterns are forever unfinished and unfolding. Yet this differentiation is at once dissatisfying for the performativity of Ford's metaphor indicates a wry awareness that any perception of wholeness is illusory. Thus, although Ford may identify the perception of pattern with the author's attempt to render reality, he remains conscious that such wholeness is illusory and borne out of the mind of the observer. Therefore, while Lawrence's use of pattern suggests more overtly the incomplete, and open-ended nature of understanding afforded by intuition, he shares with Ford an appreciation that such patterns produce only the illusion of reality.

Lawrence's awareness that pattern produces only the illusion of reality and understanding is particularly evident in his allusions to the unreality produced by maps. In *Twilight in Italy*, having reached the top of a hill, the narrator is startled by the expansiveness of the view beyond. He describes how:

> looking out over the intervening valley at the long lake of Zurich, spread there beyond with its girdle of low hills, like a relief-map. I could not bear to look at it, it was so small and unreal. I had a feeling as if it were false, a large relief-map that I was looking down upon, and which I wanted to smash.[79]

Here Lawrence identifies the image of the 'relief map' with a flattening of reality – a relief-map depicts elevation with shading or contour lines meaning the impression of three dimensions is expressed in two. He suggests parallels between the flattened image of reality reflected in the relief map, and the dissatisfying, flattened impression rendered in language.

[79] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 207.

The map is for Lawrence too removed from reality; the impression of order and relative significance affects feelings of removal from the living moment itself.

If Ford's argument is one in favour of realising truth through the decipherment of the whole, Lawrence's attitude is one of recognising the truth implicit in its incompleteness. In Lawrence's travel writings, the strange shiftiness of the documented impression stems from the suggestion of the processional, incomplete nature of truth. The notion of truth as a form of pattern paradoxically sustains an open-ended process of revelation in his sketches. This idea is comparable to T. E. Hulme's observation that 'There is a difficulty in finding a comprehensive scheme of the cosmos, because there is none. The cosmos is only *organised* in parts, the rest is cinders.'[80] Likewise, Lawrence's resistance to fixity and rigidity in the case of pattern similarly suggests that there is no 'comprehensive scheme' for the impression, since it is unified in its (to adopt Hulme's phrasing once more) 'essentially imperfect, chaotic, and cinder-like' nature.[81] The perception and process of pattern-making might produce order and significance in one's impressions in Lawrence's sketches, but this order is a reflection of the form of one's engagement with the world, as opposed to the nature of the world itself.

Continuities exist here with Ford's use of the idea of travel as a means of conceiving the uncertain process of understanding. Analysing *The Good Soldier*, Saunders argues that for the narrator John Dowell, 'What he says about travel is true of all his experiences'.[82] In attempting to 'put this thing down', Dowell uses the subject of travel to express the fragmented and divergent nature of the impression.

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[80] T. E. Hulme, 'Cinders', in *Selected Writings*, ed. by Patrick McGuinness (Manchester: Carcanet, 1998), pp. 18-36 (p. 20).
[81] Ibid.
[82] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life: Volume I*, p. 430.

> the world is full of places to which I want to return ... Not one of them did we see more than once, so that the whole world for me is like spots of colour in an immense canvas. Perhaps if it weren't so I should have something to catch hold of now.[83]

Saunders argues that the form of Dowell's narrative reflects the same disparate scattering of recollections made manifest in the 'spots of colour in an immense canvas' produced by travel.[84] While perception may be continuous, the recollections and associations which influence it are discontinuous and fragmentary. Bowler notes how for impressionists 'What makes writing possible is the ability to hold on to one image "steadily" enough, and "for long enough"'.[85] Bowler identifies in the impression a tension 'between the moving, whirling world and the stillness and concentration needed to capture' its complex depths.[86] For Lawrence, particularly in *Sea and Sardinia*, this tension is reflected in the contrast between the mobility of travel and the need to decipher the immediate otherness of the present moment. For Dowell, the concentration required to 'put this thing down', and to 'return' to these 'spots of colour', is forever frustrated, affronted and denied by the perpetual unfolding of the impression. Significant meaning is forever at risk of being subsumed by the proliferation of insignificant and inconsequential detail. Lawrence's narrators similarly find difficulty in expressing their recollected impressions – but in their case, the difficulty arises in the tendency for the pressing sensations of travel to overwhelm and bury the impression in ambiguity, leaving only a residual intensity of feeling.

[83] Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion*, ed. by Kenneth Womack and William Baker (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2003), pp. 43-4.
[84] Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life: Volume I*, p. 430-1.
[85] Bowler, *Literary Impressionism*, p. 198-9.
[86] Ibid.

In his travel sketches Lawrence repeatedly identifies the perceived difficulty of concentrating one's mind on a particular moment, with the sense that one's subject is affrontively, and opposingly, other. In the 'Italians in Exile' sketch in *Twilight in Italy*, for example, having met the anarchic Italian emigres the narrator reflects, with some sadness:

> I liked them so much; but, for some reason or other, my mind stopped like clockwork if I wanted to think of them and of what their lives would be, their future. It was as if some curious negative magnetism arrested my mind, prevented it from working, the moment I turned it towards these Italians.[87]

Where Dowell struggles to concentrate for long enough to 'put this thing down', Lawrence struggles even to focus his mind upon his own recollection. The detachment of travel produces a detachment of feeling, in which emotion and recollection negate one another. Yet where Dowell's trouble stems to some extent from the diffuse coherence of his experiences, for Lawrence's narrator the difficulty arises as an affront – a 'curious negative magnetism' – resulting from both the disjunction and perceived continuity between feeling and recollection.

In this regard, while Ford and Lawrence both masterfully manipulate the form of their impressions, for Lawrence, the unignorable otherness of the world produces an overt sense that this control is always at risk of being lost. The intensity of the struggle for expression is regularly reflected physically in both texts. For example, in *Twilight in Italy*, passing by some men attempting to control a bull, the narrator is momentarily captivated by the struggle between the people and the beast. He observes:

[87] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 204.

> They were hanging on to an immense pale bullock, which was slung up to be shoed. And it was lunging and kicking with terrible energy. It was strange to see that mass of pale, soft-looking flesh working with such violent frenzy, convulsed with violent, active frenzy, whilst men and women hung on to it with ropes, hung on and weighed it down. But again it scattered some of them in its terrible convulsion.[88]

For Lawrence's narrator the scene leaves a lasting impression of humanity's struggle with the powerful, unrestrainable resurgence of history. But it is also reflective of the individual's struggle to retain an instinctual understanding of his situation in the world: the bull's 'immense' form, forever at risk of tearing loose from its bounds, suggests the perplexing nature of the impression itself. The impression here is manifested in the bull's convulsive frenzy, but also in the individual's attempt to *hang on to it*, to sling the impression up on the page, and make it useful. The impression for Lawrence reflects the perpetual struggle between sensuous, physical, and frenzied perception, and rational control. The people seem to momentarily master the bull, just as Lawrence's narrator appears to finally complete the impression, but they are both ultimately thrown off and left and scattered, like Dowell's spots of paint on a canvas. Like Ford, Lawrence finds in this struggle an intensity of vision, even if it is one prone to convulsion and disarray.

By emphasising the uncertain extent of individual understanding, Lawrence's sketches reflect a typical contradiction in impressionistic writing, in that they attempt to render perceptual totality, and yet actively resist and are repulsed by the idea of achieving a state of completeness. In *Twilight in Italy*, for example, the narrator expresses feelings of opposition

[88] Ibid., p. 225.

and doubt when encountering the seemingly unreachable otherness and finality of 'Il Duro'. He writes:

> It was as if he were a fairy, a faun, and had no soul. But he gave me a feeling of vivid sadness, a sadness that gleamed like phosphorescence. ... It was too complete, too final, too defined. There was no yearning, no vague merging off into mistiness. . . . [*sic*] He was as clear and fine as semi-transparent rock, as a substance in moonlight.[89]

Affronted by the man's apparent completeness, Lawrence's narrator looks for hidden depths, resorting to metaphor and simile. But this produces a contradiction, for despite the apparent hardness of 'Il Duro', the narrator adopts an increasingly allusive mode of narration, which results in an increasingly disparate and ambiguous rendering of the man who is repeatedly identified as unnervingly complete and final. In his analysis of literary impressionism, Fried argues that 'blankness', or in this case completeness and transparency, prevent 'imaginative expansion of any sort'.[90] Yet, in the case of 'Il Duro' this understanding is not wholly satisfactory. For though the impression of the man as 'too final, [and] too defined' suggests blankness, when rendered this blankness becomes almost prismatic. In this regard, though the narrator is bewildered by the apparent inscrutability of Il Duro, the rendering of the impression also produces a dissolution of its apparent finality, allowing new understanding to coalesce. Lawrence finds both frustration and inspiration in the tendency for the impression to fragment and dissolve as it is deciphered.

In the early sketches, the act of rendering the impression continually suggests new opportunities to better understand one's situation in the world, through imaginative

[89] Ibid., p. 176-7.
[90] Fried, *What Was Literary Impressionism?*, p. 172.

engagements with that which otherwise appears inscrutably and unutterably other. The narrator identifies a similarly adverse feeling in the character of the 'Giuseppino'. He notes how 'I could feel a new spirit in him, something strange and pure and slightly frightening. He wanted something which was beyond me.'[91] The intuitive 'feel[ing]' that the 'Giuseppino' inspires in the narrator is frustrated and obstructed by its inexpressibility. However, in this case the actuality of the feeling is thrown into doubt by the narrator's inability to express its reality. The early travel sketches are permeated by an anxiety that the very 'issue' at stake might be 'something which was beyond me [Lawrence, the author]'. And yet, paradoxically, in highlighting that the world beyond the self is ultimately beyond any final conception the narrator confirms its actuality.

The desire to identify and decipher the immediate otherness at the heart of the impression is similarly evident in the narrator's reaction to Mount Eryx in *Sea and Sardinia*. On seeing the mountain, the narrator states:

> I confess my heart stood still. But is mere historical fact so strong, that what one learns in bits from books can move one so? Or does the very word call an echo out of the dark blood? It seems so to me. It seems to me from the darkest recesses of my blood comes a terrible echo at the name of Mount Eryx: something quite unaccountable.[92]

The effect of the mountain is startling, the impression intense. Yet the narrator challenges the notion that this effect is produced by the mere aggregation of 'historical fact[s]'. Instead, he suggests that the intensity of the impression is produced by something more 'unaccountable' – an 'echo out of the dark blood'. The idea of an echo implies that the

[91] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 202.
[92] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 37.

feeling precedes the impression, and yet is only fully realised as part of it. This reciprocal aspect of the impression is sustained, to a degree, by the power of the imagination, as the unsettling and perplexing nature of reality prompts the narrator into closer and more intuitive investigations of the strange otherness of the world.

Lawrence's emphasis on the elusive and opposing nature of the impression achieves a particular prominence in his conception of the 'spirit of place'. In his attempts to render the impression of a particular locale, Lawrence emphasises the strange, unreachable otherness which distinguishes one particular place from another, with the sense that language sits in opposition to it. At Cagliari, in *Sea and Sardinia*, he writes:

> The spirit of place is a strange thing. Our mechanical age tries to override it. But it does not succeed. In the end the strange, sinister spirit of place, so diverse and so adverse in differing places, will smash our mechanical oneness into smithereens, and all that we think the real thing will go off with a pop, and we shall be left staring.[93]

Here the impression or 'spirit' of a particular place contradicts and denies the unifying effect of language. Language is suggested to represent a mechanism for simply reproducing the same old mindless 'mechanical oneness'. Through language one is prone to simply project pre-existing and habitual feelings upon the world, in a manner which fails to retain an awareness of the reality of its otherness. In opposition, the 'spirit of place' is a 'strange' and 'sinister' reminder of the multifarious actuality of the world, existing independently of the subjective reality reflected in the self. The otherness at the heart of one's impressions not only has the potential to deny complete and categorical expression, but to actively undermine the finality of individual understanding. Appealing to this idea, the early sketches represent a

[93] Ibid., p. 57.

sustained attempt to render the strange accumulation of associations and impulses which constitute the continuous heterogeneity of one's impressions.

The 'diverse' otherness Lawrence discovers within one's impressions of place suggests similarity with Ford's conception of 'atmosphere'. In *The Soul of London*, while attempting to identify the moment at which one becomes conscious of London, Ford asks: 'Is it where the glow on the sky is no longer seen that "the country" ends and the influence of London begins?'[94] Ford here plays on the dual meaning of glow; glow meaning both radiant light, but also (in more archaic usage) to stare. The point 'where the glow on the sky is no longer seen' also reflects the moment at which seeing becomes unseeing, and the impression dissolves. Where, he asks, does one begin to envision London? Is there a distinct moment in which seeing replaces unseeing? And do one's impressions really have beginnings or endings? The glow of London may no longer be illuminating the sky, but Ford notes that one may still have an acute sense of its presence. The impression aligns with a heightened sense of coming into proximity with the subject, however diverse and adverse it may be.

For Lawrence, the idea of atmosphere provides a means of affirming the actuality of otherness through the moment-by-moment recognition of difference and contrast. In *Twilight in Italy*, he evokes the otherness of his surroundings by first suggesting the long monotony of the 'open roads' through long and circumlocutory phrases, and then contrasting it with references to the strange atmosphere which subsequently arises. For example:

> the crucifixes seem to create a new atmosphere over the whole of the countryside, a darkness, a weight in the air that is so unnaturally bright and rare with the reflection from the snows above, a darkness hovering just over the earth.[95]

[94] Ford, *The Soul of London*, p. 25.
[95] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 91.

The act of rendering or *sketching* the scene – requiring a process of intense observation, reflection, and revision – ultimately results in a form of veracious disclosure. From the dense phrasing, and intense imagery, erupts a form of visionary clarity made more vivid by its contrast with what has come before. Strangeness displaces monotony, and in turn the impression is sustained by the perception of difference. As such, Lawrence does not suggest that the impression occurs in isolation, but instead that it arises through the sustained perception and affront of otherness.

Lawrence's sketches suggest how the strange and elusive otherness of the world tends to resist the fixity and rigidity of representation in language. The hybridity of his travel sketches explores the individual's intuitive responsiveness to the multifarious otherness which distinguishes his subjects. Lawrence's disregard for formal perfection is juxtaposed with his appeal to the subconscious and mentally unknowable aspects of the impression which seem to forever subvert and undermine the unity of the whole. In rendering the affront of otherness, his sketches enact the process of becoming conscious of the material actuality of the exterior world.

Queer Effects of Real Life

The difficulty Lawrence found in precisely identifying the nature of the experience he was attempting to render is evident in his difficulties in deciding on a title for *Sea and Sardinia*. Writing in August 1921 to Scofield Thayer, the American poet and then editor of *The Dial*, Lawrence said of the book that 'it was partly your [Thayer's] asking for travel sketches à la

Twilight in Italy which made me write it'.[96] From January 1921 to the end of March he suggested various titles with subtle changes in emphasis. References from early January describe it as a 'dash to Sardinia'.[97] Later it is described as a series of 'Sardinian Snaps', before becoming 'a little travel-book' with the initial title of 'Diary of a Trip to Sardinia'.[98] Finally, writing to Robert Mountsier, his literary agent, on 31 March 1921 Lawrence, undecided, declared:

> – Use what title you like for *Sardinia*:
>
> – A Moment of Sardinia
>
> A Swoop on Sardinia
>
> A Dash through Sardinia
>
> Sardinian Films or
>
> Film of Sicily and Sardinia
>
> – The "Diary" title was merely provisional.[99]

The title which Mountsier ultimately attached to the text, *Sea and Sardinia*, diminishes the various emphases which Lawrence's suggestions impart to the text. There is the sense of the text as a 'moment'; the sense that the text is a 'swoop[ing]' transient motion; and the feeling of an almost cinematic aggregation of multiple moments in Sardinia. This frustrated struggle to attach a title to the text plays out at a macro level in the limited capacity for language to express the essence of the subject at stake.[100] Lawrence's suggestions for various titles for the text reflect his struggle to express the unifying idea of the sketches without diminishing the

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[96] Lawrence, 'To Scofield Thayer, 17 August 1921', *Letters*, IV, pp. 72-3 (p. 73).
[97] Lawrence, 'To Eleanor Farjeon, 20 January 1921', *Letters*, III, p. 649.
[98] Lawrence, 'To Robert Mountsier, 25 January 1921', *Letters*, III, pp. 652-4 (p. 653); Lawrence, 'To Mary Cannan, [12 February 1921]', *Letters*, III, pp. 663-5 (p. 664).
[99] Lawrence, 'To Robert Mountsier, 31 March 1921', *Letters*, vol. 3, pp. 696-7 (p. 696).
[100] Hulme reminds us that 'The covers of a book are responsible for much error. They set a limit round certain convenient groups of ideas, when there are really no limits', which is particularly true in this case. See: Hulme, 'Cinders', p. 22.

momentary nature of the scenes they describe. There is in his proposed titles a significant sense of the tension between the desire to express momentary feelings exactly, and the realisation that one's impressions are always retrospective records of the past. This is particularly evident in Lawrence's suggestion of a 'Dash through Sardinia'; to dash is to travel quickly across a region, but one can also dash oneself up against, or dash through something. In this context, to dash through Sardinia produces an ironic double meaning, as on one level to dash through Sardinia is to only dash up against its surface, while on another it is to dash through, and to look beneath, this surface. In this double meaning, Lawrence suggests a tension between the idea of the work as a superficial account of the journey across the island, and the idea that in rendering his impressions he is revealing the hidden under-deeps of feeling and association which produce the reality of being in Sardinia.

Lawrence's attempts to render his impressions in both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* typify Ford's argument that the impressionist seeks to suggest the associative and recollective reality of human life.[101] In 'On Impressionism', Ford writes:

> I suppose that Impressionism exists to render those queer effects of real life that are like so many views seen through bright glass—through glass so bright that whilst you perceive through it a landscape or a backyard, you are aware that, on its surface, it reflects a face of a person behind you.[102]

The 'queer', reflective effect Ford identifies appeals to the perplexity of the impression. The word 'perplexing' stems from the Latin *per*, meaning (in this instance) forward or through, and *plexus*, meaning entanglement or folding. The 'queer' effect of the impression Ford describes is perplexing in that it suggests that our perception of the present is forever

[101] Ford, 'On Impressionism', p. 267.
[102] Ibid.

entangled with and influenced by our impression of the past. The present and past are forever infolding in the impression. Ford continues: 'the whole of life is really like that; we are almost always in one place with our minds somewhere quite other.'[103] With the entanglement of past and present in mind, the other place of the impression reflects a state of perpetual reference and association.

For Lawrence, the 'queer effects' of life as they are felt in the impression are evidence of the interrelated and perplexing nature of reality. For example, in *Sea and Sardinia*, while observing the Sardinian coast, the narrator writes: 'Extraordinary how the heathy, moor-like hills come near the sea … It is like Cornwall, like the Land's End region. Here and there, in the distance, are peasants working on the lonely landscape.'[104] In this instance, while the narrator observes the 'heathy' Sardinian hills in the present, they are instinctively overlaid with reminiscences of Cornwall; the use of the simile creates a 'queer' association like that described by Ford. Extending this association to include the 'peasants' working the land, and the 'lonely landscape' which surrounds them, Lawrence suggests an unfolding form of intuitive symbolism. The individuals labour 'lonely' and isolated, and yet through association their labours reflect a unity of human experience stretching from the Sardinian hills to the Cornish coast.

Extending this comparison with Cornwall, Lawrence wakes up on a separate occasion and, looking out of his window, declares:

[103] Ibid.
[104] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 71.

> I could hardly believe my eyes it was so like England, like Cornwall in the bleak parts, or Derbyshire uplands. ... it was all so like Cornwall, or a part of Ireland, that the old nostalgia for the Celtic regions began to spring up in me.[105]

The 'queer', expansive effect of the impression here sustains contradictory feelings of disbelief and revelation. The narrator identifies a plurality of associations, noting the scene is 'like England, like Cornwall ... or Derbyshire uplands ... or a part of Ireland.' These associations produce feelings of revelatory understanding and transformation as the spirit of the 'Celtic regions ... spring[s] up in me [the narrator]' – not just in mind or body, but in the unifying 'me'. But this sense of transformative understanding also inspires doubt. He notes: 'But perhaps it is not Celtic at all: Iberian. Nothing is more unsatisfactory than our conception of what is Celtic and what is not Celtic. I believe there never were any Celts, as a race.—As for the Iberians—!'[106] While the narrator repeatedly refers to the 'Celtic' he is left unsatisfied – there is 'Nothing more unsatisfactory than our conception of what is Celtic and what is not Celtic.' The fragmentary and divergent associations of the 'Celtic' thus come to contrast and contest the reality of the 'Iberian' coast which lies immediately before the narrator. The present interrupts and adjusts past understandings, producing new meanings, just as the impression represents a mediation of perceptual moments – both past and present. The truth of the impression is both of the present and not; Lawrence's emphasis on the associative aspect of the impression suggests an attempt to determine a more vital link between subjective reality and the actuality of the circumambient universe.

Autobiographically, Lawrence's vivid evocation of Cornwall here is evidence of the generative relationship between the sensory and instinctual impulses in the present, and the recollective power of memory. Reflecting on Lawrence's life in Cornwall, Andrew Harrison

[105] Ibid., p. 81.
[106] Ibid.

has argued that '"Cornwall" was one of Lawrence's most sustained fictional creations at a moment of crisis when he was insisting that England in war-time was an unreal place which must be supplanted by the imagination.'[107] Harrison supports this argument by referring to Bertrand Russell's recollection that Lawrence thought '"facts are quite unimportant, only "truths" matter' and that London as a '"fact" not a "truth" … doesn't really exist'.[108] For Harrison, 'If "London" was an untruth which could be destroyed by a collective realignment of thinking, so "Cornwall" could be constructed as a truth by sheer force of persuasion.'[109] This effect is taken even further in *Sea and Sardinia* when Lawrence subsequently reconstructs Cornwall in the Mediterranean, as the combined force of association and 'sheer' authorial persuasiveness encourage the reader to reject the 'untruth[ful]' image of an isolated Celtic Cornwall, and instead envision Cornwall as connected to, and forming part of, a larger Iberian whole. While the details of the scene may be Celtic, when unified through the 'me' figure of the 'author' the impression transforms the scene into something typically Iberian.

This sense of Lawrence negotiating at any given moment, a plurality of feelings, recollections, and associations can be usefully compared to Ford's reflection that:

> any piece of Impressionism ... is the record of the impression of a moment; it is not a sort of rounded, annotated record of a set of circumstances—it is the record of the recollection in your mind of a set of circumstances that happened ten years ago—or ten minutes. It might even be the impression of the moment ...[110]

The ease of Ford's style seems to imply a simplicity and clarity of vision, and yet, on closer inspection, this definition is driven by its own ambiguity. Saunders has demonstrated the

[107] Andrew Harrison, '"A New Continent of the Soul": D. H. Lawrence, Porthcothan and the Necessary Fiction of Cornwall', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, 4.3 (2017), 33-43 (37).
[108] Ibid, 36.
[109] Ibid, 37.
[110] Ford, 'On Impressionism', p. 267.

concealed complexity of this passage, observing how Ford 'starts by placing the impression in the past', in order 'to tie Impressionism to the representation of the processes of memory,' but 'then he swivels round and says it might even be the present: not just "a moment" but "the moment"' – an adjustment which along with complicating the location of the impression also casually distinguishes 'between the indefinite and definite articles'.[111] For Saunders, this 'movement, of having an impression, then having it corrected, sounds very much like the way he [Ford] appeared to imagine the Impressionist proceeding, by making a first impression, then modifying it.'[112] It is a kind of self-conscious performance of the heuristic moment – the transition between definite and indefinite articles draws attention to the ambiguity and vagueness which hides behind the deceit of objective and definite language. In Ford's impressionistic works the moment of cognition and clarity almost inevitably gives way to an ambiguity which requires decipherment.

In both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence employs a similar swivelling effect when attempting to identify the moment at which the impression becomes consciousness. In the opening sketch of *Twilight in Italy*, 'The Crucifix Across the Mountains', the narrator describes the long walk through Bavaria into the Tyrolean alps. Juxtaposed against the 'strange, remote country' with its 'clear, open roads' and 'factory-made' crucifix, the narrator recalls:

> I was startled into consciousness one evening, going alone over a marshy place at the foot of the mountains, when the sky was pale and unearthly, invisible, and the hills were nearly black. At a meeting of the tracks was a crucifix, and between the

[111] Max Saunders, 'Ford's Impressionism', in *Ford Madox Ford: Literary Networks and Cultural Transformations*, ed. by Andrzej Gąsiorek and Daniel Moore (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2008), pp. 151-66 (p. 152).
[112] Ibid.

> feet of the Christ a handful of withered poppies. It was the poppies I saw, then the Christ.[113]

Just as Ford begins by locating the impression in the past, Lawrence begins by recollecting the moment at which he 'was startled into consciousness'. The source of the impression is retrospective, and yet recalling first the 'crucifix' and then the 'withered poppies', the narrator immediately doubles back on himself, correcting the recollection, and instead emphasising that it was in fact the 'poppies' and not the 'Christ' that he encountered. The narrator subtly relocates the impression in the present as the need to make sense of the truth it contains requires a negotiation on the part of the narrator. Yet, at the same time, the impression is subsequently removed from the very impulse which prompted it; where the poppies initially are recalled having appeared vivid, they are subsequently found to be 'withered'.

The wholeness of the impression – the entanglement of recollected and present perceptual moments – produces a meaningful whole which illuminates the epochal motions which Lawrence identifies in history. He suggests an acute awareness of how one's sense of the past can interrupt and affect one's impressions in the present. In *Sea and Sardinia*, while contemplating the town of Orosei, the narrator reflects that 'It seems so long since life left it and memory transfigured it into pure glamour'.[114] Here the departure of human life results in the transfiguration of the vision, just as the passage of time gives the impression a rosy tinge of significance. In emphasising the temporal aspect of the impression, Lawrence suggests that the present is a future with its roots in the past. The 'timeless glamour' of the place is 'timeless' because it has been transfigured by memory. The generative aspect of the impression transforms the view of the almond trees, river, and sea into the vision of

[113] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, pp. 91-2.
[114] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 149.

‘wonderful Orosei’ with its ‘reedy river, throbbing with light and the sea’s nearness, and all so lost, in a world long gone by, lingering as legends linger on.’[115] The ‘queer’ reflectiveness of the impression not only produces an intense form of vision, but transforms the very vision itself, translating landscape into a symbol of ‘the timeless glamour of those Middle Ages when men were lordly and violent and shadowed with death.’[116] There is something romantic, yet simultaneously destructive in this vision: a craving for the kind of factual irreverence seen in ‘On Impressionism’ in Ford’s recollection of Henry VIII as ‘a gentleman with red whiskers who always went first through a door.’[117] Here, Lawrence introduces an ironic double meaning as he recalls the line from the Catholic Office of the Dead prayer cycle: ‘Timor mortis conturbat me.’[118] Translating loosely as ‘The fear of death disturbs me’, the quotation in its original context refers to the fear of divine judgment and pays homage to the dead. The prayer suggests that by recalling all of those who have previously died one is reminded of one’s own mortality. However, Lawrence inverts this idea. Instead, he uses the phrase to suggest that by remembering that the past was once a living reality, one becomes more alive to the finite nature of one’s own being. As a metaphor for the impression, Lawrence’s use of the phrase reflects the insight that without a keen awareness of how the self, and one’s recollection of the past, influences the processes of perception, the present assumes a deathly insignificance.

The idea that the impression transforms the present through the observer’s recollection and imagination of the past, lies at the very heart of *Twilight in Italy*. In an early version of ‘The Crucifix Across the Mountains’, entitled ‘Christs in the Tyrol’, the narrator sees a martertafel and observes:

[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ford, ‘On Impressionism’, p. 265.
[118] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 149.

> I am strongly reminded of Walther von der Vogelweide and the German mediaeval spirit. Detached, he sits, and dreams, and broods, in his little golden crown of thorns, and his little cloak of red flannel, that some peasant woman has stitched for him.[119]

The 'dream[ing]' and 'brood[ing]' of the Christus, associated with the figure of Walther von der Vogelweide, also embodies the figure of the narrator himself. 'Detached' and brooding, Lawrence locates the narrator's reminiscence at the heart of the impression itself. He is both within the scene and unconsciously removed from it. In his state of contemplation, the Christus is identified as a symbol of present absence, just as the literary impressionist is revealed through the form of the impression itself. But this sense of the Christus being both present and absent also reflects those 'queer effects' of real life identified by Ford. While in the later version of the essay, published in *Twilight in Italy*, the reference to Walther von der Vogelweide is removed, Lawrence also inserts the earlier passage addressing the family of Bavarian peasants. In doing so, he establishes a more immediate point of association with the 'peasant woman' of the earlier scene now looming out of darkness once more in this impression of the Christus and its 'cloak of red flannel'. The narrator's impression of the Christus thus marks a moment of association and recollection. Lawrence suggests the entanglement of temporalities which constitutes one's reality.

Between the present and the past, the impression in *Sea and Sardinia* allows Lawrence to explore the individual's bewildering situation in a present which is always dissolving into the vast actuality of history. When departing from Palermo on the steamer, the narrator observes how 'Slowly, slowly, we turn round: and as the ship turns, our hearts turn.'[120] The motion of the ship initiates and sustains an embodied sense of mental transition. Continuing, the

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[119] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, pp. 45-6.
[120] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 30.

narrator observes how ‘Palermo fades from our consciousness: the Naples boat, the disembarking crowds, the rattling carriages to the land—the great *City of Trieste*—all fades from our heart.’[121] The motion of the ship suggests the continuity of the impression, but also its perpetual dissolution into an ever-expansive past. Matz argues that:

> the impression has no location, but conveys perception and understanding from one point to the next ... it combines present and past experience, connects the mind to the body, and ... attains to immediate illumination more lastingly meaningful than the most timeless concept.[122]

In the impression of a disappearing Palermo, the intermingling of past and present produces a ‘lastingly meaningful’ effect – for the traveller, untied from the dock and from the solid ground of objectivity, the impression is sustained through the continued negotiation of the recollected past and timeless present.

The persistent aggregation of new impulses within the impression is associated in Lawrence’s sketches with a feeling of timelessness which surpasses any single vision or concept. The emphasis on the accumulative nature of the impression in Lawrence’s sketches is similar to Ford’s emphasis on the impression of place as a ‘human aggregation’.[123] For Ford, the impression of a place could be revealed by negotiating the perplexing entanglement and mediation of the ‘momentous happenings’, ‘little bits’, and ‘intense emotions’ one associates with it.[124] He reflects in *The Soul of London*:

> A really ideal book of the kind would not contain “writing about” a town ...
> Instead there would be a picture of one, or two, or three hat factories, peopled

[121] Ibid.
[122] Matz, *Literary Impressionism*, p. 6.
[123] Ford, *The Soul of London*, p. 11.
[124] Ibid., p. 3, 22.

> with human beings, where slow and clinging veils of steam waver over vats ... And there would be conveyed the idea that all these human beings melt, as it were, into the tide of humanity as all these vapours melt into the overcast skies.[125]

Taking this passage from Ford as a framework for understanding how Lawrence constructs this impression of Palermo *at a distance*, one can observe that he introduces three individual snapshots of 'the Naples boat, the disembarking crowds, the rattling carriages to the land'. These are then immediately interrupted by the overwhelming image of the ship '—the great *City of Trieste*', which itself dissolves into the impression of the 'pale-grey void of the sea beyond.' Yet, where Ford suggests that the impression dissolves like 'vapours' in an overcast sky, producing an inscrutable ambiguity bordering on blankness, for Lawrence the dissolution of the vision of the ship gives way to an increasing attentiveness to the present and to 'the wisps of gleamy light' on the horizon. For Ford, the continual nature of perception results in an awareness of the blankness of the impression which must be deciphered retrospectively. In Lawrence's impressionism, however, the tendency to dwell on retrospective things prompts only feelings of inertia, stagnancy, and disassociation in the present. His impressionism is, in this sense, future-orientated in that it suggests that though one's perception is firmly rooted in the past, it is revitalised by the possibility of new perceptual moments – new understanding being forever manifested in the other 'wisps of gleamy light—out there' on the horizon.[126]

Yet, while the past may provide a means of accessing the future, Lawrence repeatedly emphasises the need to decipher its perplexing otherness. Sitting on the omnibus later in *Sea and Sardinia*, he notes a feeling that:

[125] Ibid.
[126] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 30.

> This was not all known. This was not all worked out. Life was not only a process of rediscovering backwards. It is that, also: and it is that intensely. ... But this morning in the omnibus I realise that, apart from the great rediscovery backwards, which one *must* make before one can be whole at all, there is a move forwards. There are unknown, unworked lands where the salt has not lost its savour. But one must have perfected oneself in the great part first.[127]

The totality of perception is not all retrospective – its dark depths and strange otherness cannot be simply resolved through 'a process of rediscovering backwards.' There is also a need for a forward motion, enacted through instinct and the imagination. In the impression Lawrence notes 'unknown, [and] unworked lands', depths of understanding that are not yet realised. This attitude suggests that while the impression is influenced in part by the backward-looking processes of recollection, it is also shaped by the anticipation that one's sincere feelings reflect larger truths. The open-endedness of Lawrence's impressions, and their tendency to deny any final conception, reflects a mediation between the retrospective recollection of the past and the anticipation of a yet unrealised truth.

This sense of future understanding being anticipated in the impression is also suggested in the tension between being and becoming in Lawrence's sketches. Stumbling out of the darkness on the old imperial road in 'The Crucifix Across the Mountains', the narrator encounters a family of peasant farmers gathering the harvest in the teeming rain. The narrator observes with great attentiveness 'The body bent forward towards the earth', 'the arms clasped full of hay', and 'the lungs [full] with the sleepy scent of dried herbs'.[128] The scene is less representation and more anatomical dissection; the impression, like the living fibre of the organs, reflects the interplay of mental and physical sensations. And yet, the heat of the body

[127] Ibid., p. 117.
[128] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 92.

is tempered by the rain and the 'heavy, pleasant coldness on the active flesh'.[129] There is a dual numbness here: a numbing of the conscious mind in the exertion of the physical body and a physical numbness from the cold rain. The narrator locates an almost cathartic pleasure in the juxtaposition of the warm, living, 'active flesh' and the inescapably inanimate nature of the rain. In this dual vision of the living and the dead, the animate and the inanimate, the hot and the cold, the narrator notes the impressionistic interplay of mind and body, past and present. The effect is an overwhelming sense of the 'timeless[ness]' of the impression, reflected in the axiomatic quality of that 'upper radiance of snow' but roused in the 'flux and the warmth of life.'[130]

Lawrence explores the paradox that the impression can be both immediately of the moment and yet suggest a timelessness that transcends the fleeting nature of the present. Of the peasant family the narrator reflects:

> There is no flux nor hope nor becoming, all *is*, once and for all. The issue is eternal, timeless, and changeless. All being and all passing away is part of the issue, which is eternal and changeless. Therefore there is no becoming and no passing away. Everything *is*, now and for ever. Hence the strange beauty and finality and isolation of the Bavarian peasant.[131]

As the 'issue' of reality, Lawrence initially seems to simply align the impression with being – the impression, like reality, '*is*'. Yet, his declarative tone implies a deceiving simplicity. For while 'There is no flux nor hope nor becoming', he contradicts this attitude with the subsequent acknowledgement 'that all passing away is part of the issue', before contradicting himself once again to suggest that there is 'no passing away'. Within the 'finality' of the

[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid., p. 93.
[131] Ibid., p. 94.

impression there remains the simultaneous and paradoxical possibility of dissolution and 'passing away'. In probing this dialectic between finality and becoming, Lawrence evokes eucharistic symbolism through reference to the prayer of spiritual communion in the phrase 'now and forever'. This holds dual significance in the scene, suggesting the ingrained Catholicism of the region, but also the duality of the narrator's own impressions, as they too sustain a communion between the transient, fleeting nature of the present and the timeless universality of being. There is some irony here as the narrator's attempts to render the apparent finality of the Bavarian peasants results only in increasing ambiguity and contradiction. Finality gives way to the rich variety of the senses, and yet in dissolution Lawrence paradoxically achieves a sense of unity.

Both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* contain an acute awareness of how one's impressions are sustained by the generative processes of association, recollection, and negotiation. Through these interrelated processes, Lawrence identifies the impression with the entanglement of the past and present – one's impressions of the present are recognised to reflect an array of interrelated associations. His impressions explore the tension between the apparent finality of one's impressions and their tendency to change and be perpetually adjusted. He emphasises the contrast between the apparent unity of one's impressions and their tendency to simultaneously fragment and reform.

Personality and Impersonality

Lawrence's reflections on the presence of the narrator within his sketches is demonstrative of his wider critical engagement with impressionistic ideas concerning authorial personality and the effacement of the self. Ford declares in 'On Impressionism', that 'Impressionism is a

frank expression of personality'.[132] At face value, this attitude seems to simply acknowledge that the defining parameter of individual experience is the personality or self. Yet, as Ford continues, this apparent simplicity is once again thrown into doubt. For the truthful expression of personality results, paradoxically, from the author's suppression of the self, and the impressionistic writer should be 'sedulous to avoid letting his personality appear in the course of his book'.[133] By this, Ford suggests that real personality stems not from egoism and overt self-expression, but instead from the subtle patterns of (to adopt Matz's phrase) 'lingering intuition' expressed in a text. On this account Ford's impressionism is distinctive, Saunders argues, for its emphasis on 'the "conscious art" with which an author produces impressions in words of lived impressions.'[134] The literary impressionist, according to Ford, must consciously and sedulously maintain an impersonal detachment from the impressions he presents.

Lawrence's travel sketches depart from Ford's ideas regarding 'conscious' impersonality. As George Hyde has argued, Lawrence asserted 'that there is a diametrical opposition between "impersonality" and "me".'[135] Hyde observes how quickly '"impersonality" spelt "classicism" and was "bunkum"' for Lawrence.[136] This argument risks grouping Ford's particular formulation of impressionistic impersonality misleadingly with the ideas of classical impersonality adopted by such later 'high modernists' as T. S. Eliot and Wyndham Lewis.[137] Yet while this distinction may be reductive, it does identify a key point of difference between Lawrence's and Ford's impressionistic attitudes. In a letter to Louie

[132] Ford, 'On Impressionism', p. 262.
[133] Ibid., p. 269.
[134] Saunders, *Self Impression*, p. 267.
[135] George Hyde, 'Lawrence, Ford, Strong Readings, and Weak Nerves', in *Ford Madox Ford, Modernist Magazines and Editing*, ed. by Jason Harding (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 81-7 (p. 85).
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ford himself distinguishes his own impressionistic ideas from those of later modernisms, in his vivid impression of walking down Holland Street with Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis blasting his 'generation'. See: Ford Madox Ford, *Return to Yesterday*, ed. by Bill Hutchings (Manchester: Carcanet, 1999), pp. 311-2.

Burrows written in September 1910, a year after he had first met Ford, Lawrence writes: 'He belongs to the opposite school of novelists to me: he says prose *must* be impersonal, like Turguenev or Flaubert. I say no.'[138] Lawrence takes issue with the fixity and rigidity of Ford's impersonal creed; it is the idea that one '*must*' and should only ever be impersonal in one's writing which he challenges. Saunders rightly notes the 'inseparability' of personality and impersonality, adopting the neologism '*im/personality*' as a means of expressing how Lawrence, 'the most personal of modernists', could simultaneously fixate on the impersonality of being.[139] Self-conscious impersonality is for Lawrence simply another stunt on behalf of the author, and it is capable of distorting the impression just as much as overt self-expression.

Lawrence's writings on travel, in particular, suggest an attempt to determine a style of writing which is not so 'strongly concentric' as Ford's, and instead allows for moments of personality amid the impersonal.[140] Worthen argues that in accepting 'the frequently inhibiting eye of self-consciousness' Lawrence was able to observe 'with piercing clarity' both himself and his surroundings, which enabled him to 'assert as a belief and philosophy the isolate individuality' which forms the basis of understanding in both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia*.[141] If impersonality is aligned in the sketches with the not-me while personality reflects the 'isolate individuality' of the me, then by negotiating between the two Lawrence is able to render and re-enact the complex, and conflicted, relationship between the self and other. In 'The Lemon Gardens' of *Twilight in Italy* the narrator declares:

> There is the I, always the I. And the mind is submerged, overcome. But the senses are superbly arrogant. The senses are the absolute, the god-like [*sic*]. For I can

[138] Lawrence, 'To Louie Burrows, 9 September 1910', *Letters*, I, p. 178.
[139] Saunders, *Self Impression*, p. 59.
[140] Lawrence, 'To Walter de la Mare, 10 June 1912', *Letters*, I, pp. 416-7 (p. 417).
[141] Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years 1885-1912*, p. 346.

> never have another man's senses. These are me, my senses absolutely me. And all that is can only come to me through my senses. So that all is me, and is administered unto me. The rest, that is not me, is nothing, it is something which is nothing.[142]

Here, Lawrence identifies the isolate nature of individuality with the senses; he suggests that sensory impulses are uniquely one's own and constitute the sense of being 'me'. Yet, there is also the self, or 'I', which is similarly inescapable. Both are absolute and yet entangled: where 'I' is used as the subject of a sentence, 'me' is the object; where the subject does, the object has things done to it. In mediating between personal and impersonal modes of expression Lawrence explores how the impression occurs somewhere in-between the self and the world. He develops this idea as the narrator continues: 'Man is great and illimitable, whilst the individual is small and fragmentary. Therefore the individual must sink himself in the great whole of Mankind.'[143] One's senses, Lawrence suggests, contribute the substance of all one's experience, yet without one's empathy, imagination, and personality such sensory impulses lack a coherent schema. The impersonal and veracious expression of one's sensory impulses is forever contested and adjusted by one's personality. The conflicting sense of the impression being personal and yet necessarily impersonal is reflected in the paradox at the end of the passage, as the narrator concludes that everything beyond the self 'is something which is nothing.'

Lawrence does, then, to some extent share Ford's view that the unbridled and self-conscious 'stunts' of the author distract from and contradict literature's aspiration to an 'exact' evocation of an aspect of reality. Yet he also contests the idea that 'the first province of style is to be unnoticeable', as the conscious suppression of the self is itself viewed as an

[142] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 117.
[143] Ibid., p. 120.

unnecessary affectation and 'stunt'.[144] Impersonal exactness forever gives way to self-conscious contingency in Lawrence's early travel sketches, just as the absolute reality of one's senses is prone to fragmentation, and precise observations prompt affrontively ambiguous feelings. David James argues that Ford's self-adjudicating style 'became the hallmark of writers who could refuse luxurious sonorities or symbolism in laying claim to a more straightforward style.'[145] But the Lawrence of *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia* contests the notion that the self-adjudication of literary impressionism necessarily requires a complete dismissal of 'sonorities or symbolism.' After all, symbolism is another manifestation of the same 'lingering intuition' which underlies perceptual totality. Ford's stylistic selectiveness and his appeal to a 'straight-forward style' may defend against authorial decadence, but Lawrence's travel sketches suggest a counter critique, that in consciously adjudicating one's own feelings and perceptions the author risks reducing and trivialising the full range of conscious and subconscious impulses which combine to form the impression.

Thus, while Ford and Lawrence both attempt to suggest the personality of the narrator through their impressions, Lawrence places a greater emphasis on how the more trivial aspects of one's personality can disrupt and distort one's perception. There is a stronger sense of his awareness of the reciprocal relationship between the impression and the personality, one always shaping the other. In one instance in *Sea and Sardinia* the narrator observes:

> The land has been humanised, through and through: and we in our own tissued consciousness bear the results of this humanisation. So that for us to go to Italy and to *penetrate* into Italy is like a most fascinating act of self-discovery—back,

[144] Lawrence, 'To Curtis Brown, 7 June 1921', *Letters*, IV, pp. 26-7 (p. 27).
[145] David James, 'By Thrifty Design': Ford's Bequest and Coetzee's Homage', *International Ford Madox Ford Studies*, 7 (2008), 243-74 (244).

> back down the old ways of time. Strange and wonderful chords awake in us, and vibrate again after many hundreds of years of complete forgetfulness.[146]

The land has become 'humanised' not only physically but psychologically. Lawrence reminds the reader that while it is real, the landscape lacks actuality. The tendency for individuals to project their own humanity upon the landscape results in a superficial understanding of the place itself. To '*penetrate*' Italy Lawrence suggests that individuals need to cultivate their own mode of seeing. Individuals must engage introspectively with their impressions and cultivate a newly attuned mode of sight to appreciate the 'Strange and wonderful chords' which link the idea and feeling, interior and exterior, self and other. This cultivated mode of seeing recognises the transformative nature of the impression and its power to illuminate the relationship between the individual and the subject. The impression as a form of 'self-discovery' and transformation offers important insights into the mediative relationship between the author and the world, but also into the relationship between the author and the past.

The idea that rendering the 'queer effects' of real life enacts a restoration of the past by cultivating a more instinctual mode of vision lies at the heart of Lawrence's sketches. At San Gaudenzio in *Twilight in Italy* the narrator identifies in the villa's slow ruin an absence of life which results from its lack of cultivation. He describes how 'The grape hyacinths flower in the cracks, the lizards run, this strange place hangs suspended and forgotten, forgotten for ever, its erect pillars utterly meaningless.'[147] This meaninglessness is directly attributed to the absence of human cultivation. The old forgotten tools of the shed, as metaphors for the author's own pen, are symbolic of the need for a cultivated form of seeing. Without the imaginative cultivation of sight through writing, and a means of deciphering their intuited

[146] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 117.
[147] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 165.

symbolism, the 'erect pillars' are 'meaningless'. Lawrence's sketches suggest that some authorial personality is crucial in cultivating a form of vision through which one can decipher the otherness of the world at large.

However, while Lawrence's sketches reflect a belief in the need for personality in enabling the impression, they retain an awareness that the impression is forever at risk of being obscured by the self-consciousness of the narrator. In *Sea and Sardinia*, the narrator's irritation is equal almost to his enjoyment. At Sorgorno, for example, rage erupts and overwhelms the sketch. The lack of 'W.C's' informs an ironic attack upon the local population who, the narrator declares, must be 'The most socially-constituted people on earth, they even like to relieve themselves in company.'[148] Evident in this attack on the 'most socially-constituted people on earth' is the self-consciousness of Lawrence's narrator, finding himself 'in a greater rage.'[149] The self-conscious fury overtakes the narratorial gaze, and in turn influences the narrator's responsiveness to the surrounding scene. He writes that there was 'No denying it was beautiful, with the oak-slopes and the wistfulness and the far-off feeling of loneliness and evening. But I was in too great a temper to admit it.'[150] There are two contesting aspects to the impression here: one relates to the beauty of the scene, and one focusses squarely on the rage of the narrator. Where Ford's 'conscious art' assumes that the sedulous removal of the authorial ego makes the rendering of reality possible, in his self-conscious yet consuming rage, Lawrence instead emphasises the intense impressions which are brought about precisely by those aspects of an individual's personality which are not refined or reasonable. Why, Lawrence's sketches ask, should the impressions of the enraged

[148] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 94.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid., p. 94-5.

and self-conscious author be any less insightful than those of the perpetually considered and sedulously refined?

This effect is explored further when, riding the bus toward Tonara in *Sea and Sardinia*, the narrator identifies a notable a difference between ‘the high, fresh, proud villages and the valley villages.’[151] Noting how ‘Those that lie down below, infolded in the shadow, have a gloomy, sordid feeling and a repellent population’ Lawrence goes on to reflect, significantly, that ‘The judgement may be all wrong: but this was the impression I got.’[152] This suggests a distinctly Ford-like disregard for objectivity, since Lawrence is declaratively unconcerned with his ‘judgement’ being right so long as it is reported truthfully. Whether the valley villages really are ‘gloomy’, ‘sordid’, and ‘repellent’, and the ‘high’ villages are ‘fresh, and proud’, is irrelevant. For Lawrence, if one’s intent is to veraciously render one’s impressions at the given moment then to unnaturally adjudicate one’s intuitive feelings is a contradiction.

Yet the self-conscious awareness of the artifice of one’s creation is, as in Ford’s writings, reflected in Lawrence’s allusions to the performative and theatrical nature of the impression. For example, in the marionette show of *Sea and Sardinia*, the cyclical form of the chanson de geste suggests the cyclical and continuous process of repeated association evident in the impression. As the marionette show is performed, Lawrence writes that – almost Prospero-like – ‘this fray is over—Merlin comes to advise for the next move. And are we ready? We are ready. *Andiamo!*’[153] The word ‘*Andiamo*!’, which translates as ‘Let’s go!’ in its imperative form, appears ten times throughout the text and the narrator enthusiastically describes it in the closing scenes of the book as a ‘Splendid word.’[154] Occurring once in the first chapter and nine times in the final two chapters, the book is framed by its urgency. Neil

[151] Ibid., p. 124.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid., p. 189.
[154] Ibid.

Roberts has argued that throughout the text, 'The decision where to go is represented as an almost comically spontaneous and irrational process, though there is again an underlying thematic logic which is revealed in the text as a whole.'[155] The thematic logic suggests through the pattern of the wider text, both the continuous nature of the impression and the 'lingering intuition' which sustains it. In the marionette knights' almost comic commitment to *go*, Lawrence envisions the exhilaration and irrationality of perception. Where Ford's patterning may be careful and 'self-adjudicating', Lawrence instead appeals to the seemingly inexplicable, intuitional exhilaration of perceiving pattern. 'Andiamo!', associated with the 'recklessness in the male soul', becomes the genesis of understanding in the text. The narrator draws parallels between the desire to *go* and Adam's curiosity-driven exit from a garden of absolute unknowing, into the chaotic wilderness of knowing. The persistent drive outwards reflects in these terms the open-ended nature of coming to know. Lawrence suggests that travel allows personal growth by forever bringing the individual into closer proximity with the exterior otherness of the world, the wilderness outside the absolute, Edenic self.

Lawrence's awareness of the performative nature of the impression is similarly evident in his allusions to stage directions. In the 1913 version of 'The Spinner and the Monks', for example, the narrator describes running 'like a figure on stage, clear on the platform of my San Tommaso, in the grand sunshine.'[156] Here, the narrator imagines himself as both the actor and the playwright, recognising the doubleness of his role as observer and author of the scene. In so doing, Lawrence aligns the performative aspect of the impression with the awareness that one is forever producing only an illusion of reality, in order to make sense of one's situation within a world that remains unreachably other. He adopts a similar technique in *Sea and Sardinia*, where lines such as 'Enters another belated traveller' and 'All this was

[155] Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 43.
[156] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 51.

received with a kind of silent sneer from the invisible assembly in the background' suggest theatricality and allude to the presence of the narrator within the impression, directing the scene and imparting significance upon particular subjects and events.[157] Allusions to theatricality contribute to a wider awareness in the sketches of the role of the artist, or author, in constructing and deciphering the impression.

Lawrence's interest in the role of the authorial ego, in rendering the impression, is evident in his responsiveness to the process of artistic production in both texts. For example, in the revisions Lawrence made between the second and third versions of 'Christs in the Tyrol', and then 'Crucifixes Across the Tyrol', there are clear and developing parallels suggested between the sculptors of the Martertafel and the narrator himself. In the earlier essay, the narrator recalls how:

> In the Zemm valley, right in the middle of the Tyrol, there are some half-dozen crucifixes by the same worker, who has whittled away in torment to see himself emerge out of the piece of timber, so that he can understand his own suffering, and see it take on itself the distinctness of an eternal thing, so that he can go on further, leaving it.[158]

In the rewritten version, the same passage is adapted to read:

> In the Zemm valley, in the heart of the Tyrol, behind Innsbruck, there are five or six crucifixes by one sculptor. He is no longer a peasant working out an idea, conveying a dogma. He is an artist, trained and conscious, probably working in

[157] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 110, 103.
[158] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 44.

> Vienna. He is consciously trying to convey a *feeling*, he is no longer striving awkwardly to render a truth, a religious fact.[159]

Significantly, Lawrence revises 'the same worker' to 'one sculptor' – a change which elevates the creator to the figure of the artist. He develops this idea further when adapting the second half of the passage, as the sculptor is not blindly whittling 'away in torment', he is 'no longer a peasant working out an idea, conveying a dogma' – 'he is an artist, trained and conscious'. In elevating the sculptor to the position of the artist Lawrence identifies an irony, that in professionalising the process of artistic production, and in adopting an apparently more refined manner, the artist goes from probing the relationship between subjective and objective truths, to simply reproducing subjective feeling. In the first version the worker aspires to achieve 'the distinctness of the eternal thing', while the artist in the later version seeks only to convey 'a *feeling*'. There are parallels suggested here between the activities of the sculptor carving out the Christus, and the narrator rendering the impression. Both seek to 'whittle' out the 'eternal' thing, which is in both cases the communion of the self and the circumambient universe. Lawrence explores how, in rendering the impression, the individual deciphers the relationship between the individual and the circumambient universe, which is exterior to, and apart from, himself.

Yet in contrast to such moments of overt self-consciousness, Lawrence also notes feelings of dimness arising through one's impressions. In *Sea and Sardinia*, for example, Lawrence notes: 'I felt very dim, and only a bit of myself. And I dozed blankly.'[160] In the contrast between these feelings Lawrence finds parallels between personality and impersonality, and conscious and unconscious levels of feeling. For his narrators, the idea that the impression combines these opposing impulses results in a more acute appreciation of the strangeness,

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[159] Ibid., p. 96.
[160] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 36.

unreality, and otherness of the thing being perceived. This is particularly noticeable in the 'Italians in Exile' sketch in *Twilight in Italy*, in which Lawrence's narrator recounts travelling from Konstanz down the Rhine to Schaffhausen, and from Schaffhausen walking to Zurich, before sailing down the Zurichsee. In the sketch the vividness of the impression is forever undermined and subverted by a perpetual sense of the unreality of the scene being described. Drifting down the Rhine on a ferry the narrator describes:

> [floating] between wooded banks and under bridges where quaint villages of old romance piled their red and coloured pointed roofs beside the water, very still, remote, lost in the vagueness of the past. It could not be that they were real.[161]

While the colourful houses give rise to the impression of a resurgent 'old romance', the reminiscence that follows ('It could not be that they were real') undermines this vision. The observer's awareness of his own imaginative role in producing this vivid impression in this instance casts doubt on the truthfulness of the account. In such scenes there is a suggestion of the need to temper authorial personality, and to address one's impressions directly, but without suppressing or disguising the inescapable presence of the author.

Lawrence's sketches reflect to a limited extent Ford's argument that impressionists should efface themselves to allow their personality to emerge through the impression. However, where Ford emphasises the importance of sedulous impersonality in rendering one's impressions, Lawrence instead appeals to the inconsistency and variousness of feeling which is felt overtly in the affront of otherness. His travel sketches suggest how one's impressions naturally mediate between both moments of self-consciousness and unconscious intuition.

[161] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 189.

The act of rendering the impression represents for Lawrence the possibility of deciphering one's conscious and unconscious entanglement with the world.

Duality, Pattern, and Transformation

Phillip Callow characterised Lawrence's ability to flit between the quotidian and the artistic as a 'tormenting duality', citing Ford's observation that:

> at first ... he seemed like the reckless robber of hen-roosts with gleaming eyes and a mouth watering for adventure and then, with the suddenness of a switched-off light, he became the investigator into the bases of the normal that he essentially was.[162]

Ford's comments recreate the same duality they identify in Lawrence, juxtaposing the popular image of the morally depraved, predatory Lawrence with an image of the esoterically minded Lawrence, reaching for the essence of reality itself. Ford is not alone in making this observation. Graham Hough has identified the 'radically dualistic' nature of Lawrence's vision in *The Dark Sun* (1956),[163] while Robert E. Montgomery has noted how Lawrence's intention was always 'to grasp the relation between the opposites in such a way that one could see them as aspects of a whole and thereby avoid falling into a dualism that sundered the unity of life.[164] Montgomery's argument subtly shifts the emphasis from the dialectic to

[162] Philip Callow, *Son and Lover: The Young D. H. Lawrence* (London: Allison & Busby, 1998), p. 120; Ford, *Mightier Than the Sword*, p. 112.
[163] Graham Hough, *The Dark Sun: A Study of D. H. Lawrence* (New York: Capricorn, 1956), p. 224.
[164] Robert E. Montgomery, *The Visionary D. H. Lawrence: Beyond Philosophy and Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 14.

the unfixed and variable *relation* which sustains it. It is the ever-changing relationships between things which Lawrence's sketches attempt to identify.

This desire to decipher a vital relationship between perceptual impulses, however ambiguous that relationship may be, is evident in Lawrence's use of rhythm to give structure to the fleeting nature of reality. In both works rhythm, like the idea of the constellation, suggests the possibility of a continuity between physical sensation and eternal or cosmic truths. Fried observes: 'Even as the impression's strange perceptual and rhetorical status encourages writers to believe in continuity between sensations and ideas, contingency and freedom, experience and essence, its ambiguities encourage them yet to seek the stability of epistemological dualism.'[165] This effect is felt in *Sea and Sardinia* when, standing on the deck of the ship, and looking out at the 'thickening darkness', the narrator notes 'a magnificent evening-star' blazing 'above the open sea'.[166] It is at this moment, sailing through the darkness of the Tyrrhenian Sea, that the narrator describes how:

> Overhead were innumerable great stars active as if they were alive in the sky. I saw Orion high behind us, and the dog-star glaring. And *swish*! went the sea as we took the waves, then after a long trough, *swish*! This curious rhythmic swishing and hollow drumming of a steamer at sea has a narcotic, almost maddening effect on the spirit, a long, hissing burst of waters, then the hollow roll, and again the upheaval to a sudden hiss-ss-ss![167]

The 'curious rhythmic swishing', echoed in the sibilant repetition of '*swish*!', affects a form of transport in its 'almost maddening effect on the spirit'. The 'hollow roll' and 'upheaval' of the ocean from this perspective produces a state of continuous rhythmic vision, which is

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[165] Fried, *What Was Literary Impressionism?*, p. 33.
[166] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 45.
[167] Ibid., p. 45.

reflected visually in the innumerable 'active' stars. This sensitivity to rhythm produces a kind of horoscopic vision which is subsequently reified in the constellation 'Orion'. For Lawrence's narrator, the rhythmic sensation of the microcosm initiates a revelatory awareness of the macrocosm. Andrew Kalaidjian has argued in the case of *Women in Love*, that Lawrence's 'Privileging [of] rhythmic form within the novel was a stark challenge to literary realism and especially to the sensationalism that drove literary bestsellers' but he defended this decision 'as a more natural representation of lived experience.'[168] In developing this argument Kalaidjian references Lawrence's comment in the unpublished foreword to the novel: 'fault is often found with the continual, slightly modified repetition. The only answer is that it is natural to the author: and that every natural crisis in emotion or passion or understanding comes from this pulsing, frictional to-and-fro.'[169] For Kalaidjian 'This frictional to-and-fro is ... a measure of impulse and resistance' by which Lawrence sustains the relationship between the image of the microcosm and the epochal changes of the macrocosm in the novel.[170] In the later account of Sardinia, a similarly repetitious, 'pulsing, fictional to-and-fro' sustains an impression of perpetual travel and transport outside of the self, but also between the present and the past. Sustaining parallels between the rhythmic motion of the ship, and the 'to-and-fro' of the narrator's gaze as it flits between sea and sky, Lawrence suggests a process of open-ended mediation between knowing and being. The rhythmic motion sustains a revelatory form of sight mirrored in the 'frictional to-and-fro' and the generative relationship between the individual and the universe, the self and the other.

A similar effect is enacted in *Sea and Sardinia* when Lawrence identifies the transportive and transformative nature of the impression with a wave-like oscillation between high and low

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[168] Andrew Kalaidjian, 'Positive Inertia: D. H. Lawrence and the Aesthetics of Generation', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 38.1 (2014), 38-55 (47).
[169] D. H. Lawrence, 'Appendix I: Foreword to *Women in Love'*, in *Women in Love*, ed. by David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey, and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 483-6 (p. 486).
[170] Kalaidjian, 'Positive Inertia: D. H. Lawrence and the Aesthetics of Generation', 47.

intensities of feeling. During the first sea voyage, the narrator explores heuristically the seemingly inexplicable sensation of the ship's motion. Adopting long, complex sentences, with sustained progressions in clause length, Lawrence achieves in the form of the passage a mimesis of motion and movement. He describes how 'almost at once the ship begins to take a long, slow, dizzy dip, and a fainting swoon upwards, and a long, slow, dizzy dip, slipping away from beneath one.' Here the sequence of long clauses followed by a single word or short clause and then a further long clause recreates rhythmically the same ebbing surge and retreat of the ship upon the waves. The narrator's protracted description of the ship's motion extends the process of perception and in turn enables a form of veracious disclosure. 'That long, slow, waveringly rhythmic rise and fall of the ship', the narrator observes, 'is like the magic gallop of the sky, the magic gallop of elemental space.' The phrase 'magic gallop' suggests a form of disclosive motion – 'magic' implying some mystic form of revelation, but 'gallop' in contrast reflecting something horse-like, physical, and embodied. By maintaining this powerful sense of rhythm, the narrator can sustain and hold on to the impression long enough to discern some sense of the truth manifest within the living moment, even if the exact nature of this truth remains fleeting and unutterable. Lawrence uses the idea of rhythm, like pattern, to investigate the patterns of intuition which arise through the process of rendering the impression. It suggests the possibility that one's experience might represent a form of truth without attempting to state its nature. The 'waveringly, tremulous' passage of the ship upon the sea thus offers the possibility for a new mediative form of understanding – an open-ended, 'never exhausted' 'elemental liberty' – in which the boundary between being and knowing is dissolved.

This sense of rhythm and mobility generating an impression of revelatory transport is particularly evident in 'The Dance' sketch of *Twilight in Italy*. There the narrator describes at length how 'The women's faces changed to a kind of transported wonder, they were in the

very rhythm of delight' as they danced with the local men.[171] Here, the impression of 'transported wonder' is enacted in the 'very rhythm of delight.'[172] This effect is developed further in the second part of the dance as the narrator notes: 'exquisite delight in every inter-related movement, a rhythm within a rhythm, a subtle approaching and drawing nearer to a climax' as:

> the women waited as if in transport for the climax, when they would be flung into a movement surpassing all movement. They were flung, borne away, lifted like a boat on a supreme wave, into the zenith and nave of the heavens, consummate.[173]

Here rhythm draws attention to the progressive, transformative effect of the impression. Long clauses build to a climax in the first sentence, which erupts in a scattering of short clauses in the second. The continuous movements of the dance mirror the implied continuity of perception in the impression. The feeling of being 'borne away' as if in transport at the revelatory 'zenith' of the dance reflects the momentary illumination of the impression. And yet, appearing as a 'transfiguration', this consummation leaves the dancers bewildered, just as the narrator remains perplexed by the precise nature of the impression.[174] Saunders writes of a similar effect in Ford's account of Provence – noting how Ford's impressions 'aren't just symptomatic of his particular mind-set' but 'also register the power of places, cultures, [and] works of art to transform a mind-set or mind-frame – or even a mind.'[175] Similarly, in the context of his travel sketches, Lawrence's impressions reflect not only how the author projects their attitudes upon the world, but also how their instinctual feelings transform their mind-set and understanding. Like the dancers carried away by a 'movement surpassing all

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[171] Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy*, p. 168.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid., p. 169.
[175] Max Saunders, 'Ford's Thought-Experiments; Impressionism, Place, History, and "The frame of mind that is Provence"', in *Ford Madox Ford, France and Provence*, ed. by Dominique Lemarchal & Claire Davison-Pégon (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), pp. 259-76 (p. 274).

movement', for the narrator, each new impression produces a sense of forceful forward momentum, and generates, if inconsistently, a transformed sense of understanding, be it one which remains forever incomplete.

Lawrence's writing is forceful – it aspires to intensity. This intensity of vision gives his writings their charge, their curious magnetism, and their simultaneous affront. In a letter to Harriet Monroe in November 1914, Lawrence decries the tepidness he perceived in some of his contemporaries. 'Have you no people with any force in them. Aldington almost shows most – if he weren't so lamentably imitating Hueffer.'[176] Here he recalls Hueffer, the 'Uncle' and the 'Headmaster', teaching a particular style of authorial forcefulness. Yet for Lawrence the 'force' of writing is rooted in its determined responsiveness to life and not in a particular aesthetic style. Forcefulness is lost in imitation. It is for this reason that he suggests the forcefulness of Ford's writing, produced by his crisp, clarifying, and self-adjudicating style, loses its potency in the hands of lamentable imitators. Lawrence argues that art exists to render and make sense of life and it should do so directly. For Lawrence, style and form should not be an affectation or stunt, but a reflection of the nature of one's engagement with the subject. Artistic innovation, for Lawrence, corresponds to the forcefulness and directness with which the author renders the impression and produces its effect in the mind of the reader.

In *Sea in Sardinia*, Lawrence celebrates the perceived directness and forcefulness of the Sardinian people and culture. He describes how even 'The roads of Italy' are a source of delight for the narrator, as 'They run undaunted over the most precipitous regions, and with curious ease.'[177] The undaunted nature of the project – the unwavering desire to connect places to one another directly – suggests a similar attitude towards writing, in which the act

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[176] Lawrence, 'To Harriet Monroe, 17 November 1914', *Letters*, II, pp. 232-3 (p. 232).
[177] Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, p. 115.

of forcefully and directly rendering one's feelings can generate a more vital understanding of the complex interrelatedness of the world. As a metaphor for writing, the undaunted qualities of the road building project calls out to the need for the narrator to forcefully render the otherness of his impressions as directly as possible.

Lawrence's travel sketches call for undaunted directness, be it in road building or in rendering one's impressions. The narrator continues: 'In England almost any such road, among the mountains at least, would be labelled three times dangerous and would be famous throughout the land as an impossible climb. Here it is nothing.'[178] Here England is associated with exaggeration and safety, which in the context of writing is evidence of Lawrence's frustration with the aesthetic aggrandizing of style over content. While on one hand, this seems to suggest that Ford's notion of impressionism is a response to the authorial self-indulgence of the fin de siècle, on the other Lawrence challenges Ford's conception of the 'conscious art' of the impression as an overly mentalised method of representation. Thus, while sharing with Ford a desire to directly address the impression as it is, Lawrence's sketches point to a difference of opinion regarding precisely what this means. Where Ford suggests that rendering one's impressions illuminates the patterns of intuition from which one's reality emerges, Lawrence's sketches instead demonstrate how sketching one's impressions requires that one engages directly with the otherness of the world. Lawrence's early travel sketches reflect sincere and determined attempts to look out through the self to the vast actuality of otherness beyond and the possibility for new understanding it represents.

This chapter has demonstrated the continuities between Lawrence's use of the travel sketch and the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism. Drawing comparisons with Ford's impressionism, it has shown how many of Lawrence's early

[178] Ibid.

impressionistic responses to place emphasise the transformative power that the impression of otherness in particular holds within both *Twilight in Italy* and *Sea and Sardinia*. In addition, the chapter shows how the idea of the impression provides an effective framework for understanding how Lawrence explores the relationship between the self and the other. It investigates how his use of the impressionistic 'travel sketch' produces the impression of unity in difference or–- to adopt Aldous Huxley's phrasing – a belief that 'a oneness underlies this diversity.'[179] Just as literary impressionists aim to illuminate the patterns of intuition which sustain one's subjective reality, Lawrence renders the affront of otherness in order to illuminate and decipher the perplexing relationship between the self and the surrounding universe. He shows that to suggest the interconnected nature of universal being, one must paradoxically emphasise the fragmentary and divergent nature of perception. In the affront of otherness, Lawrence explores the conflicted feeling of being both a part of and apart from a strange and bewildering world.

[179] Huxley, *Jesting Pilate*, p. 290.

2. THE AFFRONT OF OTHERNESS AND THE NOT-YET CONSCIOUS IN *MORNINGS IN MEXICO*, *QUETZALCOATL*, AND *THE PLUMED SERPENT*

This chapter demonstrates how Lawrence's ambivalent responses to the affront of otherness in his Mexico and New Mexico writings can be better understood in relation to Ernst Bloch's notion of the not-yet conscious. This approach provides a novel method for negotiating the racial and temporal issues which arise in Lawrence's attempts to render otherness. The chapter focuses specifically on the five-year period from Lawrence's arrival in New Mexico on 10 September 1922 to the first publication of *Mornings in Mexico* in 1927. In this five-year period, he composed in excess of eighteen articles, eight of which would go on to be included in *Mornings in Mexico* (1927), as well as drafting *Quetzalcoatl*, and its completely revised form *The Plumed Serpent* (1926). It is to these three works that the chapter primarily attends.

The problematic racial politics of Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writings have received substantial critical consideration.[1] However, there remains a need to situate Lawrence's representations of otherness in the context of race and cultural difference in relation to his wider emphasis on forms of historical otherness. This chapter begins to address this need by evoking Bloch's idea of the utopian instinct to better understand how the affront of otherness is seen as offering the possibility of personal growth and regeneration in

[1] See: Howard J. Booth, 'Lawrence in doubt: A theory of the "other" and its collapse', in *Modernism and Empire*, ed. by Howard J. Booth and Nigel Rigby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 197-223; Feroza Jussawalla, 'Transnational, Postcolonial D. H. Lawrence: Coloniser, Colonialist, or Assimilationist?', in *D. H. Lawrence: New Critical Perspectives and Cultural Translation*, ed. by Simonetta de Filippis (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), pp. 165-86; Peter Childs, 'National and Racial Aesthetics', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 52-64.

Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writing. It explores how Lawrence's heuristic efforts to render the affront of otherness anticipate in the open-ended nature of the present the possibility of coming-to-understand the reality of otherness in the future.

The chapter has the following trajectory. Firstly, it demonstrates how Lawrence uses ideas of translation and mistranslation to investigate the indefinite nature of otherness in terms of legibility. Secondly, it considers how ideas of darkness, visibility and invisibility allow Lawrence to suggest the open-ended nature of the relationship between the self and the other. Finally, the chapter demonstrates how Bloch's formulation of the not-yet conscious can illuminate how Lawrence anticipates future transformation, rebirth, and regeneration in the immediate affront of otherness.

In a letter written just over eight months after his arrival in Taos, Lawrence declared 'The world is a weird place'.[2] Feelings of strangeness, alienation, and uncertainty pervade his writings inspired by travels in Mexico and the American Southwest. David Ellis and Howard Mills have observed that day-to-day feelings of strangeness frame Lawrence's responses to these places because 'Whatever one learns about Mexico is incidental to Lawrence's hour-to-hour confrontation with alien habits.'[3] The feeling of coming up against something quite alien in New Mexico is typified in a letter to Adele Seltzer, in which Lawrence writes: 'The people here are quite nice. And at first everything *seems* so normal. Then one begins gradually to realise the uncertainty, and the limitations.'[4] Such strange, yet striking 'uncertainty' is characteristic of the seemingly inarticulable and contradictory feelings of connection and alienation Lawrence experienced while in New Mexico and Mexico.

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[2] Lawrence, 'To Edward Marsh, 18 September 1922', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by Warren Roberts, James T. Boulton, and Elizabeth Mansfield, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), IV, p. 297.
[3] David Ellis and Howard Mills, *D. H. Lawrence's Non-Fiction: Art, Thought and Genre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 114.
[4] Lawrence, 'To Adele Seltzer, [22 May 1923]', in *Letters*, IV, pp. 444-5 (p. 445).

Indeed, the difficulty Lawrence seems to find in expressing this feeling of affrontive otherness appears a likely contributor to the ambivalence of his responses to the peoples and places he describes in his writings. Writing to Thomas Seltzer, Lawrence commented:

> It seems to me Mexico will never be safe. I have my ups and downs of feeling about the place. It will end, I suppose, in my staying as long as it takes me to write a novel – if I *can* write a novel here.[5]

These 'ups and downs' of feeling are represented materially – in the alternating periods of great productivity and doubt-driven inactivity which characterised Lawrence's literary life between 1922 and 1927 – and aesthetically – in his ambivalent responses to otherness in the writings he produced. To Catherine Carswell, he wrote: 'At present I don't write – don't want to – don't care. Things are all far away. ... The world is as it is. I am as I am. We don't fit very well.'[6] The motivation to write here corresponds with the need to feel connection with a world which remains forever other – the paradox being that, as Peter Childs has argued, 'Lawrence's pursuit of unity was undermined by his own reliance on dualisms in his conceptual thinking, which ultimately resulted in the perception of a profound unspannable bridge of alterity and alienation.'[7] Like the wandering Lawrence searching for an alternative modality of being, the narrators of *Mornings in Mexico*, *Quetzalcoatl*, and *The Plumed Serpent* look out hopefully towards difference and otherness, but find themselves forever affronted, and their questioning gaze denied. The affront of otherness is evidence of Lawrence's ambivalence towards difference; this ambivalence is realised as a series of negotiations between the inner world of the self and the exterior world of the other. This

[5] Lawrence, 'To Thomas Seltzer, 9 May 1923', in *Letters*, IV, pp. 441-2 (p. 442).
[6] D. H. Lawrence, 'To Catherine Carswell, 18 May 1924', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), V, pp. 46-7 (p. 46).
[7] Peter Childs, 'National and Racial Aesthetics', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 52-64 (p. 60).

chapter considers Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness itself as a matter of engagement, mediating between the hopeful anticipation of revelatory understanding, and an appreciation of the ultimately unknowable reality of being other to oneself.

While Lawrence's writings about Mexico and the American Southwest have never yet in scholarship been considered impressionistic, the idea that they attempt to decipher the otherness of one's impressions highlights the continuity between Lawrence's early sketches and these later works. In the Mexico and New Mexico writings the impression of affrontive otherness offers a means of illuminating revelatory forms of understanding, but only if it can be decoded through language. However, in these later works there is also an increasingly acute awareness that such processes of decipherment are by their nature ambiguous, uncertain, and open-ended. Newmark argues that traditional aesthetic objects appeal to Lawrence 'because they evoke both a cultural gap *and* a desire to bridge it, which may ... be impossible. Such mediation is, then, the process of engagement, reliant on the desire or openness for connection between "entities within the world"'.[8] In Lawrence's writings of this period, the possibility of engaging meaningfully with the world depends upon the longing to connect with others, even if the attempt to do so ultimately proves to be futile. He suggests that though one cannot objectively know what it is to be other to oneself, the attempt to decipher the impression of perplexing otherness paradoxically draws the individual into closer intuitive relation with that which appears radically other.[9]

Lawrence's emphasis on the affront otherness suggests that the ultimate unknowability of the world paradoxically manifests the possibility of an alternative, more intuitive understanding

[8] Julianne Newmark, 'Traditional Aesthetics', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 65-75 (p. 67).
[9] Compare with Homi Bhabha's observation that 'to be different from those that are different makes you the same.' See: Homi Bhabha, 'Foreword to the 1986 Edition "Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche and the Colonial Condition"', in *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. by Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 2008), pp. xxi-xxxvii (p. xxviii).

of the individual's relationship with it. The importance of affront as a generative experience lies at the heart of all three works addressed here. It seems surprising that the aesthetics of affront in Lawrence's prose have yet to be addressed directly in scholarship. The assumption of intimacy in *The Rainbow*, unbashful nakedness in *Women in Love*, a cockroach in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, the shaking of hands in *Kangaroo*, a passionless playwright in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* – all of these things produce feelings of affront and outrage for Lawrence's narrators. They also produce feelings of insight and understanding, however limited and ambiguous. Yet, in his writings on Mexico and New Mexico, the experience of being affronted takes on an even greater significance. The affront of otherness in these works prompts his narrators to not only probe the multifariousness of being, but also to anticipate imaginatively the possibility of being other than themselves.

In a historical context, Lawrence's suggestion that the experience of being affronted offers the possibility of transformation and newness reflects the overlapping concerns of literary impressionism and modernism. Modernisms were affrontive. Marinetti's 1909 Futurist manifesto advocates 'courage, boldness, and rebelliousness' as there is 'no masterpiece that has not an aggressive character.'[10] Ezra Pound championed the affront of satire, proclaiming it to be 'surgery, insertions and amputations'.[11] In the first issue of the little magazine *Rhythm*, Lawrence's sometime friend, John Middleton Murry, likewise pronounced that 'Art is movement, ferocity, tearing at what lies before. ... To say that art is revolutionary is to say that it is art.'[12] Yet, the idea that much modernism is at some level necessarily affrontive is not to adopt the reductive understanding of modernism as a fracture from tradition. Andrzej

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[10] Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism (1909)', in *Futurism: An* Anthology, ed. by Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 49-53 (p. 51).
[11] Ezra Pound, *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. by T. S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1968), pp. 41-57 (p. 45).
[12] John Middleton Murry, 'Art and Philosophy', *Rhythm*, Summer 1911, 9-12 (10-1).

Gąsiorek notes, modernism 'was engaged in a series of difficult negotiations with the culture of the past, which it saw in terms of complex strands, some of which it chose to reject as it engaged in its various renovative projects.'[13] In this context, the affront of otherness in Lawrence's writings can be better understood as a reflection of a similarly complex mediation between contrasting and conflicting notions of tradition, as well as a desire to recover a radical relationship between the self and the other.[14]

Lawrence's evocative engagements with otherness in the Mexico and New Mexico writings typify Murry's argument that 'In truth, no art breaks with the past. It forces a path into the future.'[15] Holly Laird has noted that 'Lawrence continually declared his own work "new"', and 'in his repeated effort to offer visions of the future, Lawrence did as much to produce the contexts in which modernism is understood as any of his contemporaries, rising through, resisting, and exceeding the -isms of his day.'[16] In the affront of otherness Lawrence's works explore how the challenging unknowability of other modalities of being and knowing represents the open-ended possibility for new forms of understanding. His writings repeatedly identify the affront of otherness as a reminder of the perpetual opportunity to achieve a more vital relationship with the reality of the surrounding universe.

The power of otherness to prompt feelings of both discomforting alienation and illuminating insight regularly results in Lawrence negotiating extremes of conflicting feeling in an effort to enact a more intuitive mode of understanding. Charles Rossman observes how Lawrence's responses to Mexico 'were intense, extreme, and above all, sharply ambivalent, embracing

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[13] Andrzej Gąsiorek, *A History of Modernist Literature* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), p. 25.
[14] This argument develops Mark Kinkead-Weekes' argument that Lawrence understood 'life was always a matter of relationships—between opposite impulses within the self, and between selves, none paramount, all "purely relative to one another", in an essentially creative pluralism'. See: Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile, 1912-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 659.
[15] Murry, 'Art and Philosophy', 11.
[16] Holly Laird, 'Modernisms', in *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, ed. by Andrew Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 91-100 (p. 99).

both exquisite sympathy and strident hostility.'[17] This is one reason why Lawrence's representation of racial otherness has long proved one of the more controversial aspects of his writing. Virginia Crosswhite Hyde notes that following the publication of *Mornings in Mexico* a reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement* initially identified the subject of Lawrence's book to be 'variations on one theme – the look and nature of the Indians'.[18] This view was similarly upheld by Genevieve Taggard, of the *New York Times Book Review*, who argued that what the world was interested to see in *Mornings in Mexico* was what the 'neurotic, European Lawrence [would] do and decide about' the Mexican Indian.[19] Yet this view was not universal; Carleton Beals in the *Saturday Review of Literature* argued against reading Lawrence's work as an objective account of Mexican life, stating that Lawrence 'simply does not know the Indian' and instead 'makes of the Indian an image of his own gruesomely brooding soul.'[20]

The tendency for Lawrence to project his own philosophical and ideological concerns upon the native populations and cultures of the places he visited has been widely critiqued in post-colonial analyses of his travel writings. While there has been a wide array of criticism concerning Lawrence's responses to racial otherness, all of which employ quite different emphases and approaches, they largely agree that while Lawrence clearly engages with, and regularly espouses, racist, and pro-colonial discourses towards racialised others, he also demonstrates a critical and self-doubting attitude towards these discourses. Yet, such doubt should not be misinterpreted as suggesting Lawrence pre-empted postcolonial ideas. Howard J. Booth has addressed this issue, observing that while 'there is evidence of an attention to

[17] Charles Rossman, "D. H. Lawrence and Mexico," in *D. H. Lawrence: A Centenary Consideration*, ed. by Peter Balbert and Phillip L. Marcus (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 180-200 (p. 80).
[18] Virginia Crosswhite Hyde, 'Introduction', in *Mornings in Mexico*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. xxv-lxxxi (p. lxvii).
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

different people, other places and the damage inflicted by the West', we shouldn't assume that Lawrence's 'effort to go beyond the West at the time when Western empires were at their fullest extent means that he fully anticipated the post-colonial.'[21] As Booth adds, Lawrence's writings after all can clearly 'be related to "primitivism" and the deeply problematic assumption that others are there to provide transformative experiences for Western subjects.'[22] This historical awareness gives an important balance to this chapter as a reminder that though Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness reflect a sincere engagement with the question of what it means to be other than oneself, the terms in which they are expressed frequently exhibit racist and colonial prejudices.[23]

Lawrence's ambivalent responses to the affront of otherness demonstrate an increasingly acute appreciation that though writing cannot bridge the divide between the self and other, it can maintain the possibility of mutual understanding. Simonetta de Filippis has argued in this regard that Lawrence's 'profound respect for cultural diversity and … deep awareness of the impossibility of trying to penetrate the "Other" without imposing one's own view and ideology … makes Lawrence a "cultural mediator" ante litteram.'[24] Lawrence emphasises how the affront of otherness sustains and deepens the engagement with the subject, by denying complete or final comprehension of what it means to be other than oneself. Magali Roux has noted how the process of 'coming to know' other cultures and modes of life without seeking to resolve 'the irreducible mystery of otherness allowed Lawrence to

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[21] Howard J. Booth, 'Introduction', in *New D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by Howard J. Booth (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 1-16 (p. 8).
[22] Ibid.
[23] There has been substantial critical consideration given to the question of how to characterise accurately these opposing tendencies in Lawrence's works. For further discussion of this issue, see: Booth, 'Lawrence in doubt: a theory of the "other" and its collapse', pp. 197-223; Jussawalla, 'Transnational, Postcolonial D. H. Lawrence: Coloniser, Colonialist, or Assimilationist', pp. 165-86; Wayne Templeton, '"Indians and an Englishman": Lawrence in the American Southwest', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 25.1/3 (1993-4), 14-34; Newmark, 'Traditional Aesthetics', pp. 65-75.
[24] Simonetta de Filippis, 'D. H. Lawrence and Cultural Mediation', in *D. H. Lawrence: New Critical Perspectives and Cultural Translation*, ed. by Simonetta de Filippis (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), pp. 265-91 (p. 266).

rediscover the vital strength of higher emotions and their creative impulse'.[25] In groping towards otherness Lawrence's narratives reflect the idea that understanding can only be brought into being through a process of decipherment. While writing cannot make the nature of otherness knowable, it can develop a relative form of understanding which leaves open the possibility for developing a more instinctual awareness of the potential for alternative modes of being. Just as foreign travel may continually bring the individual into proximity with strangeness, the open-ended process of rendering otherness also draws the individual into a sustained engagement with the actuality of the world outside the self.

The open-ended nature of Lawrence's responses to otherness is reflected in the lengthy processes of composition and revision he engaged in with each work. While awaiting publication of *Mornings in Mexico*, Lawrence wrote to his sister Emily King: 'I'm just getting proofs of a little book of Red Indian and Mexican essays, which should be out this spring – with photograph illustrations. It'll be quite nice: small.'[26] But though Lawrence may have considered his book at this point 'nice' and 'small', the preceding five years of writing and rewriting during which *Quetzalcoatl*, *The Plumed Serpent*, and *Mornings in Mexico* came into being had been arduous and conflicted. All three texts were the product of a lengthy and at times radical process of revision by Lawrence. The significance of this process has attracted attention from critics engaged in genetic studies of Lawrence, most recently Elliott Morsia in *The Many Drafts of D. H. Lawrence* (2020). Morsia argues against a 'naïve approach to textuality' when analysing Lawrence's works and challenges the idea that there is a singular 'fixed message behind the writing.'[27] He observes that 'Lawrence was consistently and passionately averse to fixed or institutionalized forms of thinking; this

[25] Magali Roux, 'Emotions and otherness in D. H. Lawrence's Mexican Fiction', *Études Lawrenciennes*, 43 (2012), 213-235 < https://journals.openedition.org/lawrence/101> [Accessed 07/02/22] (paras. 40-1).
[26] Lawrence, 'To Emily King, [25 January 1927]', in *Letters*, V, pp. 635-6 (p. 635).
[27] Elliott Morsia, *The Many Drafts of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), p. 5.

underpins the unique and almost maniacally itinerant nature of his life and writing.'[28] The act of revision resists completeness, just as the affront of otherness resists total comprehension. Contextualising this attitude, Paul Eggert writes that 'the major landmarks of Lawrence's oeuvre ... are only the expression of an elaborate filigree of thematic crossovers, subject to continual adjustment according to the opportunities of the moment and the given genre'.[29] If the thematic affront of otherness draws attention to the idea of language as a form of negotiation, the frustrated process of 'adjustment' enacts the same mediative process at the level of composition. Eggert argues that 'The shape that this continuous unfolding of a thinking mind would have to take in print usually gave the provocation for the latest experiment and defined its boundaries.'[30] From this perspective, the affront of otherness catalyses Lawrence's engagements with the world outside of the self.

As an open-ended process of mediation, Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness (and his idealisation of forms of cultural difference) can be usefully compared with Bloch's formulation of the 'not-yet' conscious. There has been next to no consideration given to the insightful and productive comparisons which can be drawn between Lawrence and Bloch. The only recent intervention has been Booth's suggestion that our understanding of Lawrence can be renewed and extended by discarding 'conventional political labels' and instead considering his prose in light of Bloch's 'utopian longing'.[31] This chapter advances this argument by demonstrating how Bloch's idea of the not-yet conscious in the context of the utopian instinct can usefully illuminate how Lawrence anticipates in the affront of otherness the possibility of understanding and assuming new modalities of being. Tom Moylan

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[28] Ibid., p. 6.
[29] Paul Eggert, 'Revising and Rewriting', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 219-30 (p. 228).
[30] Ibid.
[31] Howard J. Booth, 'Politics and Art', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 129-44 (p. 142).

describes how Bloch uses the idea of the 'utopian function' to describe how 'imaginative ideas and images … "extend, in an anticipating way, existing material into the future possibilities of being different and better"'.[32.] Bloch theorises utopia as the anticipation and enactment of the future expressed according to the expectations and conditions of a particular historical context.[33] As Stephen Eric Bronner writes, for Bloch, 'Utopia ... ceases to exist as "nowhere," as an Other to real history. It is a constituent element of all human activity and, simultaneously, historical.'[34] Applied to otherness, Lawrence's utopian longing is similarly constituted in the belief that the affront of the seemingly strange and unfamiliar can be itself transformative and revelatory, manifesting possible futures in the present. Bronner argues that for Bloch, Utopia is a 'dim pre-figuration (*Vor-erscheinung)* of its existence' and 'the question becomes how to articulate and realize the hopes unconsciously shared by humanity.'[35] Likewise, the affront of otherness in Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writings reflects a hopeful 'dim pre-figuration' of moving outside the self, through imaginative engagements with others.

Lawrence's narratives also reflect Bloch's belief in the discontinuous relationship between the self and the world. For both men, were the self and the world continuous they would be one and the same and newness would be impossible; as Bloch reminds us, 'Who is nothing, however, will no longer encounter anything outside, either. Without ourselves, we can certainly never see what shall be.'[36] In this regard, both Bloch and Lawrence emphasise the idea that one's sensitivity to, and respect for, difference is a source of imaginative inspiration. This belief is inherently utopian. The inability of language to fully express the nature of

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[32] Tom Moylan, 'Bloch against Bloch: The Theological Reception of *das Prinzip Hoffnung* and the Liberation of the Utopian Function', in *Not Yet: Reconsidering Ernst Bloch*, ed. by Jamie Owen Daniel and Tom Moylan (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 96-121 (p. 97).
[33] Compare to Moylan's analysis of Bloch's utopian function. See: Moylan, 'Bloch against Bloch', p. 97.
[34] Bronner, 'Utopian Projections: In Memory of Ernst Bloch', p. 166.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ernst Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, trans. by Anthony A. Nassar (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 173.

otherness is in Lawrence's sketches a reminder of the open-ended possibility for new modes of understanding and being.

Translation, and the Limitations of Language

When Alfred Knopf suggested translating the title of the novel *Quetzalcoatl* to *The Plumed Serpent*, Lawrence was rather unconvinced. Writing to the Knopfs, he requested: 'Will you please put under the title, on the title page, "Quetzalcoatl" – so it is obvious that *The Plumed Serpent* is a translation. THE PLUMED SERPENT (QUETZALCOATL)'.[37] Lawrence's expressed desire for readers to know that the title was in fact a translation of the Mesoamerican name is significant. The novel is framed as a translation of Mexican culture through the eyes of an outside observer, but also as a translation of the more vital modes of being Lawrence associated with indigenous cultures into the abstract category of language.

In terms of language, the act of translation reflects an attempt to bridge the gap between the self and the other. This is an intrinsically creative and mediative act; after all, the idea of translation does not presume a direct correlation between languages, but instead requires the translator to negotiate and interpret the idiosyncrasies and nuances of language in order to make the foreign comprehensible. De Filippis has noted how 'translation as cultural mediation ... can also be referred to travel writing, as both travel writers and translators try to reproduce an alterity in order to make unknown or unfamiliar elements of other cultures known to their readers.'[38] In attempting to make the unknown knowable, and otherness legible, translation reflects both a desire to look outside of the self, and an opposing

[37] Lawrence, 'To Alfred and Blanche Knopf, 20 October 1925', in *Letters*, V, pp. 320-1 (p. 320).
[38] Filippis, 'D. H. Lawrence and Cultural Mediation', p. 267.

appreciation of the potential for otherness to add nuance to an existing awareness of one's situation in the world. Michelucci argues that Lawrence's translations of Giovanni Verga demonstrate 'the creativity of an artist who was constantly open to new literary experiments which were rooted in a deep knowledge of other cultures, the transmission and sharing of which he always perceived as a never-ending enrichment of his own.'[39] In emphasising the idea of translation, Lawrence anticipates the possibility of achieving a more vital understanding of the world outside the self, whilst simultaneously recognising that the extent of such understanding is inherently approximate and uncertain.

In all three texts, but particularly *Morning in Mexico*, Lawrence emphasises the uncertainty of translation in order to explore the extent to which one can confidently know what it is to be other than oneself. He increasingly draws attention to dialect as the manifestation of local and individual difference, as is evident in the revisions he made to early drafts. In 'Walk to Huayapa', Lawrence's narrator observes Rosalino speaking in Spanish to other local people, as opposed to speaking in his own local dialect. Curious, the narrator enquires why Rosalino has made this choice, and he responds 'Because they don't speak the *idioma* in my village.'[40] In the manuscript version, and the carbon copy of the subsequent typescript, the narrator reflects: 'He [Rosalino] means, presumably, that there are dialectic differences.'[41] Such 'dialectic differences' would seem to imply that otherness is an intrinsic quality, an eternal and insurmountable opposition between the self and the world. Yet, when revising the typescript, Lawrence replaced 'dialectic' with 'dialect', so the sentence then read: 'he means, presumably, that there are dialect differences.'[42] In her editorial notes for the Cambridge

[39] Stefania Michelucci, 'Translation', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 76-89 (p. 87).
[40] D. H. Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 29.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

edition, Hyde argues that this change shows Lawrence ‘choosing the word more associated with language inflection, not a term more prevalent in philosophical discourse.’[43] Otherness here is illuminated by local nuances of language and dialect. Where ‘dialectic’ difference, implicit in the subject itself, suggests that otherness is ultimately irretrievable through language, ‘dialect differences’ implies that the impression of otherness arises through the mediative process of translation. Neil Roberts notes how, as ‘the epitome of incomprehensible “otherness”, Rosalino becomes for Lawrence “one of those, like myself”’.[44] While the failure of translation prevents understanding of others and otherness, it creates a space for more empathetic engagements between the self and other.

Although it is a source of ambiguity and uncertainty, Lawrence repeatedly uses dialect to explore the possibility of understanding other modes of living and being. This is particularly evident in the changes he made to *Quetzalcoatl* when rewriting it as *The Plumed Serpent*. When rewriting the scene in which Kate contemplates her decision to travel to the lake at Sayula and spends some time reflecting on the local population and their history, Lawrence added the lines:

> They were of many tribes and many languages, and far more alien to one another than Frenchmen, English, and Germans are. Mexico! It is not really even the beginnings of a nation: hence the rabid assertion of nationalism in the few. And it is not a race.[45]

With the addition of these lines, language and dialect become the locus of Kate’s consideration of difference. In *Quetzalcoatl*, without this passage, Kate’s depiction of

[43] Virginia Crosswhite Hyde, ‘Explanatory Notes’, in *Mornings in Mexico*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 239-322 (p. 248).
[44] Neil Roberts, ‘Travel Writing and Writing about Place’, in *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, ed. by Andrew Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 141-50 (p. 148).
[45] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 76.

Mexico's population stresses their unity over their difference. In *The Plumed Serpent* the insertion of this passage changes this emphasis as Lawrence uses the idea of language and dialect to stress their difference as opposed to their sameness. Kate's perception that 'There is some Indian quality which pervades the whole' is thus balanced by an opposing sense that this perception of sameness is in fact a reflection of the European observer.[46] The homogenising effect of language underscores the unknowability of otherness for Kate, and yet it is also language which offers a means of deciphering its bewildering reality.

Lawrence identifies differences in language and the process of translation as a source of radical ambiguity. Language is suggested to be the manifestation of an individual's understanding and yet it is an understanding which is inherently limited and uncertain. In the Cambridge text of 'The Mozo', while reflecting on Rosalino's learning of Spanish at a night-school, the narrator writes:

> Then if he can speak his quantum of Spanish, and read it and write it to an uncertain extent, he will return to his village two days' journey on foot into the hills, and then, in time, he may even rise to be alcade, or head-man of the village, responsible to the government.[47]

Yet, the extent of Rosalino's capacity to read and write Spanish is described differently in various iterations of the essay. While Rosalino's 'quantum of Spanish' may be limited, in the manuscript version of the text the extent of his understanding is described as being 'certain'. However, in the revisions Lawrence made to the carbon copy of the typescript of the text he changed 'certain' to 'uncertain', and in the subsequent text published in *The Adelphi* he changed it again to 'very uncertain'. In this revised form, not only is Rosalino's

[46] Ibid.
[47] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 40.

understanding limited – it is also ambiguous and 'uncertain'. Significantly, this casts doubt on the extent to which translation can ever be judged to be accurate or correct. Macadré-Nguyên argues that Lawrence used ideas of 'mistranslation' or 'untranslatability' to evoke language idiosyncratically 'in a way that can alienate, estrange, or at least raise doubts and questions in his readers.'[48] Here, the increasingly uncertain and ambiguous extent of Rosalino's understanding both contrasts the overly mentalised, language-based understanding of the narrator, and casts doubt on the extent to which one can ever truly be sure of the nature of the relationship between subjective reality and the world outside of the self.

Lawrence demonstrates an acute awareness of the role of language in mediating between the self and the other, particularly in his emphasis on ideas of conversation and polyphony. This is exemplified in *Mornings in Mexico* in his decision to italicise different voices. In the original draft of the 'The Mozo', for example, Lawrence wrote 'They say: Your child is sick. *Si señor!* What have you done for it?—Nothing. What is to be done?—You must make a poultice. I will show you—.'[49] Yet in the revised typescript, he added additional italicisation, so the section read: 'They say: Your child is sick. *Si Señor!* What have you done for it?—*Nothing. What is to be done?*—You must make a poultice. I will show you—.'[50] On one hand the italicisation suggests mimicry and begs the eternal question of postcolonial criticism: who can, and should, speak for whom.[51] Yet on the other hand, the italicisation indicates the differentiation of voices and underscores the agency of each. De Filippis has argued that for Lawrence it is important for translators to be '"visible" and creative, insofar as they do not have to seek to conceal the alterity of the source language and cultures, but rather make

[48] Brigitte Macadré-Nguyên, 'Stripping the Veil of Familiarity from the World: D. H. Lawrence's Art of Language in "The Border-Line"', *Études Lawrenciennes*, 44 (2013), 169-86 <https://journals.openedition.org/lawrence/194> [Accessed 07/02/22] (para. 1).
[49] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 38.
[50] Ibid.
[51] This question is memorably explored in Gayatri Spivak's essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1985). See: Gayatri Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), pp. 271-313.

readers aware of the presence of the original text behind its translation.'[52] At a conceptual level the same is true here as the addition of the italicisation makes the narrator's role in mediating the encounter more overt. Indeed, De Filippis has noted in Lawrence's translations of Verga, that 'all exchanges are based on reciprocity'.[53] In this instance, by distinguishing between the different voices, the narrator draws attention to the agency of the individuals being described, and to the role of the narrator in negotiating between them and rendering the interaction through language. Lawrence draws attention to the reciprocal relationship between the self and the subject. Understanding is generated through this conversation-like exchange, though the precise nature of the relationship between the narrator and his subjects remains uncertain and ambiguous.

The sense of uncertainty and doubt concerning the extent to which language can translate otherness into something knowable is similarly developed in Lawrence's juxtaposition of the profuse nature of individual experience and the fixed categories of language. This is particularly evident in Lawrence's repeated juxtaposition of a hard, definite Europeanness with images of abundance and multiplicity in relation to the local cultures being observed. In *The Plumed Serpent*, while reflecting on what Quetzalcoatl embodied to the ancient indigenous populations of Mexico, Kate observes:

> All a confusion of contradictory gleams of meaning, Quetzalcoatl. But why not? Her Irish spirit was weary to death of definite meanings, and a god of one fixed purport. Gods should be iridescent, like the rainbow in the storm.[54]

[52] Filippis, 'D. H. Lawrence and Cultural Mediation', p. 280.
[53] Ibid., p. 288.
[54] D. H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, ed. by L. D. Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 58.

Lawrence mediates the perceived differences in religious belief through comparisons with language. Where Catholicism is associated with deathly 'definite meanings', the imagined religion of Quetzalcoatl is aligned with a plurality of 'contradictory meanings.' Simple 'definite meanings' fail. Exploring the notion of hybridity in *The Plumed Serpent*, Andrew Keese has written about the hybrid form of Lawrence's writing speaking 'to the messiness of culture'.[55] Likewise, the affront of otherness – and in particular, its tendency to deny simple explanation – similarly speaks to the 'messiness' of individual perception. Impressions are forever evolving and changing, and such change in Lawrence's writings always suggests the true complexity of the relations which comprise reality. Otherness is, in all three texts, an affront to the simplicity of individual assumptions. Yet, this affront also prompts Kate into closer investigation of the 'iridescent' and suggestive otherness she associates with Quetzalcoatl. Such iridescence appeals to the ambiguousness of otherness and its tendency to prevent and frustrate simple articulation, and yet it also draws attention to how language refracts, or mediates, truth from reality through the subjectivity of the observer. In Quetzalcoatl's iridescence, Kate anticipates the possibility of a new method for understanding the relationship between the individual and the world, even if she cannot express it directly or objectively.

Since it is elusively other, Quetzalcoatl represents for Kate something similar to what Foucault terms a teratology of knowledge. In philosophy, a teratology is a place of abnormality, difference, and divergence from the assumed norm, and it is by its very nature affrontive. Foucault suggests that a teratology of knowledge demonstrates the finitude of one system of truth and the potential for alternative systems to exist. In this case, Quetzalcoatl exists as a form of teratology for Kate in that the impression of its otherness enacts a form of

[55] Andrew Keese, 'Hybridity and the Postcolonial Solution in D. H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent'*, in *D. H. Lawrence: New Critical Perspectives and Cultural Translation*, ed. by Simonetta de Filippis (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), pp. 187-212 (p. 188).

resistance, contradicting and challenging 'definite meanings', and denying complete comprehension. Though otherness resists comprehension it is a reminder in Lawrence's works of the possibility of other modes of being and understanding.

Prior to this moment, Kate reflects on the frustrating ambiguity and indefinite nature of otherness: 'Perhaps something came out of the earth, the dragon of the earth, some effluence, some vibration which militated against the very composition of the blood and nerves in human beings. … Or perhaps even from the silent, serpent-like dark resistance of those masses of ponderous natives whose blood was principally the old, heavy, resistant Indian blood.'[56] While Lawrence's language here is colonialist in its amalgamation of the indigenous population into a homogenous mass of 'natives', his emphasis on the idea of resistance draws attention back to the narrative as a projection of an outside observer. Yet, the very idea of the world resisting the individual's gaze is once more undermined by the association of the 'silent, serpent-like dark resistance' with an organicist understanding of the 'blood'. There is a dual sense here that the affront of otherness prompts a variety of feelings which resist rationalised expression in language, but also an awareness that in attempting to make sense of such complex and elusive feelings one necessarily projects oneself upon the world. The scene undoubtedly represents a colonial response to the indigenous population, and yet it also suggests an underlying doubt as to the truth of the impression itself, which undermines and challenges the same colonial assumptions.

In rendering otherness as such, Lawrence not only anticipates the plurality of possibilities for new understanding but actively brings them into being by demonstrating the limited capacity for language to convey meaning. Crispian Neill has argued in the case of the short story 'The Woman Who Rode Away' that Lawrence 'stress[es] the redundancy of language as a

[56] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 55.

medium' in order to 'evoke ... that which cannot be described'.[57] Paradoxically, in recognising the limited capacity of her own language and relinquishing the need for 'definite meanings' Kate is able to appreciate the possibility that other forms of belief and understanding are possible. Macadré-Nguyên has observed how 'Lawrence's use of language … aims at stripping the veil of familiarity from the world in order to reveal what has been obscured by habit or blindness.'[58] Here a similar effect is achieved as Kate's rejection of 'definite meanings' produces a form of estrangement, using the ambiguous otherness of the Quetzalcoatl symbolism to reaffirm the possibility of a more vital and intuitive understanding of the exterior world.

The contrast between the definite meanings ascribed by language and the plurality of associations it inspires is acutely evident in *Mornings in Mexico*. In attempting to convey the complexity and nuances of indigenous beliefs and practices, Lawrence's narrator engages in increasingly self-referential passages of description. In doing this, he sustains an impression of indecipherability and complexity which undermines the colonial expectation that one can objectively know and record the reality of others. In an early draft of 'The Hopi Snake Dance', the narrator suggests that: 'To the Hopi, the origins are dark and dual and circle after circle creation emerges towards a flickering, revealed godhead.'[59] However, this was later revised to read: 'To the Hopi, the origins are dark and dual, cruelty is coiled in the very beginning of all things, and circle after circle creation emerges towards a flickering, revealed godhead.'[60] The addition of 'cruelty is coiled in the very beginning of all things' suggests the feeling that underlying the impression of otherness is a sense of antagonism and danger. In

[57] Crispian Neill, '"The incident… is spoiled inevitably in the telling": Language-Games and Narrative Identity in Charlotte Mew and D. H. Lawrence', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 38.2 (2013), 45-57 (para. 16).
[58] Macadré-Nguyên, 'Stripping the Veil of Familiarity from the World: D. H. Lawrence's Art of Language in "The Border-Line"', para. 3.
[59] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 93.
[60] Ibid.

combination with the image of a dark past re-emerging ‘circle after circle’, the feeling of potential danger and ‘cruelty’ is a reminder of both the affrontive otherness of the world outside the self and the individual’s inability to comprehend the reality it represents.

In all three works, Lawrence identifies the attempt to mediate the apparent strangeness of Mexico and New Mexico with a longing to understand and make legible the infinite strangeness of being. There are clear parallels with Bloch’s theorising of the sublime strangeness of language. Bloch notes that in writing ‘one could drown trying to understand all this, which ultimately remains alien. We stand there no wiser than before, perhaps less, for our longing did not enter with us, and yet the wrong kind of abundance came.’[61] For Bloch the process of analysing and interpreting the present is reflective of the individual’s ‘longing’ for, and anticipation of, future events. Lawrence’s responses to otherness also produce an ‘abundance’ of possible meanings which create an ‘infinite strangeness’. The rendering of otherness sustains the possibility of coming-to-understand the reality of a being other than oneself, by estranging one’s subject, and heightening one’s awareness of its ‘alien’ and unknowable quality. Just as Bloch identifies a utopian ‘longing’ which underlies this search for significance in one’s experience, Lawrence’s own efforts to render the otherness he finds in Mexico suggest that the act of engaging with otherness itself is an open-ended process of coming-to-understand that which is not-yet conscious.

Up to this point, the chapter has shown how Lawrence uses the idea of language as an approximate translation of being to explore the relationship between the self and the world. All three works suggest that writing cannot reproduce the reality of other modes of being and knowing, but it does provide a means of considering and estranging the relationship between the self and the other. The approximate nature of translation, as a metaphor for a more vitally

[61] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 196.

attuned mode of writing about the world, fosters in its ambiguity the plurality of conflicting feelings which otherness inspires in Lawrence's narrators. In the gap between the word and the thing being described, his works locate the possibility for truthfulness to arise, even if its precise nature is not-yet apparent or conscious. The ambiguity which arises through the attempt to render otherness allows Lawrence to suggest in the apparent strangeness of the exterior world a potent source of inspiration for new and investigative considerations of alternative modalities of thought and being.

Sentimentality, Strangeness, and Self-hood.

Lawrence made a conscious effort to differentiate his writings from the work of earlier and contemporary European travel writers. 'Even a man like Adolf Bandelier', Lawrence writes in *Mornings in Mexico*, 'He was not a sentimental man. On the contrary. Yet the sentimentality creeps in, when he writes about the thing he knows best, the Indian.'[62] In his dismissal of Bandelier's treatment of the 'thing he knows best', Lawrence challenges the belief that travel writers can ever be objective. However unsentimental one may be, the truth of one's conclusions is forever mediated through the feelings. Lawrence remains acutely sensitive to how rendering otherness through language is to project upon it strangely familiar visions of one's own self. Ria Banerjee has argued that Lawrence's emphasis on the self-reflexive nature of language when addressing otherness draws attention to the problem that 'to put this otherness into words, to "express one stream in terms of another" necessarily means applying the implicit standards of one stream to the other – and thus paves the way for

[62] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 60.

the failure of the interpretive eye.'[63] The difficulty Lawrence finds in articulating otherness is a direct reminder of its actuality. Yet, as Banerjee observes, it is not enough to simply observe difference because 'it is downright dangerous to express this difference through language, that familiar system of significations that carries within it a burden of tacit power dynamics. To do so invariably leads to falseness and sentimentality.'[64] By not only recognising the difference that otherness represents, but stressing the living reality it conceals, Lawrence can be seen to try to resist his own sentimentalising of racial and historical otherness. The affront of otherness makes strange the habitual processes of perception through which we engage with the world.[65]

Typifying this resistance, Lawrence reflects at length on the need to relinquish pre-existing expectations and assumptions concerning otherness in the essay 'Indians and Entertainment'. There he writes: 'We want to be taken out of ourselves. Or not entirely that. We want to become spectators at our own show.'[66] This suggests a proto-double consciousness in the form of the narration with the narrator recognising himself as both the spectator and the object viewed. In a later passage, Lawrence goes even further, declaring:

> You've got to de-bunk the Indian, as you've got to de-bunk the Cowboy. When you've debunked the Cowboy, there's not much left. But the Indian bunk is not the Indian's invention. It is ours. It is almost impossible for white people to approach the Indian without either sentimentality or dislike. The common healthy

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[63] Ria Banerjee, 'The Search for Pan: Difference and Morality in D. H. Lawrence's "St Mawr" and "The Woman Who Rode Away"', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 37.1 (2012), 65-89 (68).
[64] Ibid.
[65] Macadré-Nguyên, 'Stripping the Veil of Familiarity from the World: D. H. Lawrence's Art of Language in "The Border-Line"', para. 3.
[66] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 59.

vulgar white usually feels a certain native dislike of these drumming aboriginals. The highbrow invariably lapses into sentimentalism like the smell of bad eggs.[67]

There are two contesting attitudes regarding the knowability of otherness at work in this passage. On one hand, Lawrence maintains the impression of an intrinsic racialised difference between 'white people' and 'these drumming aboriginals', a difference which cannot be overcome. However, simultaneously, the declaration that 'the Indian bunk is not the Indian's invention. It is ours' suggests that the apparent unknowability of otherness does not reflect intrinsic difference but instead the tendency of the narrator to sentimentalise and obscure the reality of otherness. Lawrence's attitude here suggests an almost post-colonial appreciation of difference as being, like the impression itself, a reality without actuality. The individual perceives difference precisely because their existence is isolate and bounded by the self, but this is not to imply that otherness is intrinsic to the person, culture or thing being observed. Ernst Bloch describes a similar idea when he reflects: 'everything solid has gradually become not a matter of experience, but just a base habit.'[68] One's sincere engagement with the material actuality of one's subjects is, for Lawrence and Bloch, forever at risk of being distorted by the mindlessness of habit.

Lawrence calls out to a similar sense of dissolution when he continues: 'The secret of it all, is that we detach ourselves from the painful and always solid trammels of actual existence, and become creatures of memory and of spirit-like consciousness.'[69] The self is forever distinguishing and dissociating itself from the strangeness and otherness which characterises

[67] Ibid., pp. 60-1.
[68] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 167; Further comparison can be made here with Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of the mythologising of reason in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944). Compare Lawrence's critique of sentimentality to Adorno and Horkheimer's argument that advances in understanding afforded by reason, though initially progressive, risk becoming regressive when the reproduction of a particular logic is prioritised ahead of the sincere and creative engagement with one's subject. Habit produces for Horkheimer and Adorno a mindlessness which prevents meaningful understanding.
[69] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 59.

the actuality of being. In *The Plumed Serpent*, in Ramón's letters attempting to appease 'the socialists and agitators', he observes how 'Life makes, and moulds, and changes the problem. The problem will always be there, and will always be different. So nothing can be solved, even by life and living, for life dissolves and resolves, solving it leaves alone.'[70] The otherness of life stems from this perpetual process of coming together and diverging once more. To try to definitively resolve this process is futile, just as the attempt to resolve the otherness of life is for Lawrence an absurd reflection of human sentimentality. In *Mornings in Mexico*, he notes the absurd sentimentality in the distinction he draws between the actuality of being, and the performative illusion of being offered on the stage. Drawing comparisons with the self-conscious performance of a child actor, he observes that in reality 'it is the little individual consciousness lording it, for the moment, over the actually tiresome and inflexible world of actuality.'[71] In order to apprehend reality, Lawrence suggests, one needs to look outwards and realise that the world is not the summation of the self, but that it exists in vast and terrifying opposition to the self.

While one cannot objectively know the nature of otherness, Lawrence suggests that one can sustain a form of relative understanding at the level of instinct. By rendering the perplexing flux of feeling and association which underlie impression of otherness, his narrators become more receptive to the reality it represents. In 'The Hopi Snake Dance' essay of *Mornings in Mexico*, he notes how:

> Man, small, vulnerable man, the farthest adventurer from the dark heart of the first of suns, into the cosmos of creation. … Submit to the strange beneficence from

[70] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, pp. 360, 361.
[71] Lawrence, *The Mornings in Mexico*, p. 59.

> the Source, whose ways are past finding out. And conquer the strange malevolence of the Source, which is past comprehension also.[72]

Here the effluential issue of life aligns with the issue of how one can understand one's situation within the strange otherness of the universe. Lawrence envisions the individual, like the narrator, as a traveller and 'adventurer' undertaking a continual journey of discovery, through which he better understands his relationship with the world. But here he introduces the paradox that the radical difference that is the root of all being is 'past finding out.' One cannot come to know it directly but must first 'Submit to the strange beneficence from the Source' in order to 'conquer' its 'strange malevolence', which is similarly 'past comprehension'. There is a paradox here, for though the otherness of 'the Source' is unknowable, in not attempting to objectively know the world one paradoxically comes to a more vital understanding of the actuality of the world outside the self. This attitude underlies Lawrence's particular responsiveness to the affront of otherness as in the experience of coming up against something antipathetic to the charade of one's reality he suggests a renewed and more vital awareness of one's situation in the world can emerge. Booth argues that across Lawrence's writings 'The ability of the self to change and reform are constrained by the habits that limit the field of life to the known and already experienced. Travel and the engagement with others help combat habit.'[73] The affront of otherness – and the difficulty Lawrence's narrators find in its articulation – thus enacts a form of estrangement which extends and illuminates how language mediates the relationship between the self and the other.

[72] Ibid., p. 92.
[73] Howard J. Booth, '"Give me differences": Lawrence, Psychoanalysis, and Race', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 27.2/3 (1997), 171-96 (182).

Lawrence enacts a continual process of estrangement by emphasising opposing feelings of convergence and divergence in relation to otherness. For example, as the narrator observes people departing from the market in the 'Market Day' sketch of *Mornings in Mexico*, he notes:

> here they have felt life concentrate upon them, they have been jammed between the soft hot bodies of strange men come from afar, they have had the sound of strangers' voices in their ears, they have asked and been answered in unaccustomed ways.[74]

In his use of the collective 'they' to describe the marketgoers, Lawrence first creates the impression of the crowds as a homogenous mass. This is a typical colonialist trope, for as Mary Louise Pratt notes: 'The people to be othered are homogenized into a collective "they" which is distilled even further into an iconic "he" ... to fix the Other in a timeless present where all "his" actions ... are repetitions of "his" normal habits.'[75] It is this tendency to 'crude generalization' with regard to the indigenous populations of the regions he visits which Templeton critiques in Lawrence's writings of the period.[76] Yet at the same time Lawrence offers a counter-vision which isolates the individual observer, and prompts empathetic and imaginative engagements with those and that which appear radically different. The 'unaccustomed ways' of language become the manifestation of this collective experience of strangeness, just as for Lawrence's narrators it is through writing that otherness can be made legible. Bloch reflects that one's isolation in the world is confirmed by the realisation that 'we mean little to each other, [and] can pass unsuspectingly by one another'.[77] He adds

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[74] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 55.
[75] Mary Louise Pratt, 'Scratches on the Face of the Country: Or, What Mr Barrow Saw in the Lad of the Bushmen', *Critical Inquiry*, 12.1 (Autumn 1985), 119-43 (120).
[76] Templeton, '"Indians and an Englishman": Lawrence in the American Southwest', 21.
[77] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 165.

poignantly that even ‘when the possibility of helping, of becoming another’ arises, ‘the nasty way we have of warming our hearts with vanity appears, and the prospect still remains empty.[78] Resisting this tendency, Lawrence’s sketch suggests that the affront of otherness disturbs and subverts the individual’s habitual drift into solipsism and introspection. The combination of being affronted by otherness and needing to articulate this experience prompts Lawrence’s narrators into vital and more instinctual engagements with the world outside of the self.

Lawrence’s rendering of otherness here bridges the gap between the mediative vision of literary impressionism and what Thomas S. Davis identifies as a claim of later modernisms, ‘that we might discern in everyday life those multidirectional histories that touch us and often disappear.’[79] In the impression of otherness Lawrence anticipates the actuality of other lives, and other modalities of being. Drawing a contrast between the apparent normality of the market scene and the underlying sense of strangeness and difference, the narrator suggests people coming together in a shared experience, whilst simultaneously becoming more acutely conscious of the variety and diversity of human life. In the market, Lawrence’s narrator produces a vision of humanity united in its collective difference. Bell has noted Lawrence’s belief that ‘The true mystery of individual others is subsumed into our habitual assumption of understanding them.’[80] In this instance, by juxtaposing the apparent normality of the scene with the strange impression of being in close proximity to difference Lawrence suggests how the difference which underlies human life can re-emerge through the intuition. Bell has observed that ‘Lawrence constantly revived the mystery’ of that which is ‘irreducibly

[78] Ibid.
[79] Thomas S. Davis, *The Extinct Scene: Late Modernism and Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), p. 231.
[80] Michael Bell, ‘D. H. Lawrence, Philosophy and the Novel: A Nagging Question’, *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, 3.3 (2014), 51-69 (65).

other'.[81] In sustaining the mystery of otherness Lawrence investigates the possibility of understanding the reality it represents, even if the precise nature of this understanding is prone to dissolve into ambiguity.

The idea of otherness suggesting a more vital mode of understanding whilst eluding complete expression is further developed through Lawrence's increasingly circumlocutory evocations of symbolism. Where otherness affronts and denies language, Lawrence often draws attention to how indirect and symbolic modes of expression can allow individuals to probe, decipher, and better understand that which is immediately other. For example, in the manuscript version of 'Market Day', the narrator reflects prophetically:

> When space is curved, and the cosmos is sphere within sphere, and the way from any one point to any other point is round the bend of the inevitable, that turns as the tips of the broad wings of the hawk turn upwards, leaning upon the air like the visible half of the ellipse.[82]

Through the abstraction of this passage Lawrence probes the relationship between rational thought and perception. Where language seeks to identify concretely 'the way from' – or the relation between – 'any one point to any other points' it can do so only 'round the bend of the inevitable' abstraction. Yet in doing so it can only show 'the visible half the ellipse' – the half which is visible on account of being articulable. The other half, formed from instinct, remains invisible, inarticulable and ambiguously other. Booth notes some critical agreement regarding how 'Lawrence sought to think using extended images, where the language is stretched and pressured to suggest new possibilities – though modernist fragmentation, with an attendant collapse of connection, is resisted.'[83] While the general principle of this argument seems

[81] Bell, 'D. H. Lawrence, Philosophy and the Novel', p. 65.
[82] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 50.
[83] Booth, 'Introduction', p. 9.

correct, it does not fully convey precisely how such ‘extended images’ come to ‘suggest new possibilities’ for understanding. In this case, Lawrence uses the addition of each new symbol to illuminate the underlying pattern of intuition from which the impression arises. Through lengthy passages of overlapping symbolism his sketches highlight the potential for understanding even if its precise nature remains ambiguous.

The changes Lawrence made to this passage deepened this ambiguity still further. While in the manuscript he compares the wings of the hawk to ‘the visible half of the ellipse’, in the revised typescript he changed ‘visible’ to ‘invisible’. This inversion ties into the narrator’s early suggestion that he is concerned with the ‘intangible’ as opposed to the ‘tangible’. The mental and empirical use of language, just like instinct, can only provide a form of half-truth. To conceive the full ‘sphere’ of truth one must use language in a way which engages and mediates both the mental and instinctual aspects of individual consciousness. Bloch observes that ‘Only in the cloudy, shimmering aspect of being-there ... which feels and wants to become aware ... of itself, is one together with the truly infinite, the immediate, out of which alone the truth looks towards us’.[84] To evoke the ‘cloudy’ and ambiguous otherness of ‘being-there’ Lawrence repeatedly engages in long revisionary passages of extended symbolism. Such passages, despite being rooted in reality, reach out in the abstract to a modality of being and knowing which is otherwise inconceivable.

This sense of Lawrence groping for a form of understanding which is entirely alien and other to the self is particularly evident in his tendency to abstraction. The very experience of otherness sits in opposition to the embodied reality of the self. Lawrence’s impression of language, and the mental forms of rationality which produce it, diverging from the elusive otherness of being is evidenced in his attentiveness to the affront of abstraction. For example,

[84] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 198.

in the opening scene of *Quetzalcoatl*, at the bullfight, Lawrence describes how 'the young American's [Villiers'] face was calm and cold, unmoved, his eyes just coolly decided. … The Mexican diminished in importance.'[85] However, when the novel was rewritten, Lawrence changed the line, so it reads 'the young American's [Villiers'] face was so cold and abstract, only the eyes showing a primitive, bird-like fire, that the Mexican was nonplussed.'[86] The change from 'calm and cold, unmoved' to 'so cold and abstract' places a greater emphasis on 'otherness' as a form of abstraction and removal. Yet the emphasis on Villiers' growing abstraction appears immediately antithetical to the animalism and primitivism suggested by the additional revision of the phrase 'his eyes just coolly decided' to 'only the eyes showing a primitive, bird-like fire.' Both abstract and animal, the mutually negating nature of these ideas produces in their contradiction an imminent strangeness. Villiers appears both abstractly absent and bestially present. His otherness manifests itself in this impression of in-betweenness, being both active, and immediately present, and yet still seemingly insubstantial.

In this context, the affront of otherness estranges not only the act of cultural observation in Lawrence's writings, but also the individual's situation within the circumambient universe. N. S. Boone has compared Lawrence's conception of the relationship between Being and otherness with Heidegger's argument that 'Being is always already conditioned by the infinity of the otherness which calls it into responsibility for itself.'[87] This 'infinity of otherness' is evident in Lawrence's developing responses to otherness, for as Childs has observed, 'Lawrence came to see the "primitive" as both in touch with an essential way of being and at one with a communal nature that would swallow up individuality.'[88] And yet,

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[85] D. H. Lawrence, *Quetzalcoatl*, ed. by N. H. Reeve (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 10.
[86] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, pp. 12-3.
[87] N. S. Boone, 'D. H. Lawrence Between Heidegger and Levinas: Individuality and Otherness', *REN*, 68.1 (Winter 2016), 49-70 (56).
[88] Childs, 'National and Racial Aesthetics', p. 62.

Boone argues, Lawrence's writing also suggests some similarities with Emmanuel Levinas' critique of 'the value Heidegger places on the flourishing of the individual, its freedom to be, against the face of the Other which not only puts into question that freedom, but essentially negates any sense of pure freedom in being.'[89] When evoking otherness, Boone argues that Lawrence demonstrates both the belief that one can be in and of oneself, and the opposing belief that one can only truly be by recognising the possibility of one's not-being. Lawrence's impressions of otherness act as a reminder of the contingent and relative nature of subjective reality.

The idea of the affront of otherness as a reminder of the provisionality of one's reality is reflected prominently in Lawrence's references to notions of dimensionality, measurement, and conversion. For example, in the 'Corasmin and the Parrots' sketch of *Mornings in Mexico*, the narrator observes:

> If you come to think of it, when you look at the monkey you are looking straight into the other dimension. He's got length and breadth and height all right, and he's in the same universe of Space and time as you are. But there's another dimension. He's different.[90]

The dimensions of 'length and breadth and height' allow the observer to recognise the physical reality of the other, just as language allows the individual to signal reality, but the characteristics it describes are limited to the scales one has available, just as language can only articulate that which we have words for. The self thus manifests a particular ontology, just as the physical body exists in three-dimensional space. The self and other for Lawrence do not exist within the same spectrum, and they do not share the same ontological scale; they

[89] Boone, 'D. H. Lawrence Between Heidegger and Levinas: Individuality and Otherness', 56.
[90] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 16.

reflect entirely different dimensions of being. While otherness might arise 'in the same universe of Space and time' as the individual, otherness as the gleam of a 'different' mode of Being is demonstrative not only of an alternative way of living, but also of an entirely different ontology so far removed from the self that it exists as if in an alternative dimension.

To know what it is to be other to oneself, Lawrence's works suggest, one needs to deliberately estrange one's vision. To attempt to make otherness legible according to the language and assumptions of the self is to misidentify the alternative possibilities for being and knowing it represents. Elise Brault-Dreux argues that Lawrence employs a strategy 'of purposefully not knowing, combining deficient mental apprehension with intense physical experience.'[91] Characterising this strategy as one of 'deliberate naiveté', Brault-Dreux argues that Lawrence uses the experience of not-knowing to express the authorial belief that 'the perception of the other should be unspoilt by mental knowledge and transgressive mental analysis.'[92] Lawrence's repeated appeals to the strangeness of being – as opposed to not-being – suggest a conscious strategy through which he estranges the processes of intuition which sustain one's reality in order to engage imaginatively with the reality of being other to oneself.

The chapter has so far demonstrated how Lawrence uses the idea of the affront of otherness as a means of defending against the sentimentality which arises through habitual, self-conscious engagements with the world. The experience of being affronted disrupts and resists the mindlessness with which Lawrence suggests the self sentimentally projects itself upon the world. I have shown how Lawrence appeals to the actuality of otherness by adopting abstract forms of symbolism to explore the relationship between the self and the vast impersonality of

[91] Elise Brault-Dreux, 'Responding to Non-Human Otherness: Poems by D. H. Lawrence and Katherine Mansfield', *D. H. Lawrence* Review, 37.2 (2012), 22-43 (36).
[92] Ibid.

the world outside the of the self. In turn, I have established a basis for understanding how Lawrence emphasises the need to suppress the self-conscious, insincere aspects of the self in order to achieve a new and naïve understanding of one's situation in the world. Significantly, in ironising the human tendency to project oneself upon what is entirely and impersonally other, the chapter has begun to show how otherness reflects a form of the not-yet conscious. There are alternative ways of being, and Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writings are clearly conscious of this, but they can only be expressed through the negation of the self.

Darkness, Invisibility, and the Satiation of Meaning

In his writings on Mexico and the Southwest, Lawrence repeatedly expresses the antithetical nature of otherness in terms of the contrast between the visible and invisible. In the essay 'New Mexico', he reflects how 'Superficially, the world has become small and known ... There is no mystery left, we've been there, we've seen it, we know all about it. We've done the globe, and the globe is done.'[93] For the tourist, just as for the travel writer, Lawrence suggests the ability to see assumes the ability to know, as demonstrated through the anaphora 'We've been there, we've seen it, we know all about it.' Yet this critique also challenges the notion that visuality alone, as evoked in language, can adequately articulate the actuality of the thing being described. The value of language, he notes, lies not in its ability to reproduce the visible, but in its ability to anticipate and illuminate those instinctual feelings which manifest themselves in the invisible. This frustration with the visible is evident in the dual meaning of the phrase 'we've done the globe, and the globe is done' – 'the globe' referring to both the sphere of the earth and the ocular globe of the eyeball. The point of literature, then,

[93] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 175.

is not merely to reproduce what is already visible – since that method has been simply exhausted – but instead to illuminate the other patterns of instinctual truth which have previously remained invisible. In otherness Lawrence anticipates the reality that there are whole shades of truth and understanding which exist outside and independently of the visible.

Across all three texts, darkness prompts Lawrence's narrators to probe the inaccessible nature of otherness. In the 'Walk to Huayapa' sketch in *Mornings in Mexico*, the narrator describes: 'A sense of darkness among the silent mango trees, a sense of lurking, of unwillingness.'[94] In 'Market Day', the narrator observes how 'the mountains ... seem to emit their own darkness'.[95] In 'Indians and Entertainment', Lawrence writes of 'the everlasting darkness'.[96] And in the 'Hopi Snake Dance', the narrator refers to 'that famous darkness and silence of Egypt, the touch of the other mystery.'[97] The pervasiveness of darkness in Lawrence's writings on Mexico and the Southwest, gives credence to Stephen Rowley's claim that 'Perhaps no other writer in English, with the notable inclusion of Conrad, has given so much prominence to darkness.'[98] Storch has similarly noted that whereas amongst his contemporaries darkness popularly 'betokens emptiness and negation, for Lawrence darkness is a life force' and a source of 'fertile and irresistible attraction'.[99] In the overwhelming and consuming quality of darkness Lawrence's narrators find affront and contradiction – but also potency. The obscurity of darkness thus reflects a form of radical ambiguity, in which there is the possibility of new and alternative modes of non-finite understanding.

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[94] Ibid., p. 26.
[95] Ibid., p. 50.
[96] Ibid., p. 63.
[97] Ibid., p. 86.
[98] Stephen Rowley, 'Lawrence and the Taming of the Dark', *Journal of the D. H. Lawrence Society* (2001), 20-38 (20).
[99] Margaret Storch, '"But Not the American of the Whites"; Lawrence's Pursuit of the True Primitive', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 25.1/3 (1993-4), 48-62 (52).

The apparent impenetrability and illegibility of darkness, as Lawrence presents it, suggests the potential for alterity to both inspire and frustrate new engagements with the world. In *Quetzalcoatl*, the narrator describes how:

> The night had been black, black dark, a blackness thick enough to contain anything. This sense of black, *active* darkness was, in Kate's mind, peculiar to Mexico. In all other countries darkness seemed immobile. But here it seemed alive and rather horrifying.[100]

Describing the 'black, black dark, a blackness thick enough to contain anything' Kate dwells repetitiously upon darkness, producing the impression of obscurity through a form of semantic satiation. The repetition of 'darkness' gives the impression of sight quite literally butting up against this almost tactile manifestation of otherness. Rowley argues that, for Lawrence 'Optical vision will have to take a back seat so that tactile vision can bring us into contact. This is why all Lawrentian heroes have eyes that dilate upon the dark'.[101] The living darkness here is not only a reflection of an organicist belief in the relationship between the people and the land, but also indicative of darkness producing a form of introspection. The intensity with which Kate looks into the darkness produces the impression that the darkness is in turn looking back into her. The 'horrifying' darkness is a reminder of Kate's instinctual engagement with the landscape, but also of her isolation and separation. In the otherness and obscurity of darkness, Kate anticipates the actuality of a different mode of being, but also demonstrates an awareness that it can never be fully known. Instead, this more vital mode of being is only ever becoming known, as she deciphers the perplexing feelings and associations the darkness inspires. Gregory Tague has argued that Lawrence constructs a 'sketchy, broad, shadowy background' composed of instinctual truths expressed visually which provide

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[100] Lawrence, *Quetzalcoatl*, p. 269-70.
[101] Rowley, 'Lawrence and the Taming of the Dark', 27.

Lawrence's characters with a 'visual lexicon' allowing them to 'see' through language that which is otherwise incommunicable and invisible.[102] In these terms, the illegibility of darkness frustrates objective expression, whilst drawing Lawrence into ever deeper investigations of complex, plurality of feelings prompted by the impression of otherness.

Darkness is identified in all three works as a reminder of the immediacy and actuality of otherness. Himself adopting the semantics of darkness, Neil Roberts argues that Lawrence recognised 'The things that rose in his soul, and that became himself … did not derive from himself', but instead 'came from without. Or … from so far, far within himself, that it was a great far darkness that surpassed him'.[103] This sense of being surpassed and subsumed by the universality of being in Lawrence's works aligns with the possibility achieving an intimate appreciation of the very issue of subjective reality. Darkness manifests the not-yet conscious aspects of life, those processes of institution, through which the impression of otherness arises. Bloch writes that 'the issue is *the darkness of experiencing in itself*, and of precisely the intense and completely potent kind of experiencing that can only be grasped with such difficulty'.[104] Likewise, darkness serves both as a source of imaginative inspiration for Lawrence and as a semantic device through which he can explore the 'difficulty' of articulating the not-yet conscious aspects of the impression.

The inability of language to decipher otherness recalls Foucault's reminder that 'We must not imagine that the world turns toward us a legible face which we would only have to decipher. The world is not the accomplice of our knowledge.'[105] In the recurrent darkness of Mexico and the Southwest Lawrence suggests the indecipherable impersonality of a world which is

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[102] Gregory Tague, 'Metaphysical Consciousness in the Work of D. H. Lawrence', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 32/33 (2003-2004), 126-38 (130).
[103] Neil Roberts, '[Review] D. H. Lawrence. *Quetzalcoatl.* ed. by N. H. Reeve [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011]', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 37 (2012), 113-5 (115).
[104] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 199.
[105] Michel Foucault, 'The Order of Discourse', in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. by Robert Young (London: Routledge, 1981), pp. 48-78 (p. 67).

not only ‘not an accomplice of our knowledge’, but an antagonistic presence which actively negates the certainty and security of the *known*. In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate recalls how ‘The Country gave her a strange feeling of hopelessness and of dauntlessness. Unbroken, eternally resistant, it was a people that lived without hope, and without care.’[106] Yet, ‘At the same time, she feared them. They would pull her down, pull her down, to the dark depths of nothingness.’[107] The affront of otherness is felt here as a repulsion, and an inescapable attraction, just as otherness not only resists comprehension, but also seems to retain the possibility of a new and more vital understanding of the world. The ambiguity which arises in this simultaneous feeling of attraction and repulsion is similarly reflected in Lawrence’s use of the present tense in relation to the immediate feelings of affront and repulsion, but the future tense to describe Kate’s feeling of inescapable attraction to the otherness of the region. Though otherness may be objectively unknowable, Lawrence highlights how rendering the impression sustains the possibility of future understanding by bringing the individual into closer proximity with the reality of otherness.

Lawrence’s vivid evocations of darkness combine an appreciation of both the world’s resistance to being known, and Bloch’s observation in the case of language that ‘what approaches at least stands closer to the dark self, while “life” itself, grasped as the sum of its moments, dissolves into the unreality of these moments.’[108] Darkness and the inexplicable otherness of life are reflections of future possibility for Bloch and manifest the not-yet-conscious. As Kate rides with Cipriano to Jamiltepec, she descends into a state of twilit near but not-yet consciousness, in which her seemingly mysterious attraction and repulsion from him becomes absolute. In the moment of absolution Lawrence describes how she becomes

[106] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 76.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 199.

‘wordless.’[109] She is described as occupying a place in between the ancient ‘primeval’ past, and the future which is yet to be decided. In this immediate impression of presence, she finds ‘Language had abandoned her’, and, as a result, feels ‘helpless in the vast, unspoken twilight of the Pan world.’[110] Without sufficient language to express this not-yet conscious understanding of the other, alternative modality of being, it remains twilit and only partially illuminated.

The repeated allusions to twilight in the passage concerning the car journey, sustain the impression of partial darkness, without any sense of whether this darkness is falling or rising. All that Kate can do is attempt to negotiate the complex and obscure feelings which this alternative possible mode of being inspires within her. Bloch describes a comparable experience when he notes that ‘The unknowing around us in in the final ground for the manifestation of this world’. Our being in the world for Bloch necessarily depends on our inability to conceive its actuality in a final form.[111] Kate’s impression of a twilit realisation reflects an experience similar to that Bloch describes as ‘the lightning flash of a future knowledge striking unerringly into our darkness and the inconstruable question’, which constitutes ‘sufficient ground for manifestation’ and one’s ‘arrival in the other world.’[112] In the half-light of the car, Kate is struck by the realisation that ‘She could conceive now her marriage with Cipriano’ – she can suddenly anticipate a union with him, even if it still continues to retain ‘the sheer solid mystery of passivity’.[113] Her confusion and bewilderment, and her acceptance of the reality that she cannot know the nature of Cipriano’s otherness, allows for a similar ‘flash of future knowledge’ to arise. The manner in which Lawrence engenders this state of not-knowing makes for uncomfortable reading in light of subsequent

[109] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 311.
[110] Ibid., pp. 311-2.
[111] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 229.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 311.

feminist readings of the text. However, if we accept Lawrence's 'honest grappling', as Newmark terms it, the scene does suggest a sincere attempt to understand how one might come to appreciate the reality of an alternative modality of living and being without necessarily projecting one's own pre-existing attitudes upon it.[114]

Lawrence also suggests otherness to be the manifestation of the not-yet conscious through his emphasis on forms of repetition and rhythm. Repetition enacts the indefinite and processional nature of vision for Lawrence – the use of repetition in his work often reflects the idea the one does not just see, one sees. This argument builds on the current trend in scholarship which recognises Lawrence's use of repetition as a rhetorical device. Bibhu Padhi has observed how this change marks a significant shift in the critical understanding of Lawrence's style away from the dismissive arguments of F. L. Lucas, who derided Lawrence's 'vulgar, horse-whipping style' particularly in his non-fiction, and from Graham Hough, who objected to Lawrence's 'method of incremental repetition to first-shot precision', in favour of a recognition that 'the repetitional style has its strengths.'[115] Rhythm in the Mexico and New Mexico writings in particular is suggestive of Lawrence's engagement with indigenous cultural practices, but also of his attempt to determine a more instinctually attuned mode of connecting with the world through language. Stephen Rowley notes that if Lawrence's repeated use of the semantics of darkness seems 'repetitious and perhaps over-insistent, it is because the language is part of his crusade to redress the balance of life which he feels has become too intellectually oriented.'[116] Lawrence identifies in the rhythm of language a more intuitive form of communication, in which the claim to rational objectivity is contested and challenged by an instinctual responsiveness to sound. Padhi has written that Lawrence's use of repetitious forms reflects an 'appeal to our aural

[114] Newmark, 'Traditional Aesthetics', p. 68.
[115] Padhi, 'D. H. Lawrence's Non-fiction Prose: The Deeper Strains', 42.
[116] Rowley, 'Lawrence and the Taming of the Dark', 32-3.

imagination.'[117] As is particularly evident in Lawrence's recurrent emphasis on forms of darkness, he uses repetition as a means of suggesting a form of being and understanding which exists beyond, and in opposition to, the self. In the case of 'The Hopi Snake Dance', Julianne Newmark has similarly noted how Lawrence projects 'a cosmologically significant aesthetic experience' upon the scene 'with all of its blacks and greys and darkness – but with the faintest glimmer of hope in the powerful emergence of something that is 'far ahead' and can be reached through constellations of dance, utterance and faith.'[118] Lawrence's use of repetition in the case of darkness likewise sustains a form of open-ended pattern, through which one can intuit the form of potential understanding without knowing precisely its nature.

The conception of understanding as a form of unfinished pattern exemplifies Lawrence's larger resistance to the rigid finality of rationalism. The underlying empiricism of this attitude is evident in his association of otherness with the idea that one's understanding is forever being worked out and adjusted according to one's instinctual feelings. The notion that one's understanding (as it is manifest in the impression) is forever unfinished is particularly apparent in his emphasis on forms of softness. Reflecting upon indigenous dances in 'Indians and Entertainment', the narrator observes 'Everything is very soft, subtle, delicate. There is none of the hardness of representation. They are not representing something, not even playing. It is a soft, subtle *being* something.'[119] It is not surprising that the narrator cannot definitively and objectively identify the quality to which he refers, as to do so would be to distort it through the 'hardness of representation' it opposes. Through sibilance Lawrence instead enacts a form of connectedness and relatedness at the level of sound. Noting his tendency to appeal to the sensory as well as representational power of language, Moyal-

[117] Padhi, 'D. H. Lawrence's Non-fiction Prose: The Deeper Strains', 45.
[118] Newmark, 'Traditional Aesthetics', p. 74.
[119] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 65.

Sharrock and Sharrock have argued that for Lawrence 'Thought is not a reductively cerebral activity: "Thought is a man in his wholeness wholly attending."'[120] The assumption that meaningful 'thought' should be 'reductively cerebral' and rationally coherent is to deny the reality that things are related to one another in terms of their difference as well as their sameness. The idea that otherness affronts and denies objective articulation suggests a form of understanding which is felt only in the perceived failure of language to adequately convey the nuance of feeling.

The affront of otherness in all three works thus sustains an open-ended form of engagement with the intense and inarticulable under-deeps of feeling which deny complete articulation. Lawrence develops this idea by repeatedly deferring away from drawing a definitive conclusion as to what the dance ultimately represents. The affront of otherness is instead a shifting entanglement of nuances and inflections which deny such a collective conception. This is evident in the narrator's declaration:

> It has no name. It has no words. It means nothing at all. There is no spectacle, no spectator. Yet perhaps it is the most stirring sight in the world, in the dark, near the fire, with the drums going, the pine-trees standing still, the everlasting darkness, and the strange lifting and dropping, surging, crowing, gurgling, aah-h-h-ing! of the male voices. What are they doing? Who knows![121]

This is a passage based on contradiction and paradox. The scene impresses itself powerfully upon the narrator and yet it has 'no name' or 'words'. The narrator declares 'it is the most stirring sight in the world', and yet, 'There is no spectacle' or 'spectator'. It is one thing, and it isn't. It lacks definition and cannot be translated singularly into language. Yet despite this

[120] Danièle Moyal-Sharrock and Peter Sharrock, 'D. H. Lawrence and the Truth of Literature', *Philosophy and Literature*, 43.2 (October 2019), 271-86 (280).
[121] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 63.

obscurity, the narrator finds in the sustained 'lifting and dropping, surging, [and] crowing' another meaning. This elucidating otherness is located in the relationships between words and reflects the form of understanding, even if its nature remains inarticulable. Ironically, despite describing the scene in immense detail, the narrator is unable to answer the self-posed question 'What are they doing?' The tension between the questioning tone of the passage, and the acceptance that there are no words to express the strangeness of the scene is mirrored in the dual sense of the 'aah-h-h-ing' voices. Where 'aah[ing]' can convey a moment of realisation, it can also convey terror, and the feeling of being out of control. The idea that rendering and making sense of one's impressions has the potential to offer new understanding is similarly undermined by the awareness that such understanding is prone to disintegrate, and radically ambiguous. Yet, despite the ultimately unknowable nature of otherness, Lawrence notes its power to engage the imagination and sustain one's instinctual engagement with the world outside of the self.

As a source of ambiguous attraction, otherness in Lawrence's sketches serves a comparable function to amazement in Bloch's theory of the not-yet conscious. Bloch argues that 'it is the *values of amazement* that are carried by the state of presentiment, and ultimately reflected: something small, the kernel within so much impressive empty emballage'.[122] In being amazed, Bloch notes, the individual intuits the future. He suggests that the details of the impression do not in themselves produce understanding, since these are just 'empty emballage' or packing, but it is in these details that the 'kernel' of interest and foreboding takes root. In Lawrence's description of the different dances, we see a similar emphasis on the important 'kernel' of an amazement which emerges as a response to sublime terror. Describing the 'song to make the corn grow', the narrator describes how 'The drum is a heart

[122] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 193.

beating with insistent thuds. And the spirits of the men go out on the ether … seeking the creative presence that hovers forever in the ether, seeking the identification'.[123] The drumming here is itself just 'emballage' for the feeling of being taken out of oneself. It is through this sensation that the narrator describes the men's search for the 'kernel' of amazement, the 'creative presence' which is forever in the process of being identified. Fittingly in this case, Lawrence too adopts a language of germination, describing how through 'the mysterious rhythms of the creative pulse' the drummers and dancers are carried 'on and on into the germinating quick of the maize that lies under the ground'.[124] Just as Bloch evokes amazement to describe that state of intuitive captivation, Lawrence suggests that the dance's potency and meaning for the narrator lie in its ability to affect a kind of creative germination. The dance achieves meaning through its ability 'to stimulate the tremulous, pulsating protoplasm in the seed-germ, till it throws forth its rhythms of creative energy, into rising blades of lead or stem.'[125] Finally, in the throwing forth of creative energy, Lawrence notes that there is a similar presentiment of future understanding. Through its ability to inspire and amaze the imagination, Lawrence anticipates in the affront of otherness the seed of future understanding, though it must be forever brought forth through the process of engagement. The image of germination suggests the idea that the interest or amazement of the impression represents a form of communion or generative synthesis between the self and the world.

The idea that the affront of otherness sustains a form of generative synthesis is similarly reflected in Lawrence's emphasis on the process of creative fusion. In an early version of *Mornings in Mexico* he evokes it in relation to the idea of forging: 'The cosmos is a great

[123] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 63.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.

forge where the small gods forge themselves into being.'[126] The metaphor of forging, like fusion, points to a form of amalgamation. The idea of the 'cosmos' as a 'great forge' implies that all things are not only connected at an elemental level, but in being brought together generate a state of newness. And yet when Lawrence revised the line it read: 'The cosmos is a great furnace, a dragon's den, where the heroes and demi-gods, men, forge themselves into being.'[127] Here the idea of a 'furnace', as opposed to a 'forge', indicates something more destructive – newness not arising from the subtle melting together of difference, but instead from the violent, hammering individual forcefulness and will-to-renewal. Lawrence's insertion of short clauses in turn suggests onomatopoeically the hammering of difference into new, yet homogenous oneness. With this change the encounter with otherness becomes more violent and destructive. In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate is initially doubtful regarding the possibility of reforging a connection and understanding between different peoples. She asks: 'Was it really the great melting pot, where men from the creative continents were smelted back again, not to a new creation, but down into the homogeneity of death?'[128] The opportunity for new creation, and for regeneration, is destructive, not in its emphasis on the individual forcibly forming a new understanding of the world, but in the requirement that the individual should relinquish his own claim to selfhood. Indeed, she notes that a more instinctual and revitalised relationship between the self and the other is possible, as is a new modality of being, but only if one is willing to allow oneself to be subsumed and melted down into nothingness. A new modality of being is only accessible if the individual relinquishes their self and becomes receptive to the multiple otherness of the surrounding universe.

[126] Ibid., p. 83.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 77.

However, the extent to which the fusion of the self and the other is possible is always ambiguous for Lawrence. He remains conscious that one can never precisely know the extent to which one's own self has affected or distorted one's impressions of that which is other. In the 'Indians and Entertainment' sketch of *Mornings in Mexico*, Lawrence notes:

> It is the eternal paradox of human consciousness. To pretend that all is one stream is to cause chaos and nullity. To pretend to express one stream in terms of another, so as to identify the two, is false and sentimental. The only thing you can do it to have a little Ghost [*sic*] inside you which sees both ways, or even many ways. But a man cannot *belong* to both ways, or to many ways.[129]

Once again employing metaphors of divergent and contradictory streams, Lawrence attacks the false homogeneity of life reflected in the isotropic nature of language. To try to make life homogenous, he argues, is to produce the very 'chaos' of contradiction and nullifying paradox which limits our ability to appreciate the value and significance of otherness. The very existence of such a thing is representative of the actuality of otherness even if its reality remains inarticulable. The tendency for language to produce the illusion of understanding is for Lawrence a source of falsity and sentimentality. We must recognise the unreality of our understanding to be a 'little ghost', he observes. The phrase contains a tantalising suggestion of a connection between the world of the individual and some other dimension borne out of the imagination. It is a recognition of a reality which the individual cannot empirically confirm or deny – and yet the sincerity with which one renders the impression of otherness offers a glimpse of some otherworld. Lawrence's frustrations with language do indeed indicate a sincere attempt to conceive the reality of otherness through the imagination, and while, as Bell notes, 'The true mystery of individual others is subsumed into our habitual

[129] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 61.

assumption of understanding them', the attempt to imagine the reality of being other to oneself suggests an honest desire to look beyond the self.[130] In coming-to-know the other, the self unavoidably projects its own assumptions and understanding upon it, and thus annihilates its very otherness.

Lawrence uses the affront of otherness to explore, in terms of feeling, the reality that one is both a part of, and apart from the surrounding universe. This sense of a common, yet mutually negating being is evident in the changes he made to the plots of *Quetzalcoatl* and *The Plumed Serpent*. Where in *Quetzalcoatl* Lawrence suggests that Kate is ultimately unable to truly come to know, comprehend and achieve a spiritual union with Ramón, in *The Plumed Serpent* this difference is seemingly subsumed and replaced by the idea of a blood union. Roberts has noted that while this emphasis on the unity of the blood appears to indicate the possibility of truly knowing the other, this 'reciprocal connection is bound to fail because "blood" is the dominant metaphor *both* for what all humanity has in common *and* what is distinctive of the "aboriginal".'[131] The idea of race and the idea of shared humanity becomes in this context mutually negating – ultimate fusion cannot be achieved as one will always undermine the other. This reciprocal action highlights the capacity for the affront of otherness to sustain the impression of fusion through a process of perpetual negotiation between self and other. Roberts has observed how 'The hybridity implied in "fusion" turns out to be a phantom.'[132] Comparable to the 'little Ghost' of *Mornings in Mexico*, the notion of otherness simultaneously promising both the possibility of a generative fusion but also the potential destruction of the self requires an ability to imaginatively *look both ways*. The imagination, as a sort of supernatural space, enables the individual to sustain such contradictory attitudes as

[130] Bell, 'D. H. Lawrence, Philosophy and the Novel: A Nagging Question', 65.
[131] Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 158.
[132] Ibid.

form of hypothetical understanding, and yet any attempt to translate such hypotheses into more definite forms of knowing results only in their fragmentation and dissolution.

The process of rendering otherness enacts a process of destructive fusion in Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writings. While one may come to better understand the relationship between the self and the other, this process paradoxically results in a diminished sense of the radical difference which prompted one's initial impression. This idea is palpable in the revisions Lawrence made to 'The Hopi Snake Dance' sketch of *Mornings in Mexico*. The original manuscript reads: 'Between the two visions lies the gulf of mutual negation. But ours was the quickest way, so we are conquerors.'[133] However the revised version reads: 'Between the two visions lies the gulf of mutual negation. But ours was the quickest way, so we are conquerors for the moment.'[134] Where the previous version suggests that this fusion is a linear process by which the self comes to know the other by imposing its own vision or signification and in turn subsumes it, the addition of 'for the moment' instead emphasises the contingency of the flux. This struggle between the contingent 'flux' of 'blood-knowledge' and the rigidity of the rationality suggests the relationship between the self and other to reflect a form of open-ended engagement. While the self may momentarily apprehend otherness and achieve a glimpse of understanding, otherness remains an active presence with the potential to affront and undermine the completeness of this vision.

Lawrence explores this issue further through his emphasis on how the world resists understanding. This is apparent in his emphasis on ideas of concealment and invisibility. In the manuscript version of 'Walk to Huayapa', Lawrence describes how 'Across from him, a woman is half hidden behind a buttress, mending something, sewing.'[135] However, in the

[133] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 94.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 27.

carbon copy of the typescript revised by Lawrence, the sentence was changed to 'across from him, a living woman is half hidden behind a buttress, mending something, sewing.'[136] The addition of 'living' gives the woman significantly more autonomy. She is not merely a passive object in the scene, but instead is active. Her being 'half-hidden' is indicative of the narrator's inability to expose and fully comprehend her lived experience. There is a 'living' individual concealed within the scene, and in his appreciation of the livingness of the woman the narrator anticipates the actuality of an alternative reality beyond his own. But there is also a sense of the woman's presence passively resisting any form of approach through writing. Élise Brault-Dreux argues that Lawrence's writings recognise that: '"I" cannot become the other, cannot know the other, cannot feel for or instead of, the other, and "I" cannot force the other to feel exactly what "I" feels.'[137] Likewise, here the woman's partial concealment suggests that the narrator cannot necessarily see the totality of her being, or force her to be seen.

The notion that otherness resists being seen or known undermines the idea of the omniscient travelling narrator. The affront of otherness is a reminder of the narrator's finite ability to know the world, and of the need to become more receptive to the variousness of being. This receptivity is felt in Lawrence's tendency to attempt to imaginatively inhabit the position of otherness in order to conceive the two-sided nature of the engagement between the self and the other. Bell has noted in this regard that the difficulty Lawrence finds in expressing otherness requires an increased dependence upon the attitudes of 'conviviality, faith, and sympathetic intuition'.[138] The imagination and empathy are suggested to represent the channels through which the affront of otherness affects change in the observer. Yet,

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[136] Ibid.
[137] Brault-Dreux, 'Responding to Non-Human Otherness: Poems by D. H. Lawrence and Katherine Mansfield', 40.
[138] Bell, 'Philosophy', p. 159.

Lawrence demonstrates an acute awareness that this receptivity is destructive as much as it is constructive. Fiona Fleming notes, in the case of the Mexico and New Mexico writings, that there is ‘a psychological and physical form of danger … experienced in the encounter with cultural otherness’, and that during this encounter Lawrence suggests ‘the traveller’s self’ to be ‘subjected to alienating forces, leading to its regeneration or to its simple annihilation.’[139] The possibility of annihilation is exemplified particularly in the antagonistic associations of darkness in the work. Combining a similar sense of resistant invisibility, Lawrence’s narrators find in the affrontive otherness of Mexico a feeling that the world may actively undermine and unsettle forms of objective knowing which once seemed certain.

The idea that the actuality of the world opposes and resists subjective comprehension is a key element in Lawrence’s belief in the spirit of place. Writing to Adele Seltzer from Orizaba, Lawrence noted: ‘I should never be able to write on this continent – something in the spirit opposes one’s going forth.’[140] This sense of inexplicable opposition typifies the affront of otherness in his writings of the period and is reflected in their emphasis on ideas of negation and silence. As his narrators attempt to render the vast actuality of Mexico, they increasingly describe seeing and hearing nothing. In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate describes the ‘Silence, an aboriginal, empty silence, as of life *withheld*.’[141] This seemingly vast and never-ending silence suggests doubt regarding the very substance of the impression itself. If one cannot even confidently confirm the nature of the world in the present, Kate seems to ask, how can one ever hope to look beyond it? How can one go forth into the world if one’s impression of it is so vacuous? She recalls: ‘The vacuity of a Mexican morning. Resounding sometimes to the turkey-cock. And the great, lymphatic expanse of water, like a sea, trembling, trembling

[139] Fiona Fleming, ‘The Test on the Self: Alienating Landscapes and Journeys in Lawrence’s Travel Writing’, *Études Lawrenciennes*, 50 (2019) < https://journals.openedition.org/lawrence/1093 > [Accessed 07/02/22] para. 1.
[140] Lawrence, ‘To Adele, Seltzer, 21st April 1923’, in *Letters*, IV, p. 426.
[141] Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent, p. 97.

to a far distance, to the mountains of substantial nothingness.'[142] The impression is itself composed here of 'vacuity' and 'substantial nothingness' which prevents any concrete confirmation of the actuality of understanding as it is felt in the impression of the world. One's reality is suggested here to be so extensive, and so insubstantial, that the question of looking outside of it, or looking through it, seems at best absurd. The living actuality of the world outside the self seems inaccessible, as if its very otherness prevents conception or comprehension in language; it can only instead be conceived in the negative. Lawrence's feeling that something in the region's very being resisted complete and objective knowing is typified in the line 'All sound withheld, all life withheld, everything *holding back*.'[143] In its otherness, the world is everything the self is not: silent, dead, and absent. This dialectic between the self and the other is felt as an active tension here. One's sense of self and one's sense of otherness are held in a mutually negating relation: each determines the parameters of the other whilst remains irreconcilable and unknowable.

In his Mexico and New Mexico writings Lawrence uses the problem of representing a mutually negating otherness to undermine the hierarchical elevation of mental forms of knowing over the instinctual forms of understanding which manifest themselves in the feelings. Roux argues that '[for Lawrence] the problem is that modern society has stifled true emotions, advocating instead standardization through levelling down. ... Encountering otherness in all its various forms is for Lawrence a way of rediscovering the emotions that modern society has discarded or even destroyed.'[144] By recognising in the affront of otherness the actuality of other modes of Being, Lawrence's narrators foresee the realisation of the rich and various depths of feeling which challenge the modern aspiration to uniformity in thought and being. The strange, intuitional feelings which otherness inspires provide a

[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Roux, 'Emotions and otherness in D. H. Lawrence's Mexican Fiction', para. 1.

means of rediscovering the forms of knowledge and being that have been forgotten or ignored on account of being deemed incoherent or irrational.

Up to this point, the chapter has shown that though Lawrence's emphasis on darkness in relation to otherness reflects a problematic racial politics, it also evidences his wider conception of otherness as a negation of the self. In darkness, Lawrence identifies a form of presence which is as yet unknown and invisible. As a form of vacuity, darkness becomes a visual and physical manifestation of the infinite possibility of the future. His fascination with darkness is evidence of a wider interest in verbalising and engaging sincerely with ideas, and understandings which the observer themselves does not yet know. From this perspective, whilst he often draws on racist and pro-colonial stereotypes, Lawrence's tendency to emphasise the strange unknowability of the world outside the self challenges and undermines the notion of the omniscient Western observer. As a result, his impressions of Mexico and New Mexico cultures are evidence of an attempt to see beyond the self, even if this attempt is inherently flawed, fragmentary, and incomplete.

Transformation, Difference, and the Not-Yet-Conscious

Envisaging in the affront of otherness an alternative modality of being and knowing which has yet to be realised, Lawrence not only anticipates new forms of understanding, but actively enacts their manifestation. Through closer and closer investigation of the depths of the various feelings which otherness inspires, he effectively forges a more vital link between the subject and its representation. Roux argues that while 'Knowing the other completely is impossible and even dangerous', there is a simultaneous suggestion that the 'strong emotions

triggered by the encounter with otherness lead to regeneration.'[145] The sense that the affront of otherness can revitalise one's awareness of the actuality of the exterior world manifests one aspect of Lawrence's idealisation of the encounter with otherness. In *The Plumed Serpent* Kate calls out to the '*mystery*' of otherness as a means of retrieving a vital and instinctual relationship with the world around her.[146] In the boat upon the lake, she is described as crying out to her soul: '*Give me the mystery and let the world live again for me! … And deliver me from man's automatism.*'[147] The mystery of the world – its otherness – becomes a recurrent reminder of the finitude of the habitual mindlessness of modern life, but it is also a call to life. Lawrence aligns the idea of being vitally alive with an overt appreciation of the relationship between the reality of the self, and the actuality of the other. In the passage that follows, Kate imagines wrangling psychologically with the men sailing the boat, as if struggling for a mutual understanding of being other. She imagines calling out '*We are living! I know your sex, and you know mine. The mystery we are glad not to meddle with. You leave me my natural honour, and I thank you for the grace.*'[148] The feeling of mystery and not-knowing paradoxically produces in Kate the feeling of contact and mutual understanding. Yet, extending this paradox, Kate's desire for mutual understanding is entirely imagined, since she remains isolated. Booth has noted that 'Otherness in Lawrence is generative of life-changing contacts where forms of difference – gender differences, racial differences – can be rapidly interchanged and are seen as closely interconnected.'[149] Understanding here reflects less a form of objective knowing and instead an intuitive negotiation of the multiple difference Kate envisions between herself and the world outside of herself. Lawrence's forceful insistence on the affrontive power of difference produces a heightened awareness of

[145] Ibid., paras. 40-1.
[146] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 105.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid., p. 107.
[149] Howard Booth, '"Give me differences": Lawrence, Psychoanalysis, and Race', 185.

the entanglement of contradictory feelings which represent one's relationship with the exterior world.

It is in this context, that this chapter aligns Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness with Bloch's notion of a utopian not-yet. For Bloch, the desire to 'seek the true' motivates the individual to look beyond the 'darkness of the lived moment'.[150] The present is informed by and informs the individual's conception of future possibility. Ruth Levitas summarises Bloch's argument as the belief 'that reality does not consist only of what is, but includes what is becoming or might become', as 'The material world is essentially unfinished and in a state of process – a process whose direction and outcome are not predetermined.'[151] The 'essential utopian function' is thus one of 'simultaneously anticipating and affecting the future.'[152] What we perceive to be true in the present, anticipates, and enacts what could be true in the future.

In Lawrence's Mexico and New Mexico writings the encounter with otherness, and its unignorable difference, sustains the open-ended process of change and transition which constitutes the future. When he compares Lawrence to Levinas, Boone notes a shared belief that 'When otherness is submitted to the rationalized time by which we set our clocks, it can become "the plastic form of an image," and can be synchronized with rational justifications for our responses to it.'[153] Yet here Boone identifies how for Lawrence, this homogeneousness and inertia forestalls the future. Such sameness manifests itself in the feeling of existing in an eternal and never-changing present. There are similarities here with Bloch's observation that 'human beings collapse into themselves, without a path or a goal

[150] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 3.
[151] Ruth Levitas, 'Educated Hope: Ernst Bloch on Abstract and Concrete Utopia', in *Not Yet: Reconsidering Ernst Bloch*, ed. by Jamie Owen Daniel and Tom Moylan (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 65-79 (p. 70).
[152] Levitas, 'Educated Hope: Ernst Bloch on Abstract and Concrete Utopia', p. 67.
[153] Boone, 'D. H. Lawrence Between Heidegger and Levinas: Individuality and Otherness', 60.

beyond the quotidian. They lose their properly human wakefulness, substantiveness, existence ... and finally everything grand, powerfully massive, atomizes under the "knowing" gaze into false, disenchanted details'.[154] For Lawrence, difference reflects a similar 'goal beyond the quotidian' – without difference the self loses its 'properly human wakefulness' to the intense and vital depths of instinctual understanding. Bloch argues that such perpetual presence, born out of habit, produces 'false, disenchanted details', just as Lawrence argues that the failure to not only encounter difference but to be receptive to its affrontive otherness, results in the sentimentality of habit.

The affront of otherness thus upsets this tendency to habitual understanding by continually prompting new and more intuitive modes of understanding. Recurrent in all three texts is an awareness that one cannot know wholly that which one is not, and yet, through an attentive receptivity one can achieve a greater proximity with otherness. In 'The Dance of the Sprouting Corn' Lawrence writes:

> Bit by bit you take it in. You cannot get a whole impression, save of some sort of wood tossing, a little forest of trees in motion, with gleaming black hair and gold-ruddy breasts that somehow do not destroy the illusion of forest.[155]

The narrator's inability to render the impression in its entirety draws attention to the variousness of otherness. The 'tossing' shiftiness of the scene upends and undermines the objectivity of the narrator's gaze. No matter how much one attempts to pin down ever more precisely the details from which arises the 'illusion of forest', the otherness of the 'whole impression' remains elusive. And yet, still, 'bit by bit you take it in'. While the strange shiftiness of the impression – its affrontive otherness – prevents objective knowing, by

[154] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 167.
[155] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 73.

remaining awake to the plurality of its effects and their difference, Lawrence anticipates the possibility of more comprehending its reality more vitally and completely. Otherness and difference are always in the process of becoming known through the act of narration in the Mexico and New Mexico writings. Lawrence's interest in otherness, like his interest in the form of the novel, is rooted in what Bell has termed, 'its capacity to test all such vision against each other.'[156] This process of searching for, and testing alternative modes of being and knowing, not only reflects an attempt to imagine what such a modality would look like, but actively brings it into being. Lawrence's process of revising and adjusting his own responses to otherness enact at the level of his authorial decisions an ever more vital and intuitive engagement with the world.

The sustained feelings of confusion, contradiction and not-knowing created by the affront of otherness suggest a 'utopian longing' for renewal, even if the precise objective of this longing remains obscure. In *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate reflects: 'Ye must be born again. Even the gods must be born again. We must be born again.'[157] Kate's utopian association of otherness with rebirth, appeals to the open-ended and unknowable nature of difference, for as Eagleton argues in the case of utopia: 'if we knew exactly what we were hoping for when we speak of a different future, it would not be sufficiently remote from what we see around us, and thus not different enough.'[158] Likewise, if we knew exactly what it was to be other, it would not be sufficiently remote from the self to be, by its very nature, other. In rewriting *Quetzalcoatl* as *The Plumed Serpent*, Lawrence similarly placed notable emphasis on the not-yetness implicit in the impression of otherness. When, early in *Quetzalcoatl*, the notion of travelling on to Sayula is first suggested, Kate's decision to undertake the trip appears largely motivated by her ambivalence regarding the prospect of returning to England. Her minor interest in Sayula

[156] Bell, 'D. H. Lawrence, Philosophy and the Novel: A Nagging Question', 64.
[157] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 59.
[158] Eagleton, *Hope Without Optimism*, p. 66.

being only ‘Because there is water. And when I read of the man who said he had seen Quetzalcoatl, suddenly I wanted to go.’[159] However, when Lawrence revised the text as *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate’s declared motivation was quite different. Here it occurs as a moment of significant revelation, as the narrator writes:

> She wanted to go to Sayula. She wanted to see the big lake where the gods had once lived, and whence they were due to emerge. Amid all the bitterness that Mexico produced in her spirit, there was still a strange beam of wonder and mystery, almost like hope. A strange darkly-iridescent beam of wonder, of magic.[160]

Where Kate’s decision is initially suggested to be rooted in an attraction to water, in the revised passage Lawrence identifies it with a form of utopian longing. Identifying ‘the big lake’ with the re-emergence of the gods, Kate’s attitude reflects a form of idealistic longing which though inarticulable and abstract manifests itself as ‘a strange beam of wonder and mystery, almost like hope.’ As a symbol of the rippling present, the lake represents, in Bloch’s terms, the site upon which the future will be enacted. Indeed, the ‘strange’ ‘hope’ Kate perceives in her seemingly inarticulable attraction to the lake and its ‘mystery’ is emblematic of the utopian not-yet conscious. Her hope is rooted in the atavistic belief that a more vital pre-historic past can re-emerge, and effect change in the present. Andrew Humphries has noted Lawrence’s appreciation of ‘the reality that cultural difference is never a question of simply travelling to a place untouched by the world: it involves invariably the simultaneity of old and new worlds interacting upon each other in one location.’[161] By mediating between different temporalities, the affront of otherness becomes a subject through

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[159] Lawrence, *Quetzalcoatl*, p. 40.
[160] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 58.
[161] Humphries, *D. H. Lawrence, Transport and Cultural Transition*, p. 205.

which Lawrence not only explores the possibility of a future, alternative modality of being, but enacts its becoming in the present.

As an anticipation of future possibility, Lawrence's conception of the affront of otherness is thus strikingly similar to Bloch's formulation of a utopian not-yet. Douglas Kellner argues that 'Bloch urges us to grasp the three dimensions of human temporality: he offers us a dialectical analysis of the *past* which illuminates the *present* and can direct us to a better *future*.'[162] Likewise, Lawrence here synthesises all three 'dimensions of human temporality' in Kate's decision to go. There is the vision of a past life in Europe, juxtaposed against an imagined past in Mexico – both of which are illuminated in the present, and both of which in turn inspire the decision to go in search of 'a better *future*'. Lawrence demonstrates an overt appreciation of the affront of otherness as a reminder that the individual stands at the open-ended, unfolding moment. In *Quetzalcoatl*, contradicting Kate's professed belief in the constancy of one's nature, General Viedma declares: 'The human soul is greater than any circumstance, of nationality or even race. This is the unfinished end of the pattern.'[163] For Viedma, the human soul is forever unfolding and extending, like a pattern which continually incorporates new elements into a whole, which has no end. It is for him, not a reflection of circumstance, but a reflection of longing. Bloch also suggests this sentiment when he writes: 'We have seen that only just after it passes can what was experienced be held up in front of oneself ... in the intuited form of its simultaneity ... half still just experientially real, and half already a juxtaposition of inactive contents.'[164] In longing for a new Mexico and Mexican being, Viedma is not merely imagining a hypothetical place, but is actively bringing it into being. In the image of the unfinished end of the pattern Lawrence suggests how the

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[162] Douglas Kellner, 'Ernst Bloch, Utopia, and Ideology Critique', in *Not yet: Reconsidering Ernst Bloch*, ed. by Jamie Owen Daniel and Tom Moylan (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 80-95 (p. 81).
[163] Lawrence, *Quetzalcoatl*, p. 159.
[164] Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia*, p. 199.

impression of otherness, and the individual's longing to realise its true nature and potential effects its emergence. In the case of Mexico, the impression of the region's other pre-European past becomes is a perpetual reminder of the possibility of realising an alternative mode of being in the future. Lawrence identifies the impression of otherness, and the subsequent desire to decipher its intuitive truth, with a utopian longing to better understand one's situation in the bewildering expanse of history.

The sense that the affront of otherness allows the past to resurge and contest the present is reflected in Lawrence's emphasis on atavism in both *Quetzalcoatl* and *The Plumed Serpent*. In *Quetzalcoatl*, Kate observes in Ramon 'The alien race. The atavistic way of love. The dark atavism of him.'[165] Atavism describes the recurrence of particular traits, characteristics or symptoms of ancestors in the present despite a break or intermission of one or more generations. To describe Ramon as having a 'dark atavism' suggests that he not only embodies a resurgent past emerging inexplicably in the present, but in particular a past which is actively initiating the future. The symbolism of this with regards to the religion of Quetzalcoatl is clear – as Jad Smith has argued, 'Lawrence's portrayal of the Quetzalcoatl movement draws heavily on völkisch thought and, like it, unconditionally celebrates the primitive past as a source of future cultural achievement.'[166] However, it is therefore significant that Lawrence not only deleted this line when he rewrote the text as *The Plumed Serpent*, but also increasingly suggests that 'The power of the world was dying in the blond men ... and ... going into the eyes of the dark men, who were rousing at last.'[167] The change does not remove the undertones of volkisch thought nor the abhorrent racial politics Lawrence displays, but it does subtly adjust the nature of the atavism being depicted. Instead

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[165] Lawrence, *Quetzalcoatl*, p. 260.
[166] Jad Smith, 'Völkisch Organicism and the Use of Primitivism in Lawrence's "The Plumed Serpent"', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 30.3 (2002), 7-24 (15).
[167] Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, p. 400.

of being a vision of the utopian function operating in isolation, it is instead here connected to the encounter between different peoples. It is an atavism sustained by the affront of otherness.

The affront of otherness in Lawrence's works suggests how the past can contest the present and influence the shaping of the future. Where the past is associated with disintegration and dissolution, and the future with disparate possibilities, the present represents a point of perpetual negotiation between the two. The affront of otherness reflects the coming together and mediation of old and new worlds, and thus becomes a site of perpetual open-endedness and enactment. In the affront of otherness, Lawrence stresses the coming together of different temporalities in the perpetual movement towards the not-yet. In the manuscript version of 'The Mozo', for example, Lawrence included the line 'but tomorrow is another day, and it is not dead now, so if it dies at another time, it must be because God wants it so'.[168] However, in the typescript, he changed the line to read 'But tomorrow is another day, and it is not dead now, so if it dies at another time, it must be because the other times are out of hand.'[169] In her editorial notes to the Cambridge Edition, Hyde rightly observes that this extends the variations on the theme of time.[170] However, this summary does not appreciate the broader significance of this change, particularly regarding Lawrence's decision to remove the reference to 'God' in the passage. For while the original suggestion that the future is in the hands of God implies that there is some transcendental plan to which the future is bound, the removal of this reference instead indicates that the future, and any new understanding which comes with it, is not the product of some transcendental plan at all, but instead reflective of open-ended possibility. Reid notes that 'We can see this resistance and reshaping at work in modernist fiction, like Lawrence's, which transforms Mexico into a source of history that

[168] Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico*, p. 38.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Crosswhite Hyde, 'Explanatory Notes', p. 251.

brings new possibilities for the future.'[171] Lawrence identifies the affront of otherness less with a specific destination than with the process of becoming more instinctually receptive to the world. His responses to the affront of otherness suggest that new and alternative modalities of being are forever being tested out and enacted in one's impressions of difference. The alternative modalities of being and understanding to which Lawrence aspires cease to exists as an equivalent to a utopian nowhere. Instead, they are recognised as being continually worked out and enacted through the narrator's ever closer engagements with the actuality of the world outside of the self.

For Lawrence, 'the world is a weird place' and its strangeness always a source of both perplexity and inspiration. This chapter used the idea of the affront of otherness to demonstrate how otherness in Lawrence's writings is a source of generative bewilderment and inspiration, as much as it can be a source of frustration. It also contributes additional, and previously understated, nuance to the understanding of the relationship between language and being in Lawrence's work, as it highlights how he uses language to work out his subjects, but also to recreate the strangeness and perplexity of 'being-there'. In doing this, it explored the necessary overlap between aesthetic and genetic approaches to Lawrence's travel writings.

The chapter has demonstrated how Lawrence's heuristic responses to otherness reflect an open-ended process of negotiation and mediation through which he explores the ambiguous relationship between the self and the world. It has considered darkness and visibility and examined how translation makes manifest the affront of otherness in terms of the approximate nature of semantics. It has addressed the idea that for Lawrence the encounter with otherness was always to some degree transformative by exploring the concepts of temporality and becoming which lie at the very heart of Lawrence's interest in otherness.

[171] Reid, 'Decolonizing Time: The Mexican Temporalities of D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley and Carlos Fuentes', 723.

Drawing comparisons between the contingency of language and perception, it has suggested how the difficulty involved in articulating otherness reflects a sustained process of coming-to-know the other. Finally, it has demonstrated how otherness represents the form of the not-yet conscious for Lawrence. Otherness manifests a new modality of being and knowing which is not so much a destination as a mode of engaging with the world and is forever in the process of being enacted. This approach contributes a new method for connecting Lawrence's racialised responses to otherness to his wider consideration of both ontological issues of radical difference and historical notion of otherness.

3. ‘[B]E DAMNED TO ALL AUTHORITIES’: HISTORIOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND THE VAST REALITY OF OTHERNESS IN *SKETCHES OF ETRUSCAN PLACES*

In his Etruscan sketches Lawrence identifies the affront of historical otherness as a source of suggestion and education. This chapter investigates how Lawrence uses the idea of the vast reality of otherness to explore imaginatively what it means to be other to oneself. It demonstrates how the impression of historical otherness in *Sketches of Etruscan Places* (1932) promotes the possibility that one might look meaningfully outside of the self and engage imaginatively with the reality of others. To achieve these aims, the chapter shows how these sketches promote the idea that one needs both a scientific and graphic understanding of history to appreciate the actuality of other modalities of being. It considers how Lawrence highlights the limitations of modern archaeology’s scientific approach to the study of prehistory and appeals to the idea of historical otherness as an alternative source of understanding based on acts of empathetic intuition and imagination.

While there has been some critical investigation of Lawrence’s historiography it remains an underexplored area in Lawrence studies. There remains a need to situate Lawrence’s consideration of otherness in the case of historiography in relation to his wider emphasis on otherness in terms of race and cultural difference; it is this gap in the scholarship that the current chapter aims to fill. Andrew Harrison has offered the most significant recent intervention in this area, highlighting Lawrence’s critical engagement with contemporary debates concerning the principles and practice of historiography. Harrison stresses Lawrence’s belief that the value of history lies in its ability to encourage active and

imaginative engagements with the reality of the past.[1] This chapter builds upon Harrison's approach by situating Lawrence's mediation of graphic and scientific forms of history (along with his emphasis on the important affront of historical otherness) in relation to his larger aspiration to explore a vital link between the self and the otherness of the surrounding universe.

In terms of structure, the chapter begins by situating Lawrence's emphasis on the importance of both graphic and scientific forms of history in relation to his wider critique of the practices of archaeology. It demonstrates how he uses the tension between wholeness and fragmentation in the Etruscan sketches to explore a larger crisis of subjectivity brought about by modernity. In turn it shows how Lawrence suggests ways in which the techniques of historiography might aid in the restoration of a closer link between knowing and being. The chapter then investigates how the Etruscan sketches balance the scientific fact of the past with an awareness of the personal realities they represent. Building on previous chapters, this analysis demonstrates how Lawrence stresses the role of language as a means of mediating between the material actuality of the past and the otherness of one's impressions. The chapter develops this idea by exploring how his frustration with the enforced homogeneity and uniformity of the museum collection draws him into closer and more imaginative engagements with ideas of pre-history and historical otherness. Finally, the chapter explores how Lawrence uses the affront of historical otherness to consider how the dissolution and entropy of history can offer both hope and a form of education for the individual. This chapter is informed by the principle that Lawrence's attempts to render the affront of otherness in his Etruscan sketches reflects a form of historical and temporal (as well as

[1] Drawing on anecdotal accounts of Lawrence's own methods of teaching history, Harrison observes that 'Lawrence clearly saw the educative value for young minds of connecting with historical events through empathy and imaginative re-enactment.' See: Andrew Harrison, 'Historiography and Life Writing', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 103-15 (p. 106).

physical) journeying outside of the present and the self. By demonstrating how ideas of cultural and historical difference are interrelated in the travel sketches, the chapter shows how Lawrence uses language to mediate between various conceptions of difference while attempting to define a more vital and intuitive link between knowing and being.

Lawrence began actively thinking about writing 'a sort of travel book' about the Etruscan remains in 1926.[2] Reading widely on the subject, he was disappointed by the traditional, academic accounts' vacuous reworkings of the same 'few rags of information' on Etruscan culture.[3] In June of that year, he wrote: 'I shall just have to go ahead, and be damned to all authorities! There really is next to nothing to be said, *scientifically*, about the Etruscans'.[4] While he was working on the book he would add: 'What one wants is contact. The Etruscans are not a theory or a thesis. If they are anything, they are an *experience*.'[5] The contrast Lawrence establishes between the scientific 'thesis' and the more intuitive 'experience' typifies the dialectic between scientific and experiential modes of history at the heart of the travel book he was writing.

This dialectic is one which Lawrence had established earlier in his evocative – though not entirely accurate – school textbook *Movements in European History* (1921). 'The old bad history is abolished', he declares in the teacher's introduction to that book.[6] For him, this 'old bad history' was nothing more than 'a register of facts' and of little educative or imaginative

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[2] D. H. Lawrence, 'To Margaret King, 3 May 1926', *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), V, pp. 447-8 (p. 447).
[3] Lawrence, 'To Millicent Beveridge, 8 June 1926', *Letters*, V, p. 473-4 (p. 473).
[4] Ibid.; For reference: Lawrence is inconsistent in his capitalisation of the word 'Etruscan'. While he commonly capitalises the term when using it as a noun (e.g. 'The Etruscans') and does not capitalise its use as an adjective (e.g. 'etruscan history') this is not always the case. For the sake of consistency, I follow the guidance regarding capitalisation dictated in the MHRA style guide and the Oxford English Dictionary which holds that 'Etruscan' should always be capitalised. However, when quoting from Lawrence I always retain his choice of capitalisation.
[5] D. H. Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places and Other Italian Essays*, ed. by Simonetta De Filippis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 171.
[6] D. H. Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, ed. by Philip Crumpton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 7.

meaning to the students and scholars reading it.[7] Historiography – the study, narration and teaching of history – should, he suggests, 'either be graphic or scientific'.[8] By 'graphic' history Lawrence describes forms of historical narrative rooted in 'stories about men and women who appear in the old records' which are 'as vivid and as personal as may be.'[9] Graphic history educates through an emotional engagement with the past. In opposition, the 'scientific' approach holds that 'each fact must be established and put into relation with every other fact.'[10] Thus, 'if graphic history is all heart, scientific history is all head.'[11] Lawrence's emphasis on the need for a combination of both approaches reflects the principle that a complete understanding of history combines both an abstract comprehension of its facts and overarching structure, but also an emotional appreciation of the actual living reality it seeks to address. Harrison argues that this balanced approach to historiography reflects Lawrence's attentiveness to the needs of his young readers, who would '"have had almost enough of stories and anecdotes and personalities", but "not yet reached the stage of intellectual pride in abstraction"'.[12] However, this association of intellectual maturity with a desire for abstraction was less evident by the time Lawrence came to write *Sketches of Etruscan Places*. In this work, the graphic approach to the otherness of Etruscan culture served as an important counterpoint to the over-confident presumptions of scientific history and the destructive, domineering methodologies of archaeology.

Lawrence's approach to historiography broadly reflects a belief that the real lessons of history remind individuals of their own finite existence and understanding within a universe which is vast, indifferent, and other to post-enlightenment society's proud posturing. Harrison

[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., p. 8.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Harrison, 'Historiography and Life Writing', p. 105.

has contextualised Lawrence's belief in the dual need for graphic and scientific forms of historical narrative in relation to contemporary concerns regarding the prioritising of history as a science – concerns voiced, for example, by G. M. Trevelyan in his essay 'The Latest View of History' (1903).[13] For Lawrence, such unimaginative scientism reflected a destructive and imperialistic tendency to assume that the present was the 'consummation of all life and time.'[14] He suggests that the view that the past is necessarily familiar and comprehensible to us limits the possibility of learning from it. The affrontive otherness of the past in his Etruscan sketches highlights the possibility of new and alternative modalities of being.

For Lawrence, the possibility of learning from the past depends upon comprehending the vast and diverse array of other realities made manifest in the otherness of history. To make the past too familiar, he observes, is to limit the opportunities for history to make us look outside of our comfortable present; it 'tends to *shut out* the strange, vast, terrifying reality of the past, even as the charming cosiness of a garden shuts out the great terror and wonder of the world.'[15] He suggests that the otherness of the past gives it its 'great' power.[16] Lawrence's approach to historiography reflects a belief that there is an educational value in not only not-knowing, but not being able to know. It is a reminder of human finitude and of the individual's precarious position in the world. He argues that 'we must not shut out the space and fear and greatness', and that 'We must not make it too personal and familiar. We must leave in the impersonal, terrific element, the sense of the unknown'.[17] For Lawrence, this is

[13] Ibid., p. 104; Harrison builds upon Todd Avery's argument that for some at the time 'the ascendancy of "scientific" historiography' was a damaging example of 'the growing scientization of British culture, it was […] contributing to the burgeoning scientism of education and a rising distrust of literature as a valid way of knowing'. See: Todd Avery, '"The Historian of the Future": Lytton Strachey and Modernist Historiography between the Two Cultures', *ELH*, 77.1 (2010), pp. 841-66.
[14] Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, p. 7.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

not something that abstract facts alone can achieve. A coldly abstract and rational approach to history cannot convey the full 'terror and wonder' of the past.[18] He notes: 'All that the reason can do, in discovering the logical consequence of such passion and its effects, afterwards, is to realise that life *was* so, mysteriously, creatively, and beyond cavil.'[19] The Etruscan sketches probe the idea that the lessons of history are rooted in its frustrating incomprehensibility. History, as he responds to it, is evidence of the primacy of Being over knowing: the strange and seemingly incomprehensible otherness of the past is demonstrative of the reality that ontology precedes epistemology (that being precedes knowing). The actuality of the past is, for Lawrence, at its most tangible when it inspires feelings of unsettling perplexity and unknowability. Its insurmountable vastness underscores its enlightening otherness.

The power of historiography to educate is thus aligned in Lawrence's Etruscan sketches with its ability to convey a suggestive and convincing 'impression' of this 'strange, vast, terrifying reality of the past.'[20] In *Movements in European History*, he argues that historiography educates by producing moments of 'contact' with the past and by encouraging one to appreciate the reality of the other lives it represents, full of 'terror and wonder'.[21] Reflecting on how to produce this impression of 'contact' or '*experience*' in the case of the Etruscans he concludes that one 'Must take the imaginative line.'[22] The power of history to engage the imagination highlights particularly Lawrence's wider critical awareness of the literariness of archaeology as a practice. In her analysis of archaeology's influence on literary modernism, Sasha Colby notes the repeated 'blurring between fictional and supposedly non-fictional

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[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., p. 9.
[20] Ibid., p. 8, 9.
[21] Ibid., p. 7.
[22] Lawrence, 'To Millicent Beveridge, 8 June 1926', p. 473.

archaeological accounts'.[23] Her argument draws heavily in this regard from H. V. Hilprecht's evocative reflection that the practice of archaeology is 'so full of dramatic effects and genuine surprises ... that it will always read more like a thrilling romance penned by the skillful [*sic*] hand of a gifted writer endowed with an extraordinary power of imagination'.[24] History represents a form of narrative in its attempt to give a coherent structure to a plurality of disparate details, associations, and impulses. Yet, Lawrence's Etruscan sketches show that the incongruous nature of historical evidence necessarily requires acts of imaginative reconstitution and expansion; the individual must extrapolate the surviving fragments of the past in order to recognise the wholes they represent. Lawrence sees value in the suggestive power of historical otherness as a reminder of the impersonal actuality of the world beyond the self.

Lawrence's interest in the literariness of archaeology also reflects his wider engagement with contemporary advances in archaeological practice. Colby has noted how the idea of 'cultural-historical archaeology' truly came to prominence in 1920 (around the same time that Lawrence began composing his Etruscan sketches) when Vere Gordon Childe 'championed the idea that artifacts be treated as expressions of living societies rather than fossils.'[25] Colby argues that 'Cultural historical archaeology, with its emphasis on recreating the conditions of extinct peoples through an interpretative analysis of material remains' parallels works of 'archaeological fiction' and aesthetic criticism.[26] Lawrence's sketches similarly suggest that though the past is inaccessible, the individual can glimpse its actuality through the

[23] Sasha Colby, *Stratified Modernism: The Poetics of Excavation from Gautier to Olson* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 15-6.
[24] H. V. Hilprecht, *Explorations in Bible Lands During the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: A. H. Holman, 1903), p. 3.
[25] Colby, *Stratified Modernism*, p. 15-6; Gordon Childe himself expressed praise for Lawrence's diagnosis of the 'Australian temperament' in *Kangaroo*, noting Lawrence's 'uncanny insight'. See: Vere Gordon Childe's Letter to Rajani Palme Dutt [4 April 1931] from the Royal Societies Club, St. James' Street, London, S.W.1. Available: < https://www.labourhistory.org.au/hummer/no-29/gordon-childe/. [Accessed: 20/05/21].
[26] Colby, *Stratified Modernism*, pp.16, 17.

imagination. Harrison observes Lawrence's profound belief in the educational value of 'connecting with historical events through empathy and imaginative re-enactment'.[27] Lawrence's ideas here are reminiscent of earlier approaches to the evocation of history for children. In Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906), for example, Donald Mackenzie notes the invocation of a past that is 'fragment[ed], tactile, mute, [and] upon whose excavated fragments a re-creating imagination must play.'[28] From the perspective of historiography, Lawrence's Etruscan sketches likewise emphasise the role of the imagination in recovering some sense of the past in the present through the intuition and empathy of the individual. The suggestiveness of the travel sketch invites the reader into an imaginative engagement with fragments of the past as a material reminder of the reality of prehistory.

The emphasis on the affront of historical otherness in the Etruscan sketches is demonstrative of Lawrence's larger belief that historiography needs to provoke some form of wonder if it is to engage the imagination. However, as Stefania Michelucci has argued (while drawing upon the work of the Etruscologist Massimo Pallottino) 'Lawrence's work must not be confused with that of the archaeologists, nor with the contemporary "Etruscan Romance", the fascination with the mystery of a lost world and civilization.'[29] Indeed, Lawrence's account of the Etruscans sits somewhere between scientific fact and purely fanciful fiction; he demonstrates how language can sustain a form of historical sense by mediating between the wondrous and 'thrilling' aspects of imaginative history and the terrifying vastness of its

[27] Harrison, 'Historiography and Life Writing', p. 106.
[28] Donald Mackenzie, 'Introduction', in *Puck of Pook's Hill and Rewards and Fairies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. xiii-xxxiii (p. xiv); Virginia Zimmerman has noted how authors have suggested that while 'The past may be temporally remote … in its material fragments it remains present and accessible, and the person who encounters these fragments has the authority to imagine their story.' See: Virginia Zimmerman, 'Excavating Children: Archaeological Imagination and Time-Slip in the Early 1900s', in *Excavating Modernity: Physical, Temporal and Psychological Strata in Literature, 1900-1930*, ed. by Eleanor Dobson and Gemma Banks (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 63-82 (p. 63).
[29] Stefania Michelucci, 'D. H. Lawrence's Etruscan Seduction', *Etruscan Studies*, 22.1-2 (2019), 95-108 (101).

epochs. For Michelucci, Lawrence's responses to the Etruscan tombs reflect 'an emphatic, poetic, subjective re-construction of something which has faded away for ever', and

> an attempt to recapture the "soul" of Etruscan culture through a journey backwards in time during which Lawrence manages to "feel" that spontaneity of life, that whole acceptance of the present, free from limiting and imprisoning projections towards the future.[30]

However, while Michelucci is correct in identifying the important imaginative inspiration the Etruscans provided for Lawrence, this viewpoint misleadingly diminishes how Lawrence's sketches enact a sustained process of negotiation between the present and the ancient past.

Lawrence's Etruscan writings suggest that the impression of otherness enacts a necessary mediation between the past and the present, the self and the other. Describing his aims in *Movements in European History*, he notes his attempt to 'give some impression of the great, surging movements which rose in the hearts of men in Europe ... movements which have no deducible origin ... no reasonable cause, though they are so great that we must call them impersonal.'[31] For Lawrence, the historical imagination enacts a form of negotiation between the heartfelt, personal liveliness of the present and the 'great ... impersonal' motions of the past. History, he implies, educates by suggesting a vital link between the idiosyncrasies of individual experience in the present moment and the abstract, epochal 'movements' which give such moments meaning. Lawrence's approach to history echoes Mackenzie's argument that the historical imagination is sustained by the 'encounter of the remote and alien with the immediate'.[32] In Lawrence's sketches the idea of journeying both in space and time reflects a

[30] Stefania Michelucci, 'L'espace Perdu: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Writings', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 8 (2004), 35-48 (44).
[31] Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, p. 8.
[32] Mackenzie, 'Introduction', p. xiv.

process of negotiation wherein his impression of the Etruscan remains sustains an engagement with a past that appears residually present in its ruins and yet remains unreachably other.

Graphic History, Scientific History, and the Practice of Archaeology

The formal notion of history as a science is a relatively modern affair, though the ideas which make its practices possible are rooted in the enlightenment. Julian Thomas has argued that 'the link between archaeology and modernity is more than circumstantial' as 'archaeology distils a modern sensibility, embodying conceptions of time, humanity, nature, and science that have been widely adopted over the past half-millennium.'[33] The archaeological attempt to reconstruct and organise the past chronologically depends upon the principle that by disinterring fragments of the past, and systematizing them, one can illuminate a reality which has otherwise become inaccessible in the present. For Thomas, unlike earlier activities which *addressed the archaeological*, such as 'recovering ancient artifacts for use as treasure or raw materials', the *practice of archaeology* 'requires the understanding that these objects can be studied in such a way as to generate new knowledge about people who are no longer present, and the development of an appropriate inferential framework.'[34] Lawrence's Etruscan sketches suggest parallels between the aspiration of the archaeologist and the impressionist. Both archaeology and literary impressionism depend upon the principle that there is a significant link between the fragment and the whole. However, where the archaeologist

[33] Julian Thomas, 'Archaeology's Place in Modernity', *Modernism/Modernity*, 11.1 (January 2004), 17-34 (17); Kenneth Hudson has similarly argued that the 'archaeologist is a nineteenth-century innovation, a product of the new wish to study the evidence of the past in an organized manner'. See: Kenneth Hudson, *Museums of Influence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 19.
[34] Thomas, 'Archaeology's Place in Modernity', 18.

projects meaning upon the fragment through the application of an abstract inferential framework, the impressionist attempts to make sense of the fragment by deciphering the network of intuitive associations and impulses which manifest themselves within it. Lawrence's sketches suggest that where scientific rationalism assumes the fragment can be objectively known, the impressionist recognises in the elusive otherness of the fragment the perplexity that constitutes subjective reality. In the otherness of the historical site, Lawrence explores the infinitely regressive number of conflicting associations which comprise one's impression. His attempts to render such otherness highlight the potential for narrative to mediate these mutually negating impulses. In the affront of otherness, these writings recognise that though one's understanding of the past is unavoidably limited, one can still sustain a form of historical awareness by engaging in acts of creative imagination.

The shift noted by Thomas mirrors a similar shift in the scientific understanding of the relationship between ontology and epistemology. Where antiquarianism values the object in and of itself, scientific archaeology suggests that the relative value and significance of an object depends upon the historical context and situation in which it is found. Archaeology appeals to an abstract conception of history (despite its practice being paradoxically tied to the materiality of historical remains) by reasoning that the individual can only fully appreciate the significance and value of a particular artefact or site by conceiving it in abstract terms within an 'inferential framework'.[35] Logic and reason represent in these terms an effective means of reforming the fragments of the historical past into meaningful wholes.

Reflecting on the origins and significance of this epistemological shift, Thomas notes that 'For Enlightenment philosophers like Voltaire, reason was universal, and all human beings were equally capable of perfecting their rational conduct, providing that the shackles of

[35] Ibid.

tradition, authority and superstition can be cast aside.'[36] The scientific approach to the acquisition of knowledge assumes that a perfect system of thought can allow the individual to achieve a perfect understanding of their position in the world. This is, however, a problem in the case of history; as Lawrence suggests in *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, this approach not only assumes that the conditions of the past were identical to those in the present but also produces an overly mental, detached understanding of preceding cultures, which diminishes the illuminating and educative otherness of pre-history. In *Movements in European History*, Lawrence writes:

> The men of the New learning wanted to see things naturally, in the light of the true human understanding. For this reason they were called *humanists*, because the human understanding was to them the measure of truth and reality. … They did not want to consider life awful and supernatural. They wished to see everything in the human light, the light of the deep, real human intelligence, which is the best that man is capable of.[37]

Lawrence suggests that the problem of a purely scientific, rational approach to history is that the individual's existing understanding becomes the scale and measure of 'reality'. For the 'men of the New learning' things can only be if we can know them, but this attitude implies both the false illimitability of the individual consciousness, and that the form of 'reality' itself depends upon the individual's own understanding. Lawrence suggests that the problem with this attitude is that it promotes an understanding of reality as a complete, finished, and homogenous whole. The affront of otherness in this case is important as a reminder of the

[36] Ibid. 24.
[37] Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, p. 173.

finite nature of individual understanding and in turn the perpetual possibility for future change.

In his historiography, Lawrence suggests that failing to appreciate the reality of what appears 'awful and supernatural' reduces the number of opportunities to engage with (and thus learn from) that which is radically different and other. His attitude is comparable to Thomas' argument that the privileging of individual Reason ahead of Being implies

> there is a single universal condition and type of society that all human beings should aspire to, that human diversity is superficial, and that Western civilization is superior to any traditional society. This amounts to a denial of human finitude, the condition of being positioned in contingent circumstances as the mortal inheritor of a particular cultural tradition.[38]

Sketches of Etruscan Places represents a clear challenge to such enlightenment thinking. The Etruscans Lawrence imagines are the very antithesis of modern 'Western Civilization', representative physically and historically of the possibility for alternative modalities of being. In his sketches, the Etruscan remains suggest not just the 'superficial' appearance of 'human diversity', but the unequivocal manifestation of radical difference and otherness. For Lawrence, the scientific approach of archaeology epitomises an increasingly mentalised culture, which reduces the complexity of individual experience to the purely mental and rational, disregarding the unconscious processes of intuition and association which underpin subjectivity. The affrontively vast and terrifying reality of history in the Etruscan sketches is a reminder of the possibility of realising an alternative (if yet undetermined) mode of being.

[38] Thomas, 'Archaeology's Place in Modernity', 24-5.

Prehistory is the ground upon which understanding is enacted in the Etruscan sketches. The otherness of prehistory represents a creative space for Lawrence, free from the restrictive fixity and certainty of modern science. Harrison observes that 'Gaps in the historical record were particularly appealing to Lawrence' as a source of imaginative inspiration.[39] Perceived voids in the historical record attest to the truly inaccessible otherness of the prehistoric past, and they appeal to the actuality of a pre-history which existed prior to, and independently of, historical records. Voids are repeatedly used to suggest the reality of now inconceivable modalities of being. Thus, they reflect the unknowable otherness of history, but also the temporary nature of present civilization and its similar openness to being challenged and changed. Harrison notes in the case of *Movements in European History* that 'Lawrence's most engaging imaginative passages ... concern peoples who had typically been traduced or marginalised in earlier historical accounts.'[40] In the case of *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, he notes how 'Lawrence wrote in a spirit of opposition to the scholarly accounts of Etruscan civilisation provided by historians such as Theodor Mommsen, George Dennis, Fritz Weege, Pericle Ducati and R. A. L. Fell.'[41]

These scholarly accounts are at the very least ambivalent and at worst highly dismissive of what they deem to be the primitive culture of the Etruscans. Theodor Mommsen describes how 'The religion of the Tuscans ... presenting a gloomy fantastic character, and delighting in the mystical handling of numbers and in wild and horrible speculations and practices, is equally remote from the clear rationalism of the Romans and the genial image-worship of the Hellenes.'[42] Going further, he adds 'there is no room on the whole to doubt the deep

[39] Harrison, 'Historiography and Life Writing', p. 107.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Theodor Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, trans. by William Purdie Dickson, vols 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1862), I, p. 125.

degeneracy of the nation.'[43] George Dennis similarly expresses distaste for the perceived primitivism of Etruscan art, reflecting that 'In the Campana tomb of Veii, which is the most ancient yet discovered, we have the rudeness and conventionality of very early art—great exaggeration of anatomy and proportions—and no attempt to imitate the colour of nature, but only to arrest the eye by startling contrasts.'[44]

Perhaps the kindest portrayal of the Etruscans which Lawrence is known to have read in preparation for writing his book comes from A. J. Grant in *A History of Europe*, who notes that

> This strange people, whose origins are still undetermined, and whose language is still unread, was stronger in numbers and richer than Rome; it had, moreover, made more progress in the arts of life; Rome in the end owed much to its in architecture and religious ideas.[45]

In *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, we see Lawrence ironize the inability of traditional scholarship to appreciate the rich and complex symbolism of Etruscan art. During his encounter with the German archaeology student, the narrator observes how 'A lion with a goat's head as well as its own head is unthinkable' and 'That which is unthinkable is non-existent, is nothing. So, all the etruscan symbols are to him non-existent and mere crude incapacity to think. He wastes not a thought on them. They are spawn of mental impotence, hence negligible.'[46] The student appears as the living embodiment of the post enlightenment mythologising of rationality and reason over the unconscious impulses of the imagination and intuition. The seemingly irrational 'spawn of mental impotence' is unimportant to him;

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[43] Ibid. p. 347.
[44] George Dennis, *The Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (John Murray,1878), I, p. lxxxv.
[45] A. J. Grant, *A History of Europe* (London: Longmans Green, 1913), p. 71.
[46] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 123.

imagination, spirituality, and intuition are from his academic perspective obstacles to objective thought and rationality.

And yet, as Lawrence notes in the 'Volterra' essay, in trying to decipher one's impression of the ancient past, reason and logic alone are 'not enough.'[47] Ideas of community, society, culture, history, and spiritual belief arise irrespective of conscious rationality and material objectivity. To an objective understanding rooted solely in the perfectibility of logic, the mystic value of Etruscan symbolism is not only inaccessible but impossible. Lawrence writes:

> What is the meaning of this lion with the second head and neck?—I asked the German. He shrugged his shoulders, and said: Nothing!—It meant nothing to him, because nothing, except the A. B. C. of facts, means anything to him. He is a scientist, and when he doesn't want a thing to have a meaning, it is ipso facto meaningless.[48]

The student's declaration that the symbols mean 'Nothing!' beyond their materiality is suggestive of modern science's inability to recognise any value or meaning which extends outside the 'A. B. C. of facts'. Lawrence's depiction of the encounter with the student challenges a perceived scientific naivete regarding the finitude of individual understanding, which undermines the archaeological claim to objective knowledge and the other's idiosyncratic experience. The scientific archaeologist cannot appreciate the actuality of Etruscan reality and culture because it reflects an entirely other mode of being and thought. Lawrence's Etruscan sketches ask how one can truly expect to understand the nature of

[47] Ibid., p. 166.
[48] Ibid., p. 122.

something which is other, if one can only conceive it as the continuation of one's existing beliefs.

Lawrence extends his critique of the perceived naivete of the scientific approach by suggesting the possibility of alternative systems for assigning meaning or value to an object. This is particularly evident in the student's aversion to the possibility of the existence of esoteric forms of knowledge incomprehensible to modern science. '—Here no! he replied abruptly.—Merely a decoration!—Which perhaps is true. But that the etruscan artist had no more idea of its being a symbol, than an English house-decorator today would have, we cannot believe.'[49] The scientific approach to the Etruscan symbolism as a purely aesthetic concern is insufficient for Lawrence. The relationship between the symbol and the idea it represents reflects a particular conception of the relationship between being and knowing. The otherness of Etruscan art for Lawrence arises not from its being necessarily difficult or complex, but rather from the fact that it reflects a radically different understanding of the relationship between epistemology and ontology to that of the modern observer.

Yet, despite Lawrence's frustration with the student's seeming inability to conceive the possibility of an alternative form of symbolism and signification, he remains sympathetic to his attitude. The young man's inability to recognise the significance or value of subjective truths aligns with the disconnection between being and meaning epitomised in the impersonal cataclysmic destruction of the First World War:

> though it is bad enough to have been of the war generation, it must be worse to have grown up just after the war. One can't blame the young, that they don't find that anything amounts to anything. The war cancelled most meanings for them.

[49] Ibid., p. 121.

> And my young man is not really so bad: he would even rather like to be *made* to believe in something. There is a yearning pathos in him somewhere.[50]

The First World War here represents a point of separation, fracture, and division: the end of one phase of history and the beginning of another. There are also larger parallels between the conflicting attitudes of the pre-war and post-war generations, and the mythopoeic difference which separates and distinguishes the pre-historic and historic periods. Such fractures, Lawrence suggests, represent 'cancelled ... meanings' and changes in how humans engaged with, and assigned value to, their surrounding world. Where the Etruscan culture represents the synthesis of mind and body – the synthesis of epistemology and ontology – the war, with its mechanised killing fields, is symbolic of a severed link between objective rationality and sensuous subjectivity. How, Lawrence's sketches ask, could someone who has grown up in full knowledge of the expendability of human life and the individual believe in the value of subjective modes of understanding? In an epoch defined by the valueless nature of individual life and the belief that nothing 'amounts to anything', how can one possibly hope to comprehend a culture for whom the individual's very being manifests their intrinsic relationship with nature and the universe? It is this fracture (between knowing and being) which Lawrence's sketches seem to suggest works of historiography can bridge through imaginative engagements with alternative modalities of being. Historiography, he observes, can help generate a more vital understanding of one's situation in the world by establishing a vital link between the intuitive unconscious truths one intuits through being, and the abstract, rational methods of science. This is a political statement in favour of the value of human life. In the personal aspects of history Lawrence perceives an opportunity to

[50] Ibid., p. 119.

re-establish feelings of connection between peoples and cultures which might otherwise appear resistantly other.

From this perspective, Lawrence is not against the application of reason to the study of history; he observes that one must have an abstract conception of history in order to achieve any sort of coherent understanding. He recognises, though, the limits of pure logic and, on that basis, emphasises the dual need for imaginative engagements with the past to fill the gaps and voids in a material record which is by its very nature fragmentary. There are notable similarities here with Kant's arguments in the essay 'Conjectural beginning of human history' in which he observes:

> In the *progression* of a history it is indeed allowed to *insert* conjectures in order to fill up gaps in the records, because what precedes as a remote cause and what follows as an effect can provide a quite secure guidance for the discovery of the intermediate causes, so as to make the transition comprehensible.[51]

For Kant, the imagination serves to fill in the voids in our understanding – it allows the historian or historiographer to make speculative leaps between the limited facts he knows. However, he acknowledges that 'to let a history *arise* simply and solely from conjectures does not seem much better than to make the draft for a novel.'[52] There is, he notes, a difference between *conjectural history* and *works of fiction*. Lawrence's historiography tests the limits of what me might term *conjectural history* by employing the idea of historical otherness as a locus through which to explore the limits of a purely rational approach to the understanding of history.

[51] Immanuel Kant, 'Conjectural beginning of human history', in *Immanuel Kant: Anthropology, History, and Education*, ed. by Günter Zöller and Robert B. Louden, trans. by Mary Gregor et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 163-75 (p.163).
[52] Ibid.

While Lawrence challenges the notion that effective histories are necessarily abstract and impersonal, he recognises the need for some scientific understanding of the structure of the past if they are to retain any claim to truth. After all, to allow one's imagination to freely envision an entirely personal history is to diminish the vastly impersonal actuality of the past. He writes in 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 1':

> The esoteric knowledge will always be esoteric, since knowledge is an experience, not a formula. But it is foolish to hand out the formulae. A little knowledge is indeed a dangerous thing. No age proves it more than ours. Monkey-chatter is at last the most disastrous of all things.[53]

To have a 'little knowledge' is 'dangerous', he suggests, not only because it is practically impossible to accurately judge its extent, but also because it encourages the translation of a limited understanding of the past into a methodology which only further distorts one's understanding of the subject at hand. The impersonality of scientific history roots one's imagining of the past in the present and causes the ancient past's significant otherness to be obscured by the projection of modern expectations and ideologies.

Lawrence's Etruscan sketches are acutely conscious of how the narrativizing of history, and the fictional renovation of the ancient past, destroys or at least obscures the actuality of its otherness. At Tarquinia, Lawrence notes how the Etruscan city's decline and 'more or less medieval rebirth' led to it being renamed in the public consciousness 'Corneto—Corgnetum or Cornetium', and then 'Corneto-Tarquinia!' before being renamed Tarquinia by the 'Fascist régime ... glorying in the Italian origins of Italy'.[54] For Lawrence the fascist obsession with historical origins and chronology is 'beside the mark' – it displays a Roman concern with

[53] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 59.
[54] Ibid., p. 30.

control and domination which assumes the inherent power of labels and language. The world is as it is, for Lawrence, and language cannot change its being. This criticism of the Romans' domineering approach to otherness simultaneously ironises the scientific archaeologist's preoccupation with the projection of modern categories and systems of meaning upon archaeological sites which predate the system itself.

At the same time, in observing the fascist regime's attempt to appropriate such historical labels in order to align their authority with the centrality of Rome, Lawrence suggests that there is a wider correspondence between the archaeological aspiration to produce a uniform chronology of the past and the totalitarian aspiration to project uniformity on the present. The sketches explore the principle that, as a singular chronology, history marginalises those deemed different or *other*. Lawrence draws parallels here between the totalitarian 'power to name and unname' and the archaeologist's power to dictate the systems of belief and value upon which the primacy and superiority of the present is based. In doing this, he challenges the belief that the practise of archaeology alone can truly illuminate the ancient past without being distorted by one's pre-existing attitudes. Colby notes: 'Archaeology, like literature, is a meaning-maker, a means to knowledge that seeks to answer fundamental questions about who we are and where we came from.'[55] But how, Lawrence asks, can it answer such questions truthfully if it is dependent upon the expectations and ideologies of those asking the question?

The inadequacy of the 'scientific' account, when viewed in isolation, is repeatedly reflected in the elusive otherness of the Etruscan tombs and their ability to continually inspire new feelings and impulses in the observer. He observes, for example:

[55] Colby, *Stratified Modernism*, p. 9.

> Italy today is far more etruscan in its pulse, than Roman: and will always be so. The etruscan element is like the grass of the field and the sprouting of corn, in Italy: it will always be so. Why try to revert to the Latin-Roman mechanism and suppression?[56]

The vividness of the impression and its instinctual immediacy interrupts and overwhelms the apparent artifice of the traditional historical narrative. In Lawrence's view, the otherness and immutability of the impressions one receives overwhelm and surpass the truthfulness of the ordered archaeological account. He differentiates the suppressive 'mechanism' of the *scientific* understanding from the living 'pulse' of the intuitive understanding. For him, the 'Being' of Italy will always be other. It exists in and of itself and is immutable.

Liveliness, Opposition, and Mediation

In the affront otherness, Lawrence suggests the disjunction between the abstract rationalism of scientific history and the understanding that the reality of those living in the past was once as immediate as one's own. Yet he also shows an acute awareness of the difficulty this tension poses for historiography. He writes in *Movements of European History:*

> No doubt the great people of the past were personages, and quite as personal as we are. Unfortunately, nothing is more difficult than to re-create the *personal* reality of a bygone age. Personality is local and temporal. Each age has its own.

[56] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 36.

> And each age proceeds to interpret every other age in terms of the current personality.[57]

Personality, he notes, is necessarily a projection of the self upon the world. The impression of personality reflects in this context one's empathetic engagement with the world. But this act is inherently imaginative and lacking reality. The paradox of studying history is thus that one can only appreciate the personal reality of the past by projecting one's own subjective feelings upon the world, and yet one can simultaneously only conceive the actuality of the past in abstract and impersonal terms. Lawrence's sketches repeatedly suggest the paradox that the desire to express the personal reality of a particular time is necessarily influenced by the attitudes of the historians in their own present. This is an idea voiced in many of the books Lawrence read while preparing to write *Movements in European History*. In A. J. Grant's *A History of Europe* (1913), for example, Grant describes how:

> When Rome ... turned with great pride to her own past. Her poets and historians ... read into ... early history their own institutions of a later date and their own imperial ideals. They amplified hints that had been handed down by early tradition, and when there were no hints they frankly invented. The result is one of great interest and value; but the value is not primarily a historical one.[58]

For Lawrence, this imperialistic tendency to remake the past in our own image was dangerously misleading. He writes: 'It is an insult to the past, which was not personal as we are personal, and it is a ridiculous exaggeration of the present.'[59] Instead of attempting to project upon a particular age a reflection of one's own, the individual must approach the

[57] Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, p. 7.
[58] Grant, *A History of Europe*, p. 67.
[59] Lawrence, *Movements in European History*, p. 7.

remains of a particular culture naively and with an emphasis on the livingness of the culture manifested in its remains. He writes, for example:

> To the Etruscan, all was alive: the whole universe lived: and the business of man was himself to live amid it all. He had to draw life into himself, out of the wandering huge vitalities of the world. The cosmos was alive, like a vast creature.[60]

The repetitious stress on the words 'alive', 'lived', 'live' places an almost forceful emphasis on the liveliness of the earth which mirrors the bestial portrayal of the universe. The shared semantics of liveliness blurs the boundary between the animate and the inanimate worlds, an idea mirrored in Lawrence's use of the colon which itself suggests the permeable boundary between 'the whole universe' and 'the business of man'. This is a creative and imaginative re-enactment of Etruscan beliefs, played out in the form of the historically minded travel sketch. The narrator is not just travelling in space and in time, but also outside of the self. Lawrence's attempt to reproduce the living reality of the ancient past – the impression of being there – typifies his belief that to address the Etruscans 'one must take the imaginative line'.[61] By engaging imaginatively with the otherness of the tombs Lawrence explores the possibility that one can appreciate the lived reality of Etruscan culture through the suggestive power of the feelings.

In the essay 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 1', this desire to express the liveliness Lawrence perceives in the Etruscans is particularly apparent. 'This sense of vigorous, strong-bodied liveliness is characteristic of the Etruscans, and is somehow beyond art,' Lawrence observes: 'You cannot think of art, but only of life itself, as if this were the very

[60] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, pp. 56-7.
[61] Lawrence, 'To Millicent Beveridge, 8 June 1926), *Letters*, V, p. 473.

life of the Etruscans, dancing in their coloured wraps with massive yet exuberant naked limbs, ruddy from the air and the sea-light, dancing and fluting along through the little olive trees, out in the fresh day.'[62] The idea of being unable to 'think of art, but only of life itself' challenges the principle of representational expression. Where art generates meaning and understanding through the expressive act, for Lawrence, this inevitably leads to the privileging of mental and aesthetic concerns over the intuitive experience itself. As such, representation is a distorting translation of Being; in response, he seeks to reproduce the same decadent motions and their 'vigorous, strong-bodied liveliness'.[63] In the impression of movement Lawrence identifies the dynamic nature of Etruscan life; he challenges the idea that one can determine a fixed, objective understanding of the whole variety of Etruscan society. The figures' motion suggests the everchanging, mediative nature of human life, forever unfolding.

By emphasising the impression of otherness, Lawrence's sketches produce an impression of the ancient past which is perpetually emerging through a sustained negotiation of various associations and impulses. In 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 2', this manifests itself in his use of a curious form of anachronistic symbolism through which he declares:

> So all creatures are potential in their own way, a myriad manifold consciousness storming with contradictions and oppositions that are eternal, beyond all mental reconciliation. ... All emerges out of the unbroken circle with its nucleus, the germ, the One, the God, if you like to call it so. And man, with his soul and his personality, emerges in eternal connection all the rest. The blood-stream is one, and unbroken, yet storming with oppositions and contradictions.[64]

[62] Ibid., p. 48.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., pp. 125.

In noting that the 'contradictions and oppositions' which comprise the Etruscans' 'myriad manifold consciousness' and deny 'mental reconciliation' require a symbolic form of expression Lawrence enacts the same effect. He juxtaposes animalistic symbolism in 'the rage of the lion and the venom of the snake', with ancient ideas of the 'unbroken circle' and the 'divine', and finally with the scientific modern concepts of 'the nucleus' and 'the germ'. Providing the connection between all these symbols and ideas is the individual's imagination. Stefania Michelucci argues that 'The contact with the past was for Lawrence an important stage in the development of his dream of achieving "wholeness," that is, a total harmony between body, mind and soul.'[65] *Sketches of Etruscan Places* explores the discrepancy between the complexity and sensuality of embodied experience in the present and the reductive uniformity reflected in the categorical understanding of the past afforded by *scientific* study. From this perspective, Lawrence does not seek to reproduce the exact meanings and ideas that the Etruscan symbols represent; instead, he attempts to render the complex entanglement of association and instinctual feelings that they inspire.

Lawrence's emphasis on forms of touch and tactility highlights his wider attempt to suggest the personality of the ancient past through the sensuousness of the present. He observes in 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 1', that the impression of tactility in Etruscan art 'is one of the charms of the etruscan paintings: they really have the sense of touch; the people and the creatures are all really in touch.'[66] The emphasis on the dual meaning of 'touch' implies parallels between the impression of touch and the impression of *being in touch*. The engagement of both body and mind manifests aesthetically the wholeness of apprehension Lawrence perceived to be necessary in sustaining a historical sense. In the 'Volterra' essay he argues that the movement away from such a sensuous mode of expression exists on

[65] Michelucci, 'D. H. Lawrence's Etruscan Seduction', 97.
[66] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 54.

account of 'The Gothic actuality and idealism' having supplanted 'the profound *physical* religion of the southern Etruscans, [and] the true ancient world.'[67] The compulsion towards the actuality of the idea is a demonstration of the modern retreat into abstraction and scientism. In opposition, Lawrence emphasises the wholeness of the Etruscan 'physical religion' sustaining both physical and metaphysical forms of apprehension in harmonious relation – one influencing and inspiring the other.

As a reflection of the individual's historical sense, Lawrence also uses the idea of touch to explore how historiography mediates between the idea of the ancient past and its being. In 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 1', he notes how in modern art, 'There is plenty of pawing and laying hold, but no real touch. In pictures especially, the people may be in contact, embracing or laying hands on one another. But there is no soft flow of touch.'[68] Touch in the paintings manifests the very paradox of how to express the true *experience* of the historical past in language. There is 'plenty of pawing and laying hold' as the scientific author tries to determine the nature of Etruscan culture through language, but it is an impossible task. Such an approach fails to appreciate the opportunity to touch the reality of the other through the form of its being as the relationship between the individual and the universe – the 'soft flow' – which turns such 'pawing' into genuine empathetic *touch*. One cannot actualise and objectivise such 'soft flow[s]' but only suggest them as a form of relationship. To reproduce the otherness of the Etruscan experience, Lawrence implies one cannot simply define their nature but must instead recognise how their independent existence demonstrates a different relationship between individuals and the world around them. Touch or contact with the historical past, for Lawrence, represents a form of historical in-betweenness, a state of

[67] Ibid., p. 169.
[68] Ibid., p. 54.

perpetual conciliation between the abstract idea of the past and the actuality of personal being.

Moments of recurring yet spontaneous insight reflect in Lawrence's sketches the idea of history as a form of mediation, negotiating personal and impersonal impulses. 'It is useless to look in etruscan things for "uplift,"' he notes: 'If you want uplift, go to the Greek and the gothic. If you want mass, go to the Roman. But if you love the odd spontaneous forms that are never to be standardised, go to the Etruscans.'[69] These 'odd spontaneous forms' represent the contingent truthfulness of Etruscan art for Lawrence. Just as Etruscan culture was not uniform, he notes how its art similarly cannot be 'standardised'. These 'forms' are not reproductions of uniform feelings but instead something quite different – something spontaneous and contingent. They reflect moments of unity between thought and feeling, not just on the part of the artist, but on the part of the observer too. There is a persistent sense that historiography illuminates the past through the instinctual negotiation of scientific and graphic truths.

The narrator's attraction to the sustained spontaneity of the Etruscan art suggests its truth reflects an open-ended mediation between the subject and the observer. In 'Cerveteri, for example, he describes how:

> There is a simplicity, combined with a most peculiar, free-breasted naturalness and spontaneity in the shapes and movements of the underworld walls and spaces, that at once reassures the spirit. The Greeks sought to make an impression, and Gothic still more seeks to impress the mind. The Etruscans, no. … And that is the

[69] Ibid., p. 39.

> true etruscan quality: ease, naturalness, and an abundance of life, no need to force the mind or the soul in any direction.[70]

The 'spontaneity' of Etruscan art, and its meditative 'naturalness' for Lawrence, challenges the 'need to force the mind or the soul in any direction.' Where representational art implies the projection of a particular meaning, value or understanding upon its subject, he perceives in the 'ease' of the Etruscans the opposite desire – the desire to locate meaning through an appreciation of expression as a form of engagement. Concealed within these comments on art is a subtle critique of the scientific historian's deterministic efforts to judge and define the significance of the act. Where archaeology seeks to judge the relative significance of a particular object, for Etruscans, Lawrence notes, the significance was implicit in the object itself. Scientific history essentially produces forms of understanding which are quite other to those of the original makers. Without recognising the 'abundance of life' implicit in Etruscan art, Lawrence suggests, scientific historians can only see what they already believe to be true.

Methodology, Museums, and the '[A]sinine' Desire for Wholeness

Lawrence's dissatisfaction with the systematic approach to the ancient past is epitomised in his disagreements with the methods and ideology which underpin the notion of the modern museum. Thomas notes that archaeology's methodologies 'all depend upon the view that an abstract method should be applied to entities before they are rendered meaningful.'[71] He goes further, arguing that this attitude reflects the Baconian principle that 'if objects were the

[70] Ibid., p. 19.
[71] Thomas, 'Archaeology's Place in Modernity', 21.

equivalent of books that could be studied, rather than simply representing illustrative examples of phenomena, collections of things might be compared to libraries. This is the conception that lies behind the modern museum.'[72] Yet, for Lawrence, this approach ignores, or at least diminishes, the importance of historical context. The archaeological site, as the product of an infinite number of subtle relations, manifests the otherness of the ancient past. To arbitrarily remove an object from its location is to destroy forever the complex web of spatial, cultural, and temporal associations which allow one to engage imaginatively with the experience of those who produced it.

Lawrence's frustration with the destructiveness of the museum collection is particularly evident in the 'Volterra' essay, in which the narrator reflects on the 'bodily' removal of one tomb – or 'at least its contents' – to 'the garden of the Archaeological Museum in Florence'.[73] Despite the museum's apparent determination to position the contents of the tomb 'as they stood originally' there remains a profound impression of absence – Lawrence notes, for example, how 'if this tomb is really arranged as it was originally, and the ash-chests progress from the oldest to the latest counter-clockwise, as is said, one ought to be able to see certainly a century or two of development in the Volterran urns.'[74] There remains an impression of lingering doubt – a suspicion of the distortion and rearrangement of the material evidence of the past. At the same time, removing the tomb as a whole from Volterra to the museum garden attempts to reproduce a synchronous moment in history when, as Lawrence observes, in reality these family tombs reflect a period of sustained and varying activity. While the tomb in its original context highlights the situated and yet developing

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[72] Ibid., 22.
[73] Ibid., 170.
[74] Ibid.

nature of Etruscan burial practices at the site, once decontextualised its depths of association are lost.

The idea of the modern museum is, for Lawrence, too abstract and detached from the actual living otherness of the past. Museums seek to convey an impression of the whole when the impression of wholeness is in fact reflective of the archaeological theory and method. He declares:

> Museums, museums, museums, object-lessons rigged out to illustrate the unsound theories of archaeologists, crazy attempts to co-ordinate and get into a fixed order that which has no fixed order and will not be coordinated! It is sickening? Why must all experience be systematised? Why must even the vanished Etruscans be reduced to a system? They never will be.[75]

The repetition of 'Museum' here suggests Lawrence's frustration with the arbitrary uniformity of museum collections. Instead of highlighting the wide variety of developing ideas and associations implicit in different archaeological objects he argues that museum collections merely present multiple iterations of a single theoretical belief. In this account the museum embodies the appropriation of the material of the past, dressed-up and 'rigged out', to illustrate an abstract theory. Yet, to try and establish a complete vision from fragmentary remains is, for Lawrence, to ignore and misunderstand the inherent otherness of the ancient past reflected in the incompleteness of the archaeological site.

The Etruscan sketches demonstrate how the apparent homogeneity of museum collections produces a false impression of the past as a distinct whole. Lawrence seeks to challenge the common misconception that the past was somehow less complex and diverse than the

[75] Ibid., 171.

present. Without an appreciation that the experience of those living in the past was as infinitely complicated and interrelated as it is in the present, he observes, one's historical understanding becomes formless and meaningless. The museum is a mere mass for Lawrence, a collection of the detritus and jetsam washed up in the present. He argues:

> You break all the eggs, and produce an omelette which is neither etruscan nor Roman nor Italic nor Hittite, nor anything else, but just a systemised mess. Why can't incompatible things be left incompatible? If you make an omelette out of a hen's egg, a plover's, and an ostrich's, you wont have a grand amalgam or unification of hen and plover and ostrich into something we may call "oviparity." You'll have that formless object, an omelette.[76]

The word 'oviparity' describes the method of reproduction during which animals expel eggs that subsequently continue to develop outside of the body. Here, by contrasting the natural process of embryonic development with the idea of systematic amalgamation, Lawrence critiques the scientific assumption that merely collecting objects together will necessarily produce new understanding of a period that is greater than the previous sum of its constituent parts.

Dismissing the scientific approach for producing little more than a 'systemised mess', Lawrence appeals instead to the appreciation of the ontology of each object in and of itself. Each object is itself a nuanced experience for the individual. He declares 'what one wants is the actual vital touch. I don't want to be "instructed"; nor do many other people'.[77] For him, the popularity of museums reflects an arrogant modern expectation that the vast strange depths of the past can be neatly arranged and presented as an easily digestible whole. Why,

[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.

his writings seem to ask, should we assume that we can accurately conceive the entire complexity of others' experiences, when we cannot claim to know the entirety of our own? In the 'Tarquinia' essay he declares:

> Oh, the weary, asinine stupidity of man's desire to "see the thing as a whole." There *is* no whole—the wholeness no more exists than the equator exists. It is the dreariest of abstractions. … If one looks at an etruscan helmet, then it is better to be fully aware of that helmet, in its own setting, in its own complex associations, than it is to "look over" a thousand museums of stuff. Any one impression that goes really down into the soul, is worth a million hasty impressions of a million important things.[78]

In declaring that 'There is no whole', Lawrence gestures toward both the fragmentary nature of the archaeological record and the assumption that we can achieve a perfect vision of the whole spectrum of Etruscan culture through the mere systematic arrangement of these fragments. While the notion of wholeness assumes definite boundaries between what is and is not Etruscan, through the image of the Etruscan helmet Lawrence instead emphasises the permeability of such classifications.

Where archaeological theories seek to establish the idea of a thing or place, Lawrence argues instead in favour of preserving a sensitivity to the complex series of associations and relations which constitute its being. Jeffrey Schnapp, Michael Shanks, and Matthew Tiews suggest that archaeological remains offer an authentic understanding of the past which stems from an awareness that that the materiality of such remains bears 'witness' to the 'survival' of the past and reflects a 'metonymical bridging of time' which allows the past to live on in the

[78] Ibid., p. 34.

present.[79] For Lawrence too there is a real possibility that one can encounter the otherwise unreachable past by engaging imaginatively with the materiality of the surviving object. Lawrence's idea of achieving *contact* with an archaeological site through the imagination represents a similar kind of 'metonymical bridg[e]'. But Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews also offer the reminder that 'The material past is encountered unspoken, and is ultimately ineffable' which in turn requires us to engage in a 'fatally flawed translation'.[80] For Lawrence, the flawed translation of history by scientific historians is symbolised in the destruction and mindless dispersal of the remains at the Etruscan sites. At Vulci, for example, Lawrence laments how:

> Once found, however, the tombs were rapidly gutted by the owners, everything precious was taken away, then the tombs were either closed again, or abandoned. All the thousands of vases that the Etruscans gathered so lovingly and laid by their dead, where are they? Many are still in existence. But they are everywhere except at Vulci.[81]

Lawrence emphasises the principle that disinterring history in order to practise archaeology, necessarily destroys it.[82] It is a paradox that such a systematic approach to the materiality of the past erases the very thing it attempts to expose. The recovery of archaeological remains, Lawrence observes, cannot alone reinstate the living otherness of the past. Disinterring the past creates an impression of the absence and removal of history, as he reflects in the case of the 'thousands of vases', asking 'where are they?' Just as the questioning narrator looks for the presence of the past and finds only absence, the investigative efforts of archaeologists and

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[79] Jeffrey Schnapp, Michael Shanks and Matthew Tiews, 'Archaeology, Modernism, Modernity', *Modernism/Modernity*, 11.1 (2004), 1-16 (11).
[80] Ibid.
[81] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 153.
[82] In addition, in his account of the tombs at Vulci, Lawrence also queries whether the tombs were really emptied in the interests of archaeology or for the sake of financial profit.

antiquarians not only fail to illuminate the reality of the past but actively displace the very historical sense they attempt to recover. In the Etruscan sketches the ancient past is, thus, not only another place, but also an *other* place, both temporally and spatially – a place that cannot be disinterred but can instead only be glimpsed through the imagination.

Prehistory, Historical Otherness, and the Refutation of Oneness

In *Sketches of Etruscan Places* prehistory – or those 'dim days where history does not exist' – provides Lawrence with a means to reflect on the contradictions and paradoxes which characterise humanity's understanding of its relationship with the surrounding universe.[83] Gavin Lucas has argued that 'The idea of prehistory is in many ways the epitome of the modernist project: the creation of a past which has no connection to traditional history. Moreover, prehistory was not just a new past, it was also a lost past—lost to traditional forms of memory, whether written or spoken.'[84] Lucas incorrectly and misleadingly refers here to a singular 'modernist project', and he argues that modernist writers largely sought 'the creation of a past which has no connection to traditional history'; both of these attitudes have been comprehensively shown to be reductive interpretations of modernist thought.[85] However,

[83] Ibid., p. 176.
[84] Gavin Lucas, 'Modern Disturbances: On the Ambiguities of Archaeology', *Modernism/Modernity*, 11.1 (2004), 109-120 (110-1).
[85] Contemporary scholarship has moved away from considerations of a monolithic modernism and explores an interrelated and diverse range of modernisms. For example, in their introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*, Peter Brooker et al. identify modernism as 'an overdetermined, overlapping, and multiply networked range of practices that were always caught up in a dialectical process of affirmation and negation.' See: Peter Brooker et al., 'Introduction', in *the Oxford Companion Handbook of Modernisms*, ed. by Peter Brooker et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 1-14 (p. 10). Lucas' characterisation of modernism as a determined break from tradition draws heavily on Herbert Read's characterisation of modernism as 'an abrupt break with all tradition'. See: Herbert Read, *Art Now: An Introduction to the Theory of Modern Painting and Sculpture* (London: Faber, 1960). Gąsiorek has highlighted the limitations of this understanding, noting that 'from its very beginnings it [modernism] was engaged in a series of difficult negotiations with the culture of the past' as it pursued 'various renovative projects.' See: Andrzej Gąsiorek, *A History of Modernist Literature* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), p. 25.

Lucas' argument that prehistory represented 'a lost past' which could be renovated and negotiated in works of art and literature does help characterise one aspect of Lawrence's project in the Etruscan sketches.

In *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, prehistory appears not as a remote period in the distant past, but instead as the manifestation of the mediative nature of the historical account. The text enables Lawrence to negotiate contesting versions of history: the abstract and mentalised, and the instinctual and immediate. In 'The Florence Museum', he notes that the prehistoric world is obscure to us 'not because men, intelligent men did not then exist, but because one culture wipes out another as completely as possible; in those dim days, there were invasions, invasion after invasion no doubt, from the wild north on foot, from the old, cultured Aegean basin, in ship. Men kept on coming, and kept on coming: strangers.'[86] The lack of history is not for Lawrence evidence of a lack of intelligence or development, but instead demonstrates humanity's individual tendency to destroy and revise the past. And yet, simultaneously, he conceives a form of historiography which renders an impression of the past in order to decipher one's relationship with the otherness of the world in terms of diverging temporalities.

Lawrence's sketches suggest that the goal of historiography is to better understand a bewildering present through imaginative and empathetic engagements with other realities. They represent an attempt to decipher the living reality of the past from the elusive otherness of history. For example, in 'Tarquinia', Lawrence reflects that 'by the time etruscan history starts in Caere, some eight centuries B.C., there was certainly more than a village on the hill. There was a native city, of that we may be sure; and a busy spinning of linen and beating of gold, long before the Regolini-Galassi tomb was built.'[87] This passage is particularly

[86] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 176.
[87] Ibid., p. 26.

speculative, and the image of the Etruscan city is rooted in the imagination. Lawrence's narrator recognises that objects are not merely material but are the manifestation of lived activities that can be re-enacted through acts of imagination.

In these terms, pre-history alludes to an alternative, living reality now past which existed prior to and independently of the present's finitude of knowings; the history of the Etruscans, being beyond the reach of archaeologists and '*scientific* historians', represents a kind of *other* reality. The Etruscan remains attest to the actuality of other streams of life and the finitude of the narrator's own. In 'The Florence Museum', for example, he writes:

> What we see, in the etruscan remains, is the fag end of the revelation of another form of cosmic consciousness: and also, that salt of the earth, the revelation of the human existence of people who lived and who *were*, in a way somewhat different from our way of living and being.[88]

Lawrence suggests that the archaeological remains disclose the reality of an alternative modality of being, 'another form of cosmic consciousness'. Yet this disclosure is inherently incomplete, with the alternative reality and consciousness being disclosed appearing already burnt out.

Subverting the theistic notion of revelation as the disclosure of what is, Lawrence notes the revelation of what isn't. In the conclusion to his *Natural Theology* (1802), William Paley reflects having accepted there is 'something in the world more than what we see' and that 'there must be an intelligent mind, concerned in its production, order, and support', then 'we may well leave to Revelation the disclosure of many particulars, which our researches [*sic*]

[88] Ibid., p. 176-7.

cannot reach, respecting either the nature of this Being … or his character.'[89] Paley argues that the otherness of the natural world (its tendency to suggest structure) is evidence of God, though the 'particulars' of his being remain necessarily unknowable according to scientific methods. Lawrence adapts and plays with a similar principle when he notes the Etruscan remains are empirical evidence of 'the human existence of people who lived and who *were*, in a way somewhat different from our way of living and being.'[90] That the Etruscans '*were*' is what is important to Lawrence. Their remains are evidence of the reality of 'different' ways of living and being. Though the particulars of the Etruscan 'consciousness' may be as unknowable as the nature of Paley's God, Lawrence explores how rendering the impression of its otherness can still affect a form of disclosure by suggesting the form that such a consciousness might take. His sketches are compelled by the belief that other forms of life do exist, if unknowably. The question they investigate is the extent to which we can come to know them subjectively through the imagination and empathy.

The individual can become more acutely conscious of the otherness of the Etruscan remains, Lawrence suggests, if they can appreciate their strangeness as a marker of the alternative modality of being they represent. For example, in 'Cerveteri' Lawrence notes (in a passage best quoted at length) how:

> There is a queer stillness, and a curious peaceful repose about the etruscan places I have been to, quite different from the weirdness of Celtic places, the slightly repellent feeling of Rome and the old campagna, and the rather horrible feeling of the great pyramid places in Mexico, Teotihuacán and Cholula, and Mitla in the south; or the amiably idolatrous Buddha places in Ceylon. There is a stillness and

[89] William Paley, *Natural Theology, or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearance of Nature* [1803] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 578.
[90] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 176-7.

> a softness in these great grassy mounds with their ancient stone girdles, and down the central walk there lingers still a kind of homeliness and happiness.[91]

Lawrence uses an impression of 'queer stillness', 'curious ... repose' and perplexing stillness to suggest the isolation and individuality of these locales. While he engages in a process of comparison between the different sites, he makes no effort to unify, chronologise or categorise them. Instead, he seeks to unravel his initial perplexity through a process of differentiation as opposed to amalgamation; the Etruscan places, he notes, are 'quite different' to the Celtic, Roman, Native American and Buddhist sites. By emphasising the 'linger[ing]' 'stillness and ... softness', Lawrence constructs the impression of a culture which exists in opposition to – as *other* to – the rigid categories and fixed chronologies which have been derived from the study of the historic past. These parallels between hard and soft approaches to the past, mirror the same dual need for graphic and scientific approaches to historiography. His responses to the affront of otherness highlight the role of narrative in mediating between hard scientific abstraction and the sensuous idiosyncrasies of individual experience.

Lawrence's emphasis on the conciliatory nature of historiography also suggests a frustration with the scientific tendency to conceive history as a purely morphological process, with the present as its pinnacle. His Etruscan sketches conceive of the affront of otherness as evidence of the radical difference which distinguishes not just individuals but epochs. He notes: 'The idea that our history emerged out of caves and savage lake-dwellings is puerile. Our history emerges out of the closing of a previous great phase of human history, a phase as great as our own.'[92] In dismissing the evolutionary narrative, perpetuated by the Romans, which depicts the Etruscans as a primitive band of savages, Lawrence argues against the

[91] Ibid., p. 16.
[92] Ibid., p. 176.

idea of a developmental chronology for history. We misunderstand history, he observes, if we imagine it to be a successive series of developments from which emerges the present. ‘Human history’ is for Lawrence a myriad of processional (though not necessarily morphological) phases – a series of alternative epochs – which, though part of a continuum, are each individually other. Just as the self is imagined to be both part of and apart from the surrounding universe, the present is suggested to be both connected to and yet immediately separate from the past.

By placing emphasis on the apparent otherness of the ancient past Lawrence critiques the scientific tendency to assume the elevation and omniscience of the present. His Etruscan sketches observe that though one studies history to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the ancient past, the abstraction of scientific methodologies in fact affects one’s temporal removal from the reality they attempt to address. Thomas argues that archaeology’s obsession with metanarratives is based upon the proposition that ‘history can be understood as a seamless directional flow, made comprehensible through the trajectory of a single variable.’[93] Evolutionary metanarratives justify the authority of the archaeologist but do so at the expense of actuality. Lawrence’s disdain for progressive visions of history exemplifies his wider frustration with the modern obsession with systemised forms of understanding which become more preoccupied with perfecting the inferential framework than achieving a more complete apprehension of the thing itself.[94] As Thomas argues, the

[93] Thomas, ‘Archaeology’s Place in Modernity’, 26.

[94] Useful comparison here can be drawn with a passage from R. L. Stevenson’s *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes* (1879) in which the narrator describes camping in a woodland at the on the lower reaches of Mont Lozère. There Stevenson writes ‘Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly’, continuing he notes ‘What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield.’ Here, like a roof on a house, modernity blocks out the variousness of the night and replace it a uniform and monotonous blankness. See: Robert Louis Stevenson, ‘Travels with a Donkey in the Cévannes’, in *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévannes and The Amateur Emigrant*, ed. by Christopher Maclachlan (London: Penguin, 200), pp. 1-96 (p. 56). Like Stevenson Lawrence suggests that the abstraction of science affects a kind of temporal death in which one. The graphic form of history he offers in the etruscan sketches attempts to enable a form of temporal awakening, in which one becomes more acutely conscious of one’s position amidst this perplexity.

obsession with metanarratives represents a reaction against the precarious position of the individual in a modernity increasingly characterised by 'heterogeneity, hybridity, and instability.'[95] In contrast, Lawrence's sketches suggest that if one studies history to make sense of one's situation in the world, then one should not attempt to resolve the 'heterogeneity', 'instability' and otherness of the past, but instead render it as it is. The narrative reflects the flux of the present. The Etruscan remains are evidence for Lawrence that the present is not an all-knowing highpoint from which to objectively survey the vast expanse of the past, but instead an ever-changing and inconsistent position which prevents knowing and highlights instead the relative nature of individual understanding.

Lawrence further explores the relative and mediative nature of history through oceanic imagery and references to the sea – specifically the Tyrrhenian Sea. The sea is perpetually present throughout the collection of sketches as a symbol of the transient, fleeting nature of presence, and the unceasing press of time. For example, at Cerveteri Lawrence describes how 'From the sea-plain—and the sea was probably a mile or two miles nearer in, in etruscan days—the land heaves in an easy slope to the low, crowned cliffs of the city.'[96] Of course the closeness of the sea is symbolic of the Etruscans' closeness to the sea both culturally and geographically. However, the nearness of the sea also serves as a symbol of transience, a visible reminder of the actual instability and reality of Etruscan life. At Tarquinia, for example, he describes how 'through the paleness of time and the damage of men one still sees the quick ripple of life here, the eternity of the naïve moment, which the Etruscans knew.'[97] As the manifestation of the 'quick ripple of life', the Tyrrhenian Sea reflects, for Lawrence, the 'paleness of time' and the perpetual newness of the naïve moment.

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[95] Thomas, 'Archaeology's Place in Modernity', 26.
[96] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 14.
[97] Ibid., p. 45.

The Etruscans' connection to the sea is a sign of their difference and separation from the present in Lawrence's sketches; the changing distance between the town and the sea also suggests his perception of the Etruscans' acutely sensuous experience and intimacy and their opposition to the modern retreat towards more fixed and stable forms of rational understanding. Yet, the connection between the Etruscans and the sea in part contributes to what Lawrence imagines to be their modern appeal: 'We have reached the stage where we are weary of huge stone erections,' he writes, 'and we begin to realise that it is better to keep life fluid and changing, than to try to hold it fast down in heavy monuments.'[98] This attitude appeals to the need for a personal element in the modern approach to history. Instead of weighing oneself down with 'heavy' monumental frameworks and metanarratives of history, Lawrence instead emphasises the need to be receptive to the variousness and relative forms of understanding manifested in the past's otherness.

The perpetual movement and flow of water reflects the overlapping nature of different historical epochs continually flowing into and subsuming one another. In one of his other Italian essays entitled 'David', Lawrence evocatively describes his experience of the River Arno as it flows through Florence. 'What is a river then, but a green thread fluttering?' he asks, 'And now!—And particularly last night—Last night the river churned and challenged with strange noises.'[99] The 'fluttering' thread of the river gestures to the fluctuations in the Arno's notoriously irregular flow and is emblematic of the fluctuating temporal thread between the present and an ancient past. And yet the declaration 'And now!' opposes this flow. As a symbol the flow of the river, like the diachronic passage of linear time, is contrasted with the simultaneity of the 'Now'. In the forever 'naïve' present this 'fluttering thread' becomes a 'strange' and 'churning' mass. Juxtaposing an abstract linear vision of

[98] Ibid., p. 32.
[99] Ibid., p. 186.

history and the strangely messy and bewildering experience of the present, Lawrence explores the inbetweenness of one's temporal being in the world. His sketches reflect on how the epochal movements of history are always seemingly other to the spontaneity of one's feelings, and yet in their opposition sustain a sense of unfolding understanding amid the incongruity of perception.

This impression of the past as a series of often ambiguous and resurgent epochs is also developed through Lawrence's references to waves. In *Sketches of Etruscan Places* waves are emblematic of the fluctuating relationship between past and present, and they draw particular attention to the transience of the present and the mutability of times past. He writes in 'The Florence Museum':

> Civilisations rise in waves, and pass away in waves. And not till science, or art, tries to catch the ultimate meaning of the symbols that float on the last waves of the prehistoric period; that is, the period before our own; shall we be able to get ourselves into right relation with man as man is and has been and will always be.[100]

The image of the wave symbolizes how epochs succeed one another as a continuum, while also manifesting distinct periods. For Lawrence, what connects different epochs is the point of equilibrium or the rest point – the universal Being out of which all the distinct forms of life issue. This equilibrium is accessible to individuals through their ability to imaginatively conceive the 'meaning of the symbols that flow on' from one epoch to another – they are ultimate in that they hold meaning, even if that meaning is subjective. Lawrence writes that the symbols 'are [thus] the remnants of a vast old attempt made by humanity to form a

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[100] Ibid., p. 177.

conception of the universe.'[101] One cannot conceive the actuality of a bygone epoch, but through the imagination one can appreciate the plurality of possible meanings implicit in Etruscan symbols and in turn one can catch glimpses of the reality of this other mode of being. In attempting to render the otherness of the Etruscan remains Lawrence explores how language, like water, laps up against the actuality it attempts to describe. Just as at high-water, looking down one catches fleeting reflections of oneself, and glimpses of the hidden deeps below, Lawrence suggests that rendering one's impression of the ancient past highlights a similar intermingling and mediation between the self and that which appears affrontively and elusively other.

Lost Meanings, Incomprehensibility, and Ineffability

Lawrence's Etruscan sketches reveal an acute consciousness of the individual's transient and temporary situation in the world, and of the relative and ambiguous nature of their understanding. This is evident in his emphasis on the ever-changing nature of language – typified in the idea of *shadow*-words. In the 'Tarquinia' essay, for example, he describes how:

> The twilight of the beginning of our history was the nightfall of some previous history, which will never be written. Pelasgian is but a shadow-word. But Hittite and Minoan, Lydian, Carian, Etruscan, these words emerge from shadow, and perhaps from one and the same great shadow come the peoples to whom the names belong.[102]

[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid., p. 27.

In declaring ‘Pelasgian’ to be ‘but a shadow-word’, Lawrence highlights the ambiguous slippage in meaning in the labels used by historians to explain and characterise the ancient past; the term ‘Pelasgian’ referred to a specific cultural group, but this original meaning has been lost, and the term has subsequently been used to describe loosely pre-Hellenic groups in the Aegean region. Emphasising the changing use of the term, Lawrence observes the relative nature of historical understanding and its tendency to diminish the otherness manifested in the ancient past. In contrast, ‘Hittite and Minoan, Lydian, Carian, Etruscan’ are words which ‘emerge from shadow’, since these labels correspond with distinct groups and cultures which remain identifiable in the archaeological remains. The ambiguity of ‘Pelasgian’, for Lawrence, highlights how language acquires and loses meaning without a material point of reference. In the introduction to *Movements in European History*, he argues that scientific history alone cannot engage the imagination effectively, and thus fails to produce an effective historical sense. Likewise, while historical labels offer a means of distinguishing different groups, regions, and epochs, without a historical sense of the living realities they represent one cannot conceive the alternative modalities of being they represent.

In the Etruscan sketches Lawrence emphasises the imprecise and approximate nature of language as a way of suggesting both the otherness and ambiguity which characterises one’s historical sense. He emphasises the ambiguous nature of language to explore how one’s impression of the past requires a necessary mediation between scientific and graphic forms of history. For example, while trying to make sense of what he has seen in the tombs, the narrator reflects: ‘There was never an etruscan nation: only, in historical times, a great league of tribes or nations using the etruscan language and the etruscan script—at least

officially—and uniting in their religious feeling and observances.'[103] His frustration here is with the tendency for narrative and language to become ambiguous, arbitrary and generalising when attempting to describe the nuanced and idiosyncratic nature of – as Frances Wilson terms it – 'the self-wrestling human document'.[104] Wilson notes that Lawrence has a problem with Walt Whitman because of Whitman's 'habit of turning individuals into types', referencing his annoyance at Whitman's tendency to take the 'generalised thing' and 'not take a person.'[105] The same is true of Lawrence's difficulties with historiography – how can one narrate an indistinct and unreachable other reality, without adopting a language of imprecise generalities? The very structure of history is dependent upon how we narrate and categorise the past. The word 'Etruscan' becomes a place holder for the 'great league of tribes' which in fact lived across Etruria during the period. Thus, language serves to mediate between the abstract understanding which underpins history and the awareness that the Being of the past existed other to, and independently of, such forms of understanding. This is suggested in the tendency for the Etruscan remains to frustrate and subvert the narrator's attempts to categorically respond to them.

Likewise, Lawrence explores the tendency for the archaeological remains to resist simple comprehension when he recounts the inability of modern archaeologists to confidently translate the Etruscans' writings. For example, he writes:

> there are the writings on the wall, ... little sentences freely written in red paint or black, or scratched in the stucco with the finger, slanting with the real etruscan

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[103] Ibid.
[104] Frances Wilson, *Burning Man: The Ascent of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), p. 101.
[105] Ibid.; D. H. Lawrence, 'To Henry Savage, 22 December 1913', in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton, vols 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), II, pp. 129-30 (p. 130).

> carelessness and fulness of life, often running downwards, written from right to left. We can read these debonair inscriptions ... But when we have read them, we don't know what they mean. Avle—Tarchnas—Larthal—Clan. ... Names, family names, family connections, titles of the dead—we may assume so much. "Aule, son of Larte Tarchna," say the scientists, having got so far. But we cannot read one single sentence. The etruscan language is a mystery.[106]

Here Lawrence challenges the Baconian argument that objects can be read as simply as books. His proclamation 'Names, family names, family connections, titles of the dead' lists proper nouns as little more than signs. As signifiers these words are meaningless if one has no fixed point of reference against which to judge their significance, just like the terms used by archaeologists to group and categorise the past. As such, the 'mystery' of the Etruscan language mirrors the 'mystery' of the Etruscan culture, as is suggested by the characteristic otherness of its remains. Why, Lawrence asks, should we be able to derive any more significant meaning from objects that are *other* to us than we can from a language we do not understand, since the objects like the language convey a mode of being that is *other* to our own. If we cannot conceive the nuances implicit in a language we do not understand, why should we be able to conceive the nuances manifested in an object?

The perception of an unavoidable disjunction between the Etruscans' being and the language used to describe it reflects the idea that the past somehow resists the narrator's gaze. Lawrence describes how 'that which half emerges from the dim background of time is strangely stirring; and after having read all the learned suggestions, most of them contradicting one another; and then having looked sensitively at the tombs and the etruscan things that are left, one must accept one's own resultant feeling.'[107] The idea of 'time' as a

[106] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 18.
[107] Ibid., p. 28.

‘background’ highlights the temporal issues at stake in Lawrence’s historiography. The study of history, he observes is important because it reveals the depths implicit in the perception of the past as a homogenous whole. Yet, for ‘all the learned suggestions’ of scientific history, it only manages to half reveal the ‘strangely stirring’ realities implicit within the whole. Lawrence’s emphasis on historical otherness appeals to the importance of imagination and empathy in translating the materiality of the archaeological site into an impression of a living reality.

Strata, Layers, and Depths

The idea of stratification and stratigraphy lies at the heart of modern archaeology. Schnapp, Shanks, and Tiews identify the conceptualization of ‘surfaces’, ‘depths’, and ‘layers’ as a ‘matrix’ from which one can derive understanding with the emergence of scientific archaeological practices.[108] Likewise Thomas associates works like James Hutton’s *Theory of the Earth* (1788) and William Smith’s *Strata Identified by Organised Fossils* (1816) with the increasing use of the term ‘strata’ in relation to the practice of archaeology.[109] The idea of geological strata provided archaeologists with the means ‘to appreciate the sequences of events represented by the accumulation of layers of soil and debris on ancient sites’, Thomas observes, noting that the ‘relationship between the depth of time and the depth of deposit became a critical element in the archaeological imagination.’[110] Across Lawrence’s writings the idea of geological and archaeological strata is a recurrent source of creative inspiration. In *Women in Love*, while reflecting on the ‘vast, creative, non-human mystery’, Birkin

[108] Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews, ‘Archaeology, Modernism, Modernity’, 10.
[109] Thomas, ‘Archaeology’s Place in Modernity’, 27.
[110] Ibid., 28.

adopts the language of stratification to explain and realise the finitude of his own and humanity's existence.[111] He notes:

> God can do without man. God could do without the ichthyosauri and the mastodon. These monsters failed creatively to develop, so God, the creative mystery, dispensed with them. In the same way the mystery could dispense with man, should he too fail creatively to change and develop. The eternal creative mystery could dispose of man, and replace him with a finer created being: just as the horse has taken the place of the mastodon.[112]

The death of the prehistoric 'monsters', the 'ichthyosauri and the mastodon', is for Lawrence a reminder of the finitude of mankind's own existence. The fossil record and the layered structure of the earth reflect a spatial record of the successive phases and waves of history, which should serve as a reminder of one's own precarious and passing moment.

The strata are symbolic of the strange, compressive nature of history within which the most distant regions of the historical record appear as an increasingly homogenous and indistinct whole. Yet, despite this apparent compression, they maintain a form of historical continuity. To excavate the deep strata of history is always to some degree disruptive. Craig Wallace has noted how 'Archaeological descent ... disrupts accumulated, settled layers in the landscape and past/present distinctions become fragmented', and yet, despite such fragmentation, in Lawrence's Etruscan sketches the act of excavation serves to sustain the engagement between the past and present.[113] In the case of the landscapes of the modern

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[111] D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love*, ed. by David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 478.
[112] Ibid., p. 478-9.
[113] Craig Wallace, 'The "Carefully-Constructed Screen": Phantasmagorical Strata in the Ghost Stories of M. R. James', in *Excavating Modernity: Physical, Temporal and Psychological Strata in Literature, 1900-1930*, ed. by Eleanor Dobson and Gemma Banks (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 103-22 (p. 103).

Gothic, Roger Luckhurst writes of how the impression of layers and strata is symbolic of a form of 'polytemporal assemblage'.[114] Wallace expands on this idea, observing that 'the past is not superseded but repeated in a continual dialogue with the present.'[115] In Lawrence's case, the aspiration of historiography – to render an impression of the reality of the past – necessitates a similar dialogue between the self and those aspects of history which appear irretrievably other.

The idea of seeing through strata provides Lawrence's narrator with a means of imaginatively bridging the disjunction between the lost, other reality of the Etruscans and the actuality of their own experience in the present. In 'Looking Down on the City', for example, he describes feeling 'A far-off sadness, an emotion deeper than the natural planes of emotion, unrealizable, lying in the sub-stratum of one's being.'[116] Depth becomes synonymous with the unknowability of reality. As an 'experience', Lawrence suggests Etruscan reality to be accessible through those 'unrealizable' instinctual feelings which constitute 'the sub-stratum of one's being'. He perceives the Etruscans to have been autonomous individuals whose reality is forever inaccessible apart from through the intuition and empathy of the observer. Colby notes the significance of strata as connoting 'depth without bottom, depths which are constantly changing as a result of what is discovered underneath, the layers of psychoanalytic truth can only be interpreted in relation to other excavated layers and a solid analytic interpretation is at consistent risk of dislocation.'[117] Likewise, for Lawrence, the attempt in language to produce a 'solid analytic' vision of the prehistoric past is forever at 'risk of dislocation'. Reflecting a process of open-

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[114] Roger Luckhurst, '"The Contemporary London Gothic and the Limits of the "Spectral Turn"', *Textual Practice*, 16.3 (2002), 527-46 (533).
[115] Wallace, 'The "Carefully-Constructed Screen": Phantasmagorical Strata in the Ghost Stories of M. R. James', p. 104.
[116] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 194.
[117] Colby, *Stratified Modernism*, p. 97.

ended mediation, Lawrence's Etruscan sketches produce a vision of the ancient past and its people that resists finality and actively resists objective knowing.

While strata may highlight the inaccessibility of the past, Lawrence's emphasis on the imaginative opportunities afforded by archaeological remains suggests the possibility of renovating the depths of experiential meaning implicit within them. Building upon Fredric Jameson's argument that 'depth models' are characteristic of modern thought and the obsessive preoccupation with uncovering hidden depths within the self, Thomas argues that 'Archaeology was integral to the development of this "depth thinking," and its embodiment of the recovery of hidden truths from below the earth and from the distant past has provided a powerful metaphor in other areas of thought' and in particular contributed to the development of Freudian psychoanalytical theories.[118] While Lawrence critically resists Freudian ideas, implicit in his response to archaeology are similar parallels between the idea of uncovering a lost past through the excavation of the past and the idea of renovating the previously hidden and forgotten depths of the individual mind.

By distinguishing and deciphering the depths of meaning implicit in history, Lawrence uses the expansive otherness of the past to suggest the sheer scale of possibility for new forms of understanding. His historiography reflects the principle that the attempt to narrate the past prompts a re-evaluation and appreciation of the complexity of our own lives in the present. In the 'Tarquinia' essay, for example, he adopts the image of the parapet to describe how:

> We walk to the parapet, and suddenly are looking into one of the most delightful landscapes I have ever seen: as it were, into the very virginity of hilly green

[118] Thomas, 'Archaeology's Place in Modernity', 28; Thomas draws upon Jameson's formulation of the depth model, by which he describes the widely occurring theoretical principle that surfaces conceal depths of meaning which can be recovered or retrieved. See: Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', *New Left Review*, 146 (1984), 62.

> country. It is all wheat-green and soft and swooping, swooping down and up, and glowing with green newness, and no houses. ... then swerving the curve and up again, to the neighbouring hill that faces ... Beyond, the hills ripple away to the mountains, and far in the distance stands a round peak, that seems to have an enchanted city on its summit. ... And immediately one feels: that hill has a soul, it has a meaning.[119]

Here the parapet appears as a symbol of the high point of the present. In the 'virginity' and 'newness' of the landscape Lawrence imagines, as if instinctively, a view onto an Edenic past. The intuitive, unfolding nature of the vision is reflected in the motion of his gaze 'swooping, swooping down and up', 'swerving the curve and up again', while the Tuscan landscape manifests its own strata and layers, which themselves need to be unpicked. The impression of the ancient sites' hidden depths is reimagined in Lawrence's responses to the present landscape. They suggest individuals' desire to situate and ground themselves in relation to the otherwise boundless and baseless expanse of time itself. As the landscape opens up and unfolds, the rolling 'hilly green country' gives way to the rippling mountains, which in turn reveal a distant 'round peak'. The image of the city on the hill in Christian symbolism represents the divine light of God, the creator – or, in this case, the vital quick of life, the process of creation. This is a moment of imaginative re-enactment; Lawrence attempts to imagine the Etruscan experience by adopting his own kind of symbolic vision.

Lawrence's journeys into the tombs reflect similar thought adventures enacted imaginatively through a form of unfolding symbolic vision. Fixating on the unutterable, his narrative performs an almost archaeological excavation of the experience of visiting the remains. For example, in the 'Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 1', Lawrence describes how:

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[119] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 33.

> There is a mystery and a portentousness in the simple scenes which goes deeper than common-place life. It seems all so gay and light. Yet there is a certain weight, or depth of significance that goes beyond aesthetic beauty. If one once starts looking, there is much to see. But if one glances merely, there is nothing but a pathetic little room with unimposing, half-obliterated, scratchy little paintings in tempera.[120]

Lawrence's perception of the 'mystery' and otherness of the Etruscan paintings is reproduced through a sensitivity to difference and contrast. Superficial 'simple scenes' conceal depths, 'light[ness]' and visibility are contrasted with concealment and hiddenness. The narrator's toing-and-froing between the superficial lightness of the scene and the impression of its concealed significance suggests the brushing away of dirt by the archaeologist. Lawrence's acute sensitivity to detail re-enacts the intensity of vision required to see the life beyond the 'aesthetic beauty' of the art. The paintings' power to evoke strong feelings is for Lawrence a reminder that they are the manifestation of other embodied realities. Within this there is a subtle critique of the systematic, categorical approach to the remains. The impersonal, scientific approach with its purely rational attitude, provides the same 'glances' of meaning, but the failure to engage personally and imaginatively with the art means ultimately one can only see 'a pathetic little room with ... scratchy little paintings.' As such Lawrence suggests the need for a more intuitive and imaginative mediation between the materiality of the remains and the other reality which produced them.

In rendering his impressions of the Etruscan remains, Lawrence repeatedly uses images of hidden depths to explore the continuity between vision and deeper, instinctual modes of perception. This is particularly evident in his responsiveness to the permeability of different

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[120] Ibid., p. 49.

archaeological layers and strata. For archaeologists, as Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews note, the permeability of the strata – the moments of 'discontinuity [and continuity] when one layer becomes another' – challenges the methodological approach and requires the use of an interface.[121] Such an interface, however rationally justified, is inherently arbitrary, defining categorical distinctions between different periods which in reality overlap and flow into one another. For Lawrence, such a requirement is demonstrative of one way in which the practice of archaeology necessarily distorts the reality of history as it is evident in the archaeological site, for the permeability of the archaeological record attests to the palimpsestic nature of history itself; in *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, the transient nature of history is felt through overlaps and contradictions, absences and resurgences, the dual processes of creation and destruction.

In Lawrence's view, the desire to make the past uniform obscures the fleeting otherness of the naïve living moment and its tendency to overlap, undermine and resurge within itself. Sitting on the beach, Lawrence describes the 'peculiarly forlorn coast' before recalling that beneath its 'sunken' inertia:

> this is the Tyrrhenian sea of the Etruscans, where their shipping spread sharp sails, and beat the sea with slave-oars, roving in from Greece and Sicily, Sicily of the Greek tyrants; from Cumae, the city of the old Greek colony of Campania, where the province of Naples now is; and from Elba, where the Etruscans mined their iron-ore.[122]

The apparent absence of life on the coast is contested by the recollection of the life which once filled it. The feeling of 'forlorn' absence gives rise to an imagined vision of Etruscan

[121] Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews, 'Archaeology, Modernism, Modernity', 10.
[122] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 25-6.

ships which in turn inspires images of the 'Greek tyrants' and through them the 'old Greek colony of Campania' which is now replaced and overlaid with the province of modern Naples. Here the past resurges in the present through the imagination of the narrator, before giving way once more. Through a palimpsestic act of imagination, Lawrence performs a form of mediative history, in which graphic imaginings are entangled with recollections of scientific fact. In this intuitive system of recollection, he reproduces in narrative the impression of an historical record which disregards systematic chronology in favour of a more synchronous palimpsest. Intuition here draws Lawrence's mind instinctively to difference, to the plurality of life which has come before, without needing to resolve it through the use of fixed chronologies. Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews suggest that the archaeological conception of landscape is palimpsestic, noting the process of temporal percolation 'that folds together the many fragmentary traces of pasts present in any one place.'[123] By this they seek to express how different traces of the past permeate a landscape, overlapping and amalgamating into a single vision. By emphasising the intermingling and layering of history, Lawrence's Etruscan sketches reflect a similar process of percolation and permeation. The idea of the historical impression allows Lawrence to suggest a form of mediative historical consciousness which moves beyond merely envisioning history as a series of isolated moments.

Lawrence's sense that one needs to look more deeply than the visual is likewise displayed in the contrast he establishes between 'camera vision' and the unutterable aspects of the Etruscan experience. In 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 2', he writes:

> what is it, that will never be put into words? For a man who sees not as a camera does when it takes a snapshot, not even as a cinema-camera, taking its succession

[123] Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews, 'Archaeology, Modernism, Modernity', 11.

> of instantaneous snaps; but in a curious rolling flood of vision ... and only the mind *picks out* certain factors which shall *represent* the image seen.[124]

The inability of language to convey the depths of meaning implicit in the experience of the Etruscans is, for Lawrence, felt in the tendency to emphasise questions over answers. However 'instantaneous' it may be, camera vision cannot produce that feeling of the whole otherness of being manifested in the scene itself, since it preserves a degree of doubt. The idea that the Etruscan remains can be simply laid out as a series of successive images, is for Lawrence evidence of the failure to appreciate the consuming and overwhelming whole otherness of feeling which the encounter with the ancient past inspires. This is simultaneously a critique of the scientific historian's belief that the ancient past can be explained by a series of facts. The mind doesn't see in a series of facts, Lawrence observes, just as it doesn't see in a series of snaps. The mind sees a continual 'rolling flood of vision', a sustained mediation of co-existing feelings, truths, and ideas. It is the rational mind which unpicks this whole otherness of feeling and causes it to fragment. To approach history from the perspective of pure rationality is therefore to miss the complete flood of other feeling and instinctual understanding which elude any simple utterance.

Noting a difference between the static 'snaps' of facts and the subtle 'rolling flood' of understanding, Lawrence continues:

> We have made up our minds to see things *as they are*: which is camera vision. But the camera can neither feel the heat of the horse, his strange body; nor smell his horsiness; nor hear him neigh. Whereas the eye, seeing him, wakes all our other

[124] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, 127.

> sensual experience of him: not to speak of our terror of his frenzy, and admiration of his strength.[125]

For Lawrence, to appreciate the actual other living reality of the historical artefact one must approach it in a condition of complete apprehension. Camera vision, like scientific history, can present an image of the past as it *is*, but it fails to suggest its reality. Lawrence's Etruscan sketches explore the idea that to approach the remains of the past with the intention of documenting them objectively is to misunderstand the purpose of studying history. Lawrence observes that the power of the past to educate is in fact rooted in its ability to engage the empathy and imagination of the observer, and to prompt extended investigation of the other realities it conceals.

The idea that history represents a process of perpetual mediation is reflected in Lawrence's emphasis on the permeability of geological strata and the permeability of time boundaries. 'Age overlaps age', he writes in one instance, alluding to the permeability of historical boundaries and categories. For example, he reflects at Tarquinia:

> you may still see the hills where the well-tombs of the aboriginal inhabitants are discovered, with the urns containing the ashes inside. Then come the graves where the dead were buried unburned, graves very much like those of today. But tombs of the same period with cinerary urns are found near to, or in connection. So that the new people, and the old apparently lived side by side in harmony, from very early days, and the two modes of burial continued side by side, for centuries, long before the painted tombs were made.[126]

[125] Ibid., p. 127-8.
[126] Ibid., p. 35.

Here, overlaying multiple clauses, Lawrence re-enacts the stratification of history producing an ever-lengthening form of vision, in which each observation is contested and clarified by the one which follows. The vision of the 'hills' gives way to the 'urns' imagined as being at their heart. The image of the graves of the past, is in turn overlaid with the associated image of the graves of today. But this image is itself once more superimposed with the image of other 'cinerary urns'. The combined effect is then finally resolved as Lawrence emphasises the commingling of the 'new' and 'old', overlaying this image once more with the reminder that this effect was inspired by the experience of the tombs themselves. By re-enacting the process of stratification textually, Lawrence explores how one's impression of history depends upon a process of perpetual recollection and mediation in the present, and contests morphological or developmental conceptions of the past as a singular, sequential chronology. Likewise, Lawrence's impressions of cultural or historical difference do not necessarily reflect a process of evolution or development, but instead reveal the coexistence and interaction of diverse forms of life as a form of palimpsest.

Lawrence's emphasis on the palimpsestic nature of one's historical sense also draws attention to the fleeting and ungrounded nature of the present. Geoff Bailey has asked:

> If palimpsests representing variable and differential temporalities are a universal feature of the world we live in, where exactly do we locate the present? And where do we draw the boundary between the 'present' and the 'past' or for that matter between 'present' and 'future'?[127]

For Lawrence, the variable temporalities one sees in the archaeological record serve to undermine the idea of a fixed present. The idea of a monolithic, homogenous present reflects

[127] Geoff Bailey, 'Time Perspectives, Palimpsests and the Archaeology of Time', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, 26 (2007), 198-223 (214).

the totalising vision his writings always resist. Instead, the palimpsestic quality of his impressions portray the present as a naïve moment of intuitional mediation, in which the incongruous assemblage of past and present visions becomes the ground upon which the future is made manifest.

In the Etruscan sketches, the permeability of historical epochs is increasingly seen to represent the mediative relationship between the self and the other. Lawrence's narrator is drawn to instances of inbetweenness. In the case of the Etruscan murals, he describes how:

> The subtlety of etruscan painting, as of Chinese and Hindu, lies in the wonderfully suggestive *edge* of the figures. It is not outlined. It is not what we call "drawing." It is the flowing contour where the body suddenly leaves off, upon the atmosphere.[128]

The permeability of the figures' outlines in the Etruscan paintings manifests the interrelationship between the natural world and the human body, the self and the other. There is no distinction or categorical division between ontology and epistemology, just a 'flowing contour' or a permeable boundary between the ontology of the body and the ineffable power of 'atmosphere'. This idea of the 'flowing contour' between knowing and being, emphasises the contingency of understanding. He declares: 'The universe, which was a single aliveness with a single soul, instantly changed, the moment you thought of it, and became a dual creature with two souls, fiery and watery, forever mingling and rushing apart, and held by the great aliveness of the universe in an ultimate equilibrium.'[129] The 'single aliveness of the universe' – its very being – appears forever other to individual understanding as it is instantly 'changed' the moment one thinks about it. While scientific

[128] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 123-4.
[129] Ibid., p. 57.

history might be able to provide an abstract conception of the 'universe', to comprehend the present as a lived (or living) moment one must assume a more mediative mode of thought. To appreciate the actuality of the past one must recognise its otherness and its affront to the fixed abstract understanding presented by scientific historians. For Lawrence, one must instead approach the remains in a state of imaginative apprehension, open to the plurality of different beliefs and ideas manifested in the objects themselves.

Lawrence's impressions of the ancient past forever negotiate the paradox that in the ruin, dissolution, and decay of history one can still intuit a sense of the other reality it represents. The Etruscan sketches explore through the form of the historical impression the possibility of coming to appreciate the other reality manifested in the materiality of archaeological site. At 'Volterra' he sees in the city's archway 'that peculiar weighty richness of ancient things.'[130] This impression of the gate's looming weight is complemented by the

> three dark heads, now worn featureless, [but still] reach[ing] out curiously and inquiringly one from the keystone of the arch, one from each of the arch-bases, to gaze from the city out into the steep hollow of the world beyond.[131]

Though anthropomorphic, being 'featureless', these heads maintain an implacable blankness. There is a curious sense of encountering something worn smooth and made other by the continual erosive press of time and the elements. And yet, despite their timeworn blankness, these heads continue to 'reach out curiously and inquiringly'. Their anthropomorphism gives rise to feelings of almost personal recognition and promote a sense of the past resurging through the associative aspect of the impression. This sense of the past reaching out to the modern observer is repeated again when Lawrence remarks: 'Strange, dark old etruscan

[130] Ibid., p. 159.
[131] Ibid.

heads of the city gate, even now they are featureless they still have a peculiar, out-reaching life of their own.'[132] The use of the verb 'out-reaching' underscores the impression that the heads embody the presence of an ancient past that was alive previously too, irrespective of the individual.

Lawrence's emphasis on the presence of a living past challenges the claims to objectivity made by the *scientific* approach to archaeology. He continues:

> [Pericle] Ducati says they represented the heads of slain enemies hung at the city gate. But they don't hang. They stretch with curious eagerness forward. Nonsense about dead heads. They were city deities of some sort. ... But we'll call it etruscan still. The roots of the gate, and the dark heads, these they cannot take away from the Etruscans. And the heads are still on the watch.[133]

Where Ducati sees the sculptures as the 'heads of slain enemies' representing death, savagery and primitive violence, Lawrence sees 'curious eagerness' and life. This contradiction highlights the true primacy of instinct over mental truths. For Lawrence, the instinctive liveliness of the heads and their curious 'stretch[ing]' motion alone demonstrate the falsity of the belief in Etruscan savagery. He explores how the irrepressible nature of such instinctual truths directly challenges and denies the truthfulness of the academic narrative created by Ducati. These ineffable truths draw attention to the distortive nature of the *scientific* archaeology which appropriates the Etruscan artefacts, in the same manner as the Romans, not to understand the past as it was but instead to aggrandize the present.

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[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid., pp. 159-60.

Bareness, Absence, and the Entropy of History

Across Lawrence's sketches, the bareness of the Etruscan sites is identified as a source of affrontive otherness and a reminder of the limited and destructive methods and scope of scientific archaeology. Bareness and emptiness are a reminder of how the mindless excavation and the recovery of artefacts leads inevitably, just like a history rooted only in a register of scientific facts, to a diminished impression of the actual living reality of the past reflected by the sites. In 'Cerveteri', for example, Lawrence notes first the sense of an empty tomb as 'a house that has been swept bare', and later observes that 'The tombs are bare: what treasures they yielded up, and even to us Cerveteri has yielded a great deal, is in the museums. If you go, you will see, as I saw, a grey, forlorn little township in tight walls—perhaps having a thousand inhabitants—and some empty burying places.'[134] Appearing 'bare', 'forlorn' and 'empty', the town and the tombs suggest a shared sense of loss for Lawrence. The emphasis is on the tombs having 'yielded up' their 'treasures' and being systematically harvested and drained by archaeologists. The removal of historical artefacts represents a wider elimination of the pastness of archaeological sites. The remains are harvested for use in the present, but that act of destruction necessarily results in the loss of the very materiality of the past being addressed. The 'empty burying places' manifest the gaps and voids left in our understanding of the historical past by such systematic removal. The human desire to conceive the whole of history, as in a museum, results paradoxically at Cerveteri in the creation of new voids and absences.

Lawrence identifies the museum collection with the paradox that in attempting to produce a complete comprehensive catalogue of the past, one becomes increasingly conscious of all

[134] Ibid., p. 22.

that is lost and missing. In the sketches, the desire to conceive the past wholly is balanced paradoxically by the recognition of the absence of such wholeness. Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews observe that the aspiration and desire for wholeness is a reaction against the horror and nausea created by loss and waste, noting that 'There is horror not only in the metamorphic processes of decay that apply to our own materiality. But also in the entropy that is history—the tendency to misunderstand (so much is missing), the drift into formlessness.'[135] They identify in modern responses to archaeology a fear of the dissolution of the self. For Lawrence too, the increasing scarcity of Etruscan remains in situ inspires a crisis of subjectivity both in existential terms and in the immediacy of the present. The decay and dissolution of the past is a perpetual reminder of the finitude of the individual and the dissolute and impermanent nature of subjective experience. Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews describe this idea, with some poignancy, as an awareness of how archaeological remains represent 'the sickening loss that is the horror of history—the wasted lives. So much thrown away.[136]

To waste is to destroy and to discard, but it is also to wither and diminish. Perceiving this dual sense of destruction in the Etruscan sites, Lawrence aligns the indifference of conquerors and vandals to the value of Etruscan life and culture with the scientific disinterest in subjectivity. The sites manifest for Lawrence the waste of subjectivity itself, its crisis and dissolution. The scientific practice of archaeology is, he observes, merely the latest iteration of a Roman approach to the past, in which that which appears *other* must be destroyed or reappropriated within a narrative that conforms to the dominant mythopoeia. At Tarquinia, Lawrence reminds us that:

[135] Schnapp, Shanks and Tiews, 'Archaeology, Modernism, Modernity', 12.
[136] Ibid., 12.

> There is nothing really etruscan left. It is better to abandon the necropolis altogether: and to remember that almost everything we know of the Etruscans from classic authors is comparable to the paintings in the late tombs. It refers to the fallen, Romanised Etruscans of the decadence.[137]

However, while he suggests that to study the Etruscan tombs *scientifically* is a futile act, since academic attitudes are corrupted by later prejudices and ideologies, this is not to imply that it is futile to *see* the tombs. For Lawrence, the very scarcity and absence of Etruscan artefacts exacerbates the impression of their difference and otherness. The tendency to project subjective understanding upon the world as objective knowing sustains the unknowability of otherness and the possibility of realising alternative modalities of being. Lawrence implies that subjectivity only has a temporary and fleeting grip upon the world. Yet, his sense of the futility of trying to empirically know the world is not entirely hopeless. The absence of historical remains provides new spaces for imaginative engagement with the Etruscan culture at a level of Being as opposed to knowing. The sketches explore how through the perpetual waste of subjectivity one can paradoxically create a more intuitive appreciation of this alternative reality outside of one's objective knowledge.

Stressing the importance of the imagination in enabling one to see beyond the emptiness of the tombs to the significant otherness of Etruscan life, at Cerveteri Lawrence notes how:

> when we remember the great store of treasure that every notable tomb must have contained: and that every large tumulus covered several tombs ... we can have an idea of the vast mass of wealth this city could afford to bury with its dead, in days when Rome had very little gold, and even bronze was precious.[138]

[137] Lawrence, *Sketches of Etruscan Places*, p. 131.
[138] Ibid., p. 18.

In remembering 'the great stores of treasure' which were once collected in the tombs Lawrence observes how imaginative recollection can achieve a form of obverse vision: in emptiness there is the possibility of fullness, while in fullness (such as in a well-stocked museum) one can perceive emptiness and vacuity. This form of obverse vision, when applied imaginatively to the sheer number of tombs and tumuli in the necropolis, gives a sense of the vast wealth once collected there. In its vastness Etruscan society manifests a powerful liveliness. The imagination has the potential to translate a hypothesis into a form of living truth. Juxtaposing and contrasting scientific and graphic truths in moments of imaginative re-enactment Lawrence suggests that the otherness of the past is a living reality, even if its truth can only be glimpsed in the present.

Lawrence challenges what he perceives to be the inescapable self-consciousness – or self-centredness – of objective scientific understanding. Where archaeologists and scientific historians have used the prehistoric past to illustrate a primitivist narrative of cultural development, Lawrence instead argues that this has blinded us to our own finitude. The otherness of prehistory in his Etruscan sketches illustrates, through the finitude of history itself, the limitations of scientific understanding. Lawrence emphasises how the use of inferential frameworks to assign value, significance and meaning to archaeological objects necessarily projects modern ideas and prejudices upon them and obscures the reality of their otherness. Contemplating an Etruscan chimaera, for example, Lawrence notes:

> it is not merely a big toy. It has, and was intended to have, an exact esoteric meaning. In fact, the Greek myths are only gross representations of certain very clear and very ancient esoteric conceptions, that are much older than the myths ... The etruscan religion, surely, was never anthropomorphic: that is, whatever gods it contained were not *beings*, but symbols of elemental powers ... We, on the

> contrary, say: In the beginning was the Word!—and deny the physical true existence. We exist only in the Word, which is beaten out thin to cover, gild, and hide all things.[139]

In the assumption that the chimaera was merely a 'toy' as opposed to an 'esoteric' symbol, he notes the modern tendency to trivialise the ancient past, but also to self-consciously anthropomorphise all forms of belief. The 'gross' anthropomorphism of the Greek myths Lawrence sees as in fact a distortion of the Etruscan intimacy with the 'elemental powers' of nature. Where he stresses the Etruscan belief in the relationship between the human being and nature, he identifies the Greeks with the transition towards an anthropocentric world view – a principle emphasised subsequently in biblical creation stories. This juxtaposition of two contrasting mythopoeias is sustained through Lawrence's reference to the opening verse of the gospel of John – 'In the beginning was the Word'; he demonstrates how anthropomorphism has led to the rationalising of history. In the sketches, Etruscan culture appears other on account of its resistance to such human-centric thinking, and instead represents alternative forms of mediative understanding.

The esotericism of Etruscan culture is, then, for Lawrence not the result of some mystical form of revelation, but the product of the modern inability to recognise and accept a mode of Being and of understanding the world which is *other* to its own. Scientific archaeology's preoccupation with reason is for Lawrence a means of moulding the unknowable difference of the world into a form of knowable familiarity. He reflects dismissively:

> trust an Englishman and a modern for wanting to turn the tall, proud, sparky, dare-devil asphodel into the modest daffodil! I believe we don't like the asphodel because we don't like anything proud and sparky. The myrtle opens her blossoms

[139] Ibid., p. 122.

> in just the same way as the asphodel, explosively, throwing out the sparks of her stamens. And I believe it was just this that the Greeks *saw*. They were that way themselves.[140]

The 'modern' 'Englishman['s]' tendency to project his own 'modest' symbolism upon the past demonstrates the self-reflexive nature of the historical gaze for Lawrence. The modern dislike for 'anything proud and sparky' results self-reflexively in the assumption that this was true of the ancient past as well. For the 'modern' scientific historian, the symbolism of the myrtle is incomprehensible if not inconceivable. When Lawrence suggests that the Greeks '*saw*' something else, he probes the paradox that in seeing more, one comes to realise all that one cannot see.

The Etruscan sketches sustain a tension between the expansion of one's vision, and its dissolution and dimness. Seeing more is repeatedly identified with an increasing awareness of all that one can't see. This tension erupts in moments of frustration with the very activity of travelling to see things at all. He writes in 'Looking Down on the City': 'I don't want to *see* things any more: particularly the great works of man.'[141] The 'great works of man' Lawrence refers to here are the great classical works of sculpture and art, and yet in using similar language to that which he uses to describe the Romans' imperialistic appropriation and suppression of Etruscan culture, he attacks the great metanarratives of history with a capital H. It is in part the paucity of Etruscan remains which gives them their appeal. In the 'Vulci' essay, for example, he notes how 'There was nothing to see but these black damp chambers, sometimes cleared, sometimes with coarse great sarcophagi and broken rubbish and excavation-rubble left behind, in the damp, grisly darkness.'[142] Moving beyond

[140] Ibid., p. 15.
[141] Ibid., p. 193.
[142] Ibid., p. 148.

archaeology's inability to derive further understanding from such degraded sites, Lawrence evokes the power of narrative to illuminate imaginatively the *experience* of the Etruscans.

Lawrence identifies the impression of strangeness and otherness which arises during his visits to the tomb with the quieting and dimming of the rational mind. He aligns the experience of feeling dimmed with the emergence of a more prescient form of historical consciousness. For example, he writes, in 'The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 1':

> seeing tomb after tomb, dimness after dimness, divided between the pleasure of finding so much, and the disappointment that so little remains. One tomb after another, and nearly everything faded or eaten away ... Once it was all bright and dancing ... And it was deep and sincere honour rendered to the dead and to the mysteries. It is contrary to our ideas; but the ancients had their own philosophy for it.[143]

The repetition of the phrases 'tomb after tomb, dimness after dimness', 'One tomb after another' reflects rhythmically the same dimming of the rational mind, which allows the individual to perceive the 'bright' other reality of the Etruscans. This sense of dimming is initiated earlier as he notes:

> Pieces of the wall-face are shattered away, damp has eaten into the tempera colours, nothing seems to be left but disappointment. Yet in the dimness, as we get used to the light, we see flights of birds flying through the haze, rising from the sea with the draught of life still in their winds. And we take heart and look closer.[144]

[143] Ibid., p. 54-5.
[144] Ibid., p. 44.

Despite the fragmentation and 'pieces of the wall-face ... shattered away', the visual and psychological dimness which envelops the observer's mind gives rise to a similarly refreshed form of sight.[145] Allowing the rational mind to become dimmed, Lawrence highlights the creative power of the imagination. The suppression of the rational mind heightens the senses which in turn reinvigorates the imagination. Feelings of dimness allow the narrator to undermine and subvert the expectations of the intellect and scientific abstraction, and instead to approach the Etruscan remains from a position of creative naivety. Even if the nature of Etruscan life remains other and unknowable, the spontaneity of its actual livingness is re-enacted through the imaginative aspect of narration.

Lawrence's reflections on dimness explore the principle that to realise the 'simple, uninitiated vision of the [Etruscan] people' one must engage in daring and intuitive acts of self-directed imagination and divination. 'All it depends on, is the amount of *true*, sincere, religious concentration you can bring to bear on your object.' he declares:

> An act of pure attention, if you are capable of it, will bring its own answer. And you choose that object to concentrate upon, which will best focus your consciousness. Every real discovery made, every serious and significant decision ever reached, was reached and made by divination. Columbus discovered America by a sort of divination. The soul stirs, and makes an act of pure attention, and that is a discovery.[146]

For Lawrence, it is not the inferential framework which educates one about the reality of the past, but the power of the whole impression to suggest the lived reality manifested in the vast otherness of history. The educative power of history is manifest in the very process of

[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid., p. 62.

engaging with it. Render the impression of archaeological sites completely, and they will, he observes, bring their ‘own answer’. Attending to the archaeological remains of the past presumptively will only produce a history which self-consciously reflects an image of the observers themselves. To ‘concentrate upon’ and decipher one’s impression of the object offers the possibility of coming to a more acute appreciation of the lived reality of the past. In these terms, the affrontive otherness of the archaeological remains serves as the site from which the individual consciousness reaches out imaginatively through a process of empathetic ‘divination’ towards the reality of the ancient past. Lawrence argues strongly that one must focus intensely and ‘concentrate’ upon that object until its strange otherness overwhelms any pre-existing expectations of meaning – ‘semantic satiation’ describes a comparable effect in language when one says familiar words repeatedly until they suddenly seem to lose all their original meaning.

This momentary loss of understanding and meaning appeals on one level to the unignorable loss and decay of history. Yet, on another, Lawrence identifies this momentary loss of understanding as a state of generative not-knowing. The affrontive otherness of the Etruscan remains produces perplexity but also an intuitive awareness of the alternative modalities of being and knowing they represent. The narrator continues: ‘Whatever object will bring the consciousness into a state of pure attention, in a time of perplexity, will also give back an answer to the perplexity.’[147] We must, he observes, achieve a state of not-knowing in the case of history, if we are to side-step the reductive narratives of scientific historians and the Romans before them, and reconnect with the Etruscans at a humanistic level. In his sketches, Lawrence challenges the purely scientific approach to history by instead emphasising the importance of one’s intuition being roused into a state of ‘pure attention’. One must engage

[147] Ibid.

imaginatively and empathetically with the terrifying actuality of history if one is to become conscious of the numerous lives and alternative realities which comprise it. Lawrence's Etruscan sketches explore the extent to which individuals can appreciate and comprehend their situation in the interminable vastness of history. The uncertainty and ambiguity which characterises human life is reflected in the affront of otherness for Lawrence. The discovery of new understanding in the sketches depends upon imaginative engagements – acts of 'pure attention' – in which individuals make themselves receptive to the possibility manifested in the vast and terrifying otherness of the world. After all, 'Every great discovery or decision comes by an act of divination', Lawrence reminds us, 'Facts are fitted round afterwards.'[148]

The need to dim the mind, to suppress one's preconceptions of the ancient past, reflects a clear critique of the archaeological application of a particular methodology in order to derive truth. Stefania Michelucci has observed that when responding to the Etruscan remains 'Lawrence is not only well aware of the limitations inherent in his reconstruction of their way of life, of his being bound to "invent" it on the basis of what remains of their civilization, since literature can imagine but not restore what has been destroyed by time, but, more importantly, he questions the authority of his own point of view in an attempt to avoid the distortions produced by his own inherited cultural assumptions.'[149] In his Etruscan sketches, Lawrence probes the extent to which intuition and instinct provide a means of recovering the other of the past. The Etruscans' historical *otherness* not only limits the extent to which we can reconstruct and comprehend the true nature of their society and culture, but also challenges the assumed centrality and universality of the present. Crucially, unlike the historical accounts drawn from the Romans, he does not appeal to the otherness of the past as a sign of its degeneracy or savagery. Instead, he demonstrates how engaging

[148] Ibid.
[149] Michelucci, 'D. H. Lawrence's Etruscan Seduction', 97.

imaginatively with the past one can perceive not only the finitude of the current epoch and its entirely mental mode of Being but the future possibility of alternative modes of life. Lawrence's appeal to the dual nature of history is an argument in favour of an inclusive interpretation of history as opposed to an exclusive one. He demonstrates how the affront of historical otherness is as valuable as the scientific facts of history. The challenging otherness of the ancient past is shown in his sketches to be a reminder of the individual's own finitude. Instead of merely instructing the reader in the facts of history, Lawrence uses the impression of otherness to suggest the opportunities for personal growth and change. His Etruscan sketches explore the education that is reflected in the affront of otherness.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored the affront of otherness in Lawrence's travel writings. It has shown how his responses to radical difference represent a sustained investigation of the generative relationship between perception and expression. The overarching argument has been that Lawrence's attempts to render the impression of otherness are evidence of a life-long desire to better understand what it means to be other to oneself. There have been two primary emphases in developing this argument. The first has been to establish a basis for reading Lawrence's travel writings in light of literary impressionism as a way of engaging with the world. The thesis has demonstrated the similarities between Lawrence's probing investigations of otherness and the impressionistic conception of narrative as a means of deciphering the perplexity of reality. Previous scholarship on Lawrence's travel writing has, at best, drawn superficial comparison with literary impressionism at the level of visuality. This study has addressed this situation by showing how Lawrence's use of narrative in the writings on travel reflects an impressionistic conciliation between the self and the world. By better understanding how Lawrence's travel writings share with literary impressionism an awareness of the mediative nature of subjective reality, the thesis offers a new conceptual framework for understanding the nature of authorial decisions in composing his works. The thesis has evidenced how his heuristic process of writing, doubting, and revising his ideas suggests a larger effort to decipher and to come-to-know the instinctual meanings which manifest themselves in the elusive otherness of things.

The second emphasis has been on the suggestive power of otherness and its affront. Though scholars have identified Lawrence's idealisation of otherness and his desire to uncover a new modality of being and understanding in the travel writing, there has not been an effective method for linking up the various approaches to reading otherness in Lawrence's travel

writings. This thesis provides such a method by situating Lawrence's various invocations of radical difference in relation to his wider belief that the affront of otherness can educate by inspiring imaginative and empathetic engagements with the world outside of the self. In maintaining this emphasis, the thesis has shown how Lawrence's effort to render the impression of otherness anticipate the possibility of deriving new understanding from the immediate strangeness of the present. Though Lawrence became increasingly doubtful that the encounter with cultural difference could bring about a sustained societal regeneration in western Europe, this method reveals how even his later sketches reflect the belief that personal growth can still be achieved through imaginative engagements with the vast reality of radical difference.

For the past twenty years, the primary tendency in scholarship addressing otherness in Lawrence's travel writings has been to correct historically naïve analyses of his responses to cultural difference. As has been discussed in the preceding chapters, an extensive number of critics have made significant contributions to this area of scholarship by invoking post-colonial theory to illuminate the complex and ambivalent politics underpinning Lawrence's representations of cultural difference. Though their methods and viewpoints are different they all approach otherness in the travel writings mainly from the perspective of race. The prevailing view in such scholarship is typified by Howard Booth's argument that though Lawrence 'never found a stance that transcended the prevailing colonialist discourses', and at times adopted racist language in unthinkingly expressing colonialist prejudices, his use of language 'stretched and probed many of the possibilities of thought around colonialism available'.[1] For Booth, 'however uncomfortable it might sometimes be to follow his [Lawrence's] thinking', the value of his works comes from understanding how, unlike many

[1] Howard Booth, 'Lawrence in doubt: A theory of the "other" and its collapse', in *Modernism and empire*, ed. by Howard J. Booth and Nigel Rigby (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 197-223 (p. 197).

of his contemporaries, ‘Lawrence continually pushed lines of thought as far as they would go and, when they began to fail to satisfy, moved on.’[2] Thus, though existing scholarship broadly agrees that Lawrence’s writings about difference and otherness often reflect colonial prejudices regarding race and culture, it also highlights the need to better understand how his writings exhibit a questioning and doubting critical attitude towards these same discourses and assumptions. In using the term ‘the affront of otherness’, this thesis addresses this need by using comparisons with literary impressionism to expose and illuminate how Lawrence thinks critically about the engagement between the self and other. A major challenge of reading and interpreting Lawrence is to understand how the suggestive power of his aesthetics enacts this form of critical insight. The thesis solves this problem by demonstrating how Lawrence anticipates a more intuitive understanding of the reality of otherness at the level of the impression, in the attempt to truthfully render reality at the living moment.

The thesis has thus focused less on what Lawrence says about otherness than on how he says it; it has demonstrated how his ambivalent attitudes to radical difference are mediated through the process of writing. In his works on travel, it is through the process of writing that Lawrence’s opposing, doubting, and self-critical impulse emerges, as he sheds what Neil Roberts has termed the ‘disabling preconceptions’ and ‘didacticism’ which unsettle his initial responses to otherness and others.[3] The affront of otherness stimulates both Lawrence’s tendency to be challenged by the possible actuality of other realities, and his opposing propensity to engage imaginatively and empathetically with the question of being other to oneself. By situating his writings on travel in the context of the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism the thesis has demonstrated how

[2] Ibid.
[3] Neil Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 169.

Lawrence suggests the power of otherness to affect and transform the individual's being and understanding.

To briefly summarise the trajectory of the preceding chapters, the first situated Lawrence's early Italian and Sardinian travel sketches in relation to the ontological and epistemological concerns of literary impressionism. It did this in order to demonstrate how the transformative encounter with otherness is reflected in the role of writing in mediating the interrelated processes of perception and expression. The chapter introduced the idea of literary impressionism as a frame through which to see the complexity and elusiveness of otherness in clearer ways than has previously been possible. To do so, it took Ford Madox Ford as the contemporary exemplar of literary impressionism and showed how reading Lawrence's early travel sketches in light of Ford's ideas can helpfully illuminate both the mediative and transformative qualities of otherness at the level of the book's writing. The chapter went on to evidence how Lawrence's emphasis on the transformative potential of the encounter with otherness in these early sketches reveals his appreciation of writing as a means through which to decipher and make conscious the otherwise implicit and unconscious truths anticipated in instinctual feelings.

The second chapter focused on the Mexico and New Mexico writings and developed the idea that Lawrence's open-ended responses to otherness forever reach for the possibility of newness and growth. It argued that Lawrence investigates the possibility of personal growth in terms of understanding; he uses writing to mediate between a belief in the possibility of coming-to-understand the reality of otherness, and the simultaneous awareness that one can never truly know what would comprise an alternative modality of being or understanding. In demonstrating the open-ended quality of otherness across these writings the chapter adapted some techniques from genetic considerations of Lawrence. In a recent study, Elliott Morsia challenged the 'naïve approach to textuality' in traditional studies of Lawrence which look to

derive an ‘overarching and inherently generalized narrative from one iteration of a work’.[4] Engaging with existing genetic approaches, Morsia highlights the ‘multiplicity and provisionality’ of the themes and ideas which emerge through a textually aware reading of Lawrence’s works.[5] Influenced by Morsia’s argument in favour of such genetic approaches to Lawrence, the chapter compared the varying responses to the affront of otherness across different works to show how his open-ended and provisional engagement with radical difference is reflected in the continued adjustment and revision of theme and imagery.

The chapter showed in part how Lawrence’s process of drafting, doubting, adjusting, and redrafting mediates between the immediacy of otherness (its tendency to provoke instinctual meaning), and the conflicting recognition that the reality of otherness remains ultimately unknowable. Situating Lawrence’s open-ended responses to otherness in relation to his belief regarding the transformative potential of encountering radical difference, the chapter then drew comparisons with Ernst Bloch’s formulation of the utopian instinct and not-yet.[6] By doing this, it showed how Lawrence’s responses to the affront of otherness anticipate the possibility of new or alternative modalities of understanding and being, while recognising that one cannot realise the reality of being other than oneself.

Chapter Three drew comparisons between the expression of otherness in the Etruscan sketches and the historiographical ideas Lawrence sets out in *Movements in European*

[4] Elliott Morsia, *The Many Drafts of D. H. Lawrence: Creative Flux, Genetic Dialogism, and the Dilemma of Endings* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), p. 5.
[5] Morsia, *The Many Drafts of D. H. Lawrence*, pp. 5, 6; Paul Eggert argued similarly that ‘Each work became an element in the fertile soil from which the others sprang. To demonstrate the truth and implications of this it is only necessary to take a cross-section of his contemporaneous writings at any one creative moment. The surprisingly provisional nature of his usually forcefully expressed ideas comes into focus when we do this; and accepted practices of interpretation, based on the published forms of his writings taken as individual objects, as separate works, become problematic.’ See: Paul Eggert, ‘Revising and Rewriting’, in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 219-29 (p. 219).
[6] There is little yet published comparing Lawrence and Bloch. For some preliminary considerations, see: Howard J. Booth, ‘Politics and Art’, in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 129-44 (pp. 141-2).

History. It compared Lawrence's belief in the transformative and educative possibilities of otherness with his wider attitudes concerning the relationship between art and education. In doing so the chapter not only offered a new perspective on the transformative aspect of otherness in Lawrence's writings, but also highlighted how his investigations and responses to radical difference continue across the arbitrary boundaries of genre and form. Booth has argued that in Lawrence's late writings, 'The historical axis of difference gained precedence over the geographical axis.'[7] While this thesis agrees that in terms of the overarching trajectory of Lawrence's writings there is a shift in the identification of otherness as a temporal as well as geographical issue, it suggests that this shift is not as simple as one axis taking precedence over the other. Instead, the chapter argued that the notion of journeying (both physically and imaginatively) reflects the intersection of these two axes and allows Lawrence to meander between self and world, the me and not-me, in writing. It argued that the affront of otherness in the Etruscan sketches is comparable to the 'vast and terrifying reality' of the past Lawrence identifies in *Movements in European History*, in that it prompts the individual to engage imaginatively with the question of what it would mean (or feel like) to be other than oneself.[8] The affront of otherness, as I have employed it in this thesis, thus suggests in Lawrence's works an attempt to mediate between rationalist and empiricist conceptions of history.

The thesis has theorised the multifarious nature of otherness as the shape of possibility in Lawrence's travel writings. It has shown how his invocation of otherness at one moment often responds to ideas which he has already expressed. The thesis has shown that though Lawrence's responses to otherness are regularly inconsistent and contradictory, they reflect a

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[7] Booth, 'Lawrence in doubt: A theory of the "other" and its collapse', p. 218.
[8] For discussion of the context of Lawrence's historiographical ideas, see: Andrew Harrison, 'Historiography and Life Writing', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 103-15.

continuity of thought, but one which should not be conceived teleologically as a process of maturation or development. For example, where in the early sketches Lawrence stresses an almost mystical truth implicit in the affront of otherness, in the Mexico and New Mexico writings this emphasis changes and increasingly identifies the feeling of disturbance with ideas of mediation and negotiation. In the late Etruscan sketches the disturbing effect of otherness is recognised not only as a reminder of the unknowability of the reality beyond the self but as a signal that newness lies beyond the grasping fingers of habit, reachable only through empathy and imagination.

The thesis has established the principle that Lawrence's responses to otherness are better understood as a continuous open-ended engagement with the world outside of the self based on the perpetual inspection and revision of ideas, rather than as a developing or maturing system. It has also suggested that in highlighting a continuity of thought that extends across the divisions of genre, form, and text, the affront of otherness in Lawrence's travel writings reflects something equivalent to a long thought process. His heuristic approach to the expression of otherness extends the process of perception, expression, and contemplation, highlighting the role of writing in mediating the contingent relationship between things. Suggesting a closeness and intensity of vision, Lawrence's attempts to decipher the perplexity of otherness through the processes of writing and revision produce a form of contemplative stillness.[9] In writing about travel, Lawrence uses the art object to view the apparent strangeness and radical difference of the world which is otherwise lost in the fleeting and habitual nature of modern life.

[9] Compare to Viktor Shklovsky's concept of defamiliarization and the notion that art should challenge habitual modes of perception. For Shklovsky 'as perception becomes habitual, it becomes automatic' and its sensations lesser. He argues that 'The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.' See: Viktor Shklovsky, 'Art as Technique', in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), pp. 3-24 (pp. 11-2).

Existing scholarship had offered some consideration of how the practice of producing and responding to art provided Lawrence with a means of pursuing investigative lines of thought. For example, in the *Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, Michael Bell challenged the popular dismissal of Lawrence as 'a writer of artless spontaneity'.[10] In the context of the travel writing, Neil Roberts concluded his 2004 study with a similar reminder that however one interprets Lawrence's writings 'they are fully conscious and responsible utterances, each designed to produce a particular aesthetic and ideological effect.'[11] Recognising the aesthetic complexity of Lawrence's writing, this thesis offers additional evidence of how, in the case of otherness, his aesthetics reflect a conscious effort to probe the limits of perception and understanding. It has demonstrated how Lawrence suggests that the otherness of the subject is made manifest in the otherness of the artistic work. While the possibility Lawrence envisages in otherness is continually reshaped, the thesis has traced how his writings emphasise the role of narrative in enabling individuals to decipher, and thus come into closer proximity with, the bewildering actuality of the world outside of the self. It has shown how Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness appeal to the possibility of coming into contact with, and productively engaging with, the infinity of difference which exists outside of the self.

By demonstrating how Lawrence anticipates a new modality of being in the strange otherness of the impression, the thesis has situated his travel writings in relation to his wider views on literature and art. He begins his early critical essay 'Art and the Individual' with the declaration that 'It is Art which opens to us the silences, the primordial silences which hold the secret of things, the great purposes, which are themselves silent'.[12] Here he suggests that

[10] Michael Bell, 'The Idea of the Aesthetic', in *The Edinburgh Companion to D. H. Lawrence and the Arts*, ed. by Catherine Brown and Susan Reid (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), pp. 11-22 (p. 11).
[11] Roberts, *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*, p. 169.
[12] D. H. Lawrence, 'Art and Individual', in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 133-42 (p. 140); In Lawrence's consideration of Poe, De Maupassant, Ibsen, Gorky, Fildes and Watts he notes again that what unites all of these writers and artists is the

the art object renders the invisible visible, the silent audible. It is the work of art or literature, Lawrence observes, which makes the implicit otherness of the world observable. As this thesis has shown through the comparison with Lawrence's ideas concerning the purpose of historiography, it is the affront of otherness which serves to educate the individual, by encouraging imaginative and educative engagements with the reality of the world outside the self. The thesis has illustrated how Lawrence's travel writings respond to the belief that the good and effective travel book should convey the vast reality of other lives and modalities of being. Lawrence's travel writings emphasise the idea that by engaging imaginatively and empathetically with others' realities one can enact a new and alternative mode of being. By recognising otherness as the reflection of possibility, his writings suggest that rendering the impression of otherness can actively bring about change in the individual. In this regard, the thesis sheds light on how Lawrence's works consistently mediate between the individual's tendency to project subjective meaning upon the world, and the realisation that the world can effect change in the individual through the impression. It has shown how, in attempting to render otherness, Lawrence not only perceives the possibility of a new mode of understanding but enacts its becoming through a sustained process of negotiation and continual adjustment. The thesis has revealed how the narrators in Lawrence's writings on travel not only imagine the possibility of a more intuitive and vital mode of understanding but bring it into being through their attempt to decipher the complex series of associations and impulses prompted by the impression of otherness.

The thesis has demonstrated how Lawrence's emphasis on otherness in the travel sketches can be better understood in light of his belief that 'The business of art is to reveal the relation

idea that 'Their sole object is to set vibrating in the second person the emotion which moved the producer'. See: Ibid., p. 139-40.

between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment.'[13] It has examined how Lawrence's sustained effort to render the impression represents a life-affirming desire to know and understand one's significant position within the world. This emphasis on interrelatedness also underlies the wider comparisons made with Ford's aspirations for impressionism, and particularly his reflection that 'The province of Art … is the bringing of humanity into contact, person with person.'[14] For Lawrence, as with Ford, the understanding manifested in writing emerges through its ability to produce and sustain vital relations between self and other. In his 'Study of Thomas Hardy' Lawrence notes how 'The further he [man] goes, the more extended his consciousness, the more he realises the things that are not himself.'[15] In the context of the travel writing, this thesis has examined how Lawrence suggests the impression of otherness can educate by highlighting the limited extent of one's understanding of the world outside of the self. By showing how Lawrence's responses to the affront of otherness mediate between empiricist and rationalist attitudes concerning the knowability of the world outside of the self, this study has explored how Lawrence's travelling narrators are not just reporting an alternative reality but exploring the boundary between what is familiar and what is radically different. In the task of rendering otherness Lawrence suggests we know 'nothing' but are instead only ever coming-to-know *things*. The process of coming-to-know leaves us perpetually reaching out towards the unknown and other, forever challenged and denied. As a challenge to habitual knowing, the affront of otherness in Lawrence's works reflects a sort of education in instinct, prompting a form of renewal through vital, imaginative, and empathetic engagements with the world outside of the

[13] D. H. Lawrence, 'Morality and the Novel', in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1985), pp. 169-76 (p. 171).
[14] Ford Madox Ford, *The Critical Attitude* (London: Duckworth, 1911), p. 64.
[15] D. H. Lawrence, 'Study of Thomas Hardy', in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1985), pp. 3-132 (p. 42).

self. Lawrence's responses to otherness are unable to render the reality of being other, but they do suggest the form of the relationship between the self and the other.

The thesis has used the idea of the impression to explore how Lawrence's responses suggest one can only anticipate why things are as they are, by truthfully showing how they are. This idea aligns with the important premise of Ford's impressionism that the extent to which one truthfully renders one's impressions has a direct effect on their significant meaning. Lawrence's appeals to the marvellous veracity of his earlier travel writings suggest a correlation between the act of rendering the impression and the truth that is anticipated within it. By conceiving his travel writing in this way, the study has shown how the open-ended nature of his impressions leaves their anticipated truths unresolved and open to change. The study has demonstrated how the open-ended nature of Lawrence's impressions can be used to add nuance to the critical understanding of his wider idealisation of otherness.

The study has also contributed a method for linking Lawrence's investigative approach to rendering the impression to the utopian idealism which underlies his responses to otherness. Both literary impressionism and the idea of utopia emphasise the basic principle that how things are (or, in the case of the impression, showing how things are) relates directly to why they are. In utopia how things are corresponds directly with why they are. The utopian order manifests utopian values, just as rendering the impression offers the possibility of deciphering deeper patterns of intuited truths. The thesis has demonstrated how we can usefully illuminate the complex nature of Lawrence's impressionistic and utopian responses to otherness through comparisons with Bloch. Where Bloch theorises the utopian instinct in terms of the not-yet conscious, with the individual anticipating in the concrete conditions of the present the shape of future possibility, the thesis has shown that Lawrence similarly anticipates and enacts a more intuitive understanding of the world in rendering the impression of otherness.

The thesis has recognised, of course, that the impression and the utopia do not align temporally. The impression is necessarily retrospective as it requires the author to invest time in deciphering it, while a utopia is anticipatory, and thus occurs in the not-yet. However, in understanding Lawrence's travel sketches as reflecting both an impressionistic and utopian instinct, the thesis has offered a new consideration of the function of writing in mediating between knowing and being. This is a perpetually unfolding process for Lawrence, in which understanding is sustained by the anticipation of a significant relationship between how things are and why they are. The possibility of new understanding, and particularly the possibility of a new understanding of other modes of being, is made manifest through Lawrence's process of sincere and doubting composition and revision. While the travel writing may indeed come to doubt the simple idealised vision of regeneration brought about by the encounter with difference and otherness, at the level of writing the sense of a vital link between how things are and why they are sustains the perpetual possibility of transformation and change.

In the context of wider studies of Lawrence, this thesis establishes a relationship between Lawrence's travel writing and his belief that literature (and art) can offer a form of creative, yet concrete, real-world education. He reflects in the retrospective essay 'Return to Bestwood', 'What we should live for is life and the beauty of aliveness, imagination, awareness, and contact.'[16] This formulation of life as a curious assembly of incongruous parts, is reflected in the suggestive and affrontive potential of otherness. It is the interplay of these ideas at the level of writing that indicates how the work of literature has the capability to give the impression of liveliness. In exploring this aspect of Lawrence's travel writing, the thesis demonstrates the value and opportunity for further comparison with the works of Ford.

[16] D. H. Lawrence, 'Return to Bestwood', in *Late essays and Articles*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), *pp*. 13-24 (p. 24).

In *The Critical Attitude* Ford contests the notion of literary aesthetics being a matter of the tonality or visuality of language, arguing that 'by the gift of poetry we mean not the power melodiously to arrange words but the power to suggest human values.'[17] In the context of Lawrence's professed belief that 'the whole aim of Art seems to be to rouse a certain emotion', Ford's emphasis on the work of art as a mode of suggestion underscores the implicitly educative quality Lawrence envisages in the ability of art and literature to affect the feelings.[18] Ford's belief that art's educational value lies in its powers of suggestion is rooted in the distinction he draws between 'Instruction' and 'Education'; he associates 'Instruction' with 'Statement', and 'Education' with 'Suggestion'.[19] Where Education attempts to broaden the mind, Instruction, Ford argues, promotes only the accumulation of facts.[20] Literature should be suggestive not instructive, he argues, writing that 'Fiction should render, not draw morals.'[21] Likewise, for Lawrence the suggestive otherness of art is connected to its ability to enable personal growth through imaginative engagements with the bewildering and insurmountable otherness of being. In his essay 'John Galsworthy', Lawrence argues that 'We judge a work of art by its effect on our sincere and vital emotion'.[22] The affront of otherness in his travel writing seeks to encourage and initiate new sincere engagements with

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[17] Ford, *The Critical Attitude*, p. 94.
[18] Lawrence, *'Art and the Individual*', p. 138.
[19] Ford, *The Critical Attitude*, pp. 25-7.
[20] Compare with the etymology of education. Maurice Craft writes of the different Latin roots of 'education', noting them to be *educare*, meaning 'to train or to mould', and *educere*, which means 'to lead out'. See: Maurice Craft, 'Education for Diversity', in *Education and Cultural Pluralism*, ed. by Maurice Craft, (London: Falmer Press, 1984), pp. 5-26 (p. 9). Noting the effect of this etymological difference, Randal V. Bass and J. W. Good observe that the purpose of education depends upon whether one perceives it as a method of preservation and passing down of knowledge and the shaping of youths in the image of their parents.' or, whether one 'sees education as preparing a new generation for the changes that are to come—readying them to create solutions to problems yet unknown.' See: Randall V. Bass and J. W. Good, 'Educare and Educere: Is a Balance Possible in the Educational System?', *The Educational Forum*, 68 (Winter 2004), 161-8 (162). For Lawrence education should be a matter of leading and suggesting as opposed to moulding. In his late essay 'Enslaved by Civilisation', he sums up this attitude that 'School is a very elaborate railway-system where good little boys are taught to run upon good lines till they are shunted off into life'. Instruction is for Lawrence mindless, the 'running-on-lines habit is absolutely fixed.' See: D. H. Lawrence, 'Enslaved by Civilisation', in *Late Essays and Articles*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 155-9 (p. 157).
[21] Ford Madox Ford, *It Was The Nightingale* (London: Heinemann, 1934), p. 205.
[22] D. H. Lawrence, 'John Galsworthy', in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 207-20 (p. 209).

that which seems otherwise incomprehensible, unreachable, and unknowable. Frank Palmer expresses this perspective as being grounded in the belief 'that good literary works provide the opportunity for knowledge by acquaintance'.[23] The sense of acquaintance is reflected in Lawrence's emphasis on the importance of coming into close proximity with otherness. The thesis has shown how Lawrence identifies one's proximity to otherness with the power of the work to effect change in the reader.

When Ford recalled his impression of reading Lawrence's writing, he aligned its intensity and imaginative power with its disturbing otherness; its ability to unsettle the reader, he noted, prompted both bewilderment and a sense of exciting newness. He described how 'Each time that I have opened one of his [Lawrence's] books … I have had a feeling of disturbance'.[24] This disturbance was not, however, limiting, for Ford; he added that it was 'not so much as if something odd was going to happen to me but as if I myself might be going to do something eccentric.'[25] In this reminiscence, Ford aligns the otherness of Lawrence's works with their suggestive power, and their ability to disturb and challenge one's habitual feelings and understanding. Such disturbance, he noted, gives them their provocative imaginative appeal, adding that 'when I have read for a couple of minutes I go on reading with interest—in a little the spirit of a boy beginning a new adventure story'.[26] Ford identifies the power of Lawrence's writings to disturb as a provocation, which forever renews interest. Otherness in the travel writings typifies this idea, affronting characters and narrators alike, and yet ultimately drawing them into deeper and more contemplative and imaginative engagements with subjects.

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[23] Frank Palmer, *Literature and Moral Understanding: A Philosophical Essay on Ethics, Aesthetics, Education, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 220.
[24] Ford Madox Ford, *Portraits from Life*, p. 105.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

The thesis demonstrates how Lawrence uses the affront of otherness to enact a form of defamiliarization and undermine the certainty with which one can claim to know the world outside of the self. In rendering the impression of otherness Lawrence's heuristic process of writing sustains a form of estrangement that simultaneously suggests the opportunity to decipher afresh the strange actuality of the relationship between the self and world. Lawrence's depictions of affrontive otherness in the travel writing exemplify his argument in 'Morality and the Novel', that 'A new relation, a new relatedness hurts somewhat in the attaining: and will always hurt. … Because it means the struggle with and the displacing of old connections, and this is never pleasant.'[27] In the case of otherness, the 'struggle' is to render the impression veraciously as it is felt, without slipping back into the automatic processes of writing borne out of the 'old connections' of one's habitual understanding. That which is truly other in the travel writing is often recognisable only by the discomfort and disturbance it inspires, just as the actual newness and otherness of a subject or work is felt only 'by the fact that they do arouse a certain resistance, and compel, at length, a certain acquiescence.'[28] The thesis has demonstrated how Lawrence's writings make clear that if one travels to encounter new and alternative modalities of being then one must expect to find old habits disturbed, challenged, and cast into doubt. The ability of a work of literature to promote genuine and sincere feeling in a reader aligns, for Lawrence, with the veracity of its representation, but to respond sincerely to a work of literature or to the subject it addresses, does not mean one should blindly accept habitual or reactionary feelings. The affront of otherness in these writings is a reminder of the need for one to decipher and disentangle one's impression from the grip of mindless habit.

[27] Lawrence, 'Morality and the Novel', p. 174.
[28] Ibid., p. 175.

The thesis has thus provided a basis for understanding how Lawrence's responses to otherness challenge the idea that merely through the industrious acquisition of more information and knowing, one can objectively claim to know the world outside of the self as it is.[29] Ford critiques the specialist on the basis that 'The assembler of facts needs not temperament at all but industry. … he arouses no thought at all. But the business of the artist is to awaken thought in the unthinking.[30] Likewise, in otherness Lawrence finds a similar reminder that good travel writing should not maintain an industrious and all-knowing objectivity in its account of places, as to do so would merely be to transpose the pre-existing attitudes of the observer. The bewildering challenge of otherness is a perpetual reminder of the radical difference and strange actuality which distinguish places from one another. In order to appreciate the actuality of otherness Lawrence suggests that one cannot think merely logically, or rationally; instead one must engage intuitively with the challenging otherness which defines a particular moment. Horkheimer and Adorno observe that in post-enlightenment modernity 'Thought is reified as an autonomous, automatic process, aping the machine it has itself produced, so that it can finally be replaced by the machine.'[31] The desire for efficiency and 'industry' in the production of new knowledge and the assemblage of new facts requires the individual adopt the automatic processes of the machine, but this does not really awaken thought. The thesis has shown how the affront of otherness in Lawrence's travel writings is similarly important in challenging and disturbing such machine-like process

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[29] Danièle Moyal-Sharrock writes of Lawrence's writings manifesting a process of 'great moral discovery' by which they enact a form of truth which cannot otherwise be rationalised. See: Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, 'Wittgenstein and Leavis; Literature and the Enactment of the Ethical', *Philosophy and Literature*, 40.1 (April 2016), 240-64, 253. In the travel writing, this process of 'discovery' is enacted by journeying outside of the familiar circuit of one's familiar surroundings, but also through the act of writing it. Moyal-Sharrock adds that for Lawrence 'The creative imagination is really creative; it doesn't stage the ethical, but allows it to emerge from the artistic fabric.' See: Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, 'Wittgenstein and Leavis; Literature and the Enactment of the Ethical', *Philosophy and Literature*, 40.1 (April 2016), 240-64, 253.
[30] Ibid., p. 64.
[31] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. by Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 19.

of logical thought, which have become so habitual under the conditions of European industrial modernity.

The thesis has shown how Lawrence challenges the perceived attitudes of those European travellers who go abroad yet retain the same industrious, objective mindset of capitalist society. The Englishman of 'The Return Journey' is a prime example: 'I could feel so well the machine that had him in its grip,' Lawrence notes, sometime after having heard that the man was motivated by the desire 'to do it all'.[32] Lawrence's works suggest that individuals with this mechanical, industrious mindset miss the point of travel – which is to encounter and sincerely engage with alternative realities outside of one's own. Just as Ford notes that art is about awakening thought in the unthinking, Lawrence's emphasis on the affront of otherness suggests that art can disrupt such mindless and 'unthinking' processes of knowing by affronting the very idea that one can know, or do, it all.[33] In opposition to this, Lawrence's narrators and narratives find their most evocative moments of inspiration in the affrontive and ultimately insurmountable expansiveness of otherness. The thesis has demonstrated how the affront of otherness in Lawrence's travel writings represents a reminder of one's forever limited comprehension of the radical difference which underlies the material universality of being. His increasingly self-doubting responses to otherness across the travel writing reflect a sincere recognition that one's feelings do not occur in isolation from the world, but instead the self and other exist in a state of perpetual entanglement.

[32] D. H. Lawrence, *Twilight in Italy and Other* Essays, ed. by Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 211, 210.

[33] Martha Nussbaum has written of the increased importance of the liberal arts in 'a complex and interlocking world'. She writes that the arts provide 'a way of grappling with the altered requirements of citizenship in an era of global connection' and allows the individual to 'function with a richness of human understanding and aspiration that cannot be supplied by economic connections alone'. In the case of his travel writing, Lawrence similarly uses the aesthetics of otherness to suggest the complex interactions between self and other which take place in an international context. See: Martha C. Nussbaum, 'Education for Citizenship in an Era of Global Connection', *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 21 (2002), 289-303 (292).

It seems almost axiomatic at this point to observe that Lawrence uses writing to make sense of the perplexing reality of human life. Lawrence's attempts to express otherness demonstrate a notable awareness of the generative role of writing and art in making sense of those aspects of human life which resist simple knowing. His travel writings exemplify Ford's reflection that:

> The artist to-day ... is the only man who, in a world grown very complicated through the limitless freedom of expression for all creeds and all moralities, can place before us how those creeds work out when applied to human contacts, and to what goal of human happiness those moralities will lead us.[34]

For Lawrence, like Ford, writing offered a mode of understanding in bewildering times. The act of veraciously rendering the impression of otherness not only allows Lawrence to probe the limits of individual understanding but also offers a cathartic answer to the unknowable and often challenging nature of modern times. In the moment of contact with others, he anticipates the possibility of better understanding the relationship between the me and the not-me, and realising a more vital appreciation of one's situation within the world. Against the backdrop of industrialised degeneration, the affront of otherness affords Lawrence the hope that lingers in possibility.

[34] Ford, *The Critical Attitude*, pp. 27-8.

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