III

Man to Man

Lawrence believed that creative motive is the first motive of all human activity. Man is not confined to one direction only. Apart from his sexual impulse, man has his creative or religious impulse. The creative or religious impulse is "the pure disinterested craving of the human male to make something wonderful, out of his own head and his own self, and his own soul's faith and delight, which starts everything going." In all human activities, the sexual motive is present and even important; but it is not predominant. The prime motive is the religious or creative motive. The creative motive leads man to act in unison with other men for some great common purpose. Marriage and purposive male activity are, in fact, complimentary. An accomplished marriage prepares man for "new responsibilities ahead, new unison in effort and conflict, the effort to make, with other men, a little new way into the future."

Relationship between two males is one of the themes of *Women in Love*. But Birkin's problem of man-to-man relationship has been left unsolved in this novel. However, *Aaron's Rod*, *Kagkaroo*, and *The Plumed Serpent* taken together may be regarded as the fictional version of Lawrence's theory of man to man relationship. In these novels Lawrence has, with great insight, delineated two aspects of man to man relationship: (1) the relationship between two men as individuals; and (2) the relationship of men in society.

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2. Ibid. p. 107.
In *Women in Love*, Birkin is somewhat taken aback when Gerald tells him about his intention of getting married to Gudrun. While he regards his own marriage to Ursula as inevitable and desirable, he thinks it unwise on the part of Gerald to get married to Gudrun. Birkin believes in the irrevocability and finality of the bond of marriage. He knows that marriage for Gerald does not mean the committing of himself to a sacred and irrevocable relationship with Gudrun. By marrying Gudrun, Gerald would simply be accepting a social convention in which he "did not livingly believe." After the marriage he would be free to "retreat to the under-world for his life." Birkin regards marriage to be creative and sacred. For Gerald it is neither creative nor sacred. It is like a doom to him, and he is willing to be doomed. But he is not prepared to make a pure relationship with any soul. Birkin had realized that Gerald was moving towards his doom through the false and destructive relationship of extreme sensations with Gudrun. He wants to save him from this self annihilation. He tells him that, apart from his belief in a permanent union between a man and a woman, he also believed in "the additional perfect relationship between man and man—additional to marriage;" and he offers his irrevocable friendship to him. He thinks that if Gerald would accept his offer and enter into "the bond of pure trust and love" with him, he would subsequently be able to pledge himself with a woman in irrevocable and sacred marriage.

The other way was to accept Rupert's offer of alliance, to enter into the bond of pure trust and love with the other man, and then subsequently with the woman. If he pledged himself with the man he would later be able to pledge himself with the woman; not merely in legal marriage, but in absolute, mystic marriage. Gerald, however, rejects Birkin's offer. He, perhaps, lacks the will to accept it. Earlier, while having an intimate talk on profound matters of life and death, Birkin had offered to enter into Blutbrüderschaft with him. He had suggested that they should "swear to stand by each other—but true to each other—ultimately—infallibly." But Gerald had excused himself by saying that they should leave it till he understood it better. Gerald was limited to "one form of existence"—the materialistic existence. He was limited to "a sort of fatal halfness, which to himself seemed wholeness." Birkin's offer of soul-intimacy had scared his materialistic mind. Towards the close of the novel, when he dies by falling down a slope in the snow, his dead body appears to Birkin to be like a block of "bluish, corruptible ice." Death had reduced Gerald, the denier, to "cold, mute Matter." Birkin tells Ursula that Gerald should have accepted his offer of deathless friendship. He believes that if Gerald would have accepted his offer of irrevocable bond of friendship and love, he would have been living in the spirit with him (Birkin) even after his physical death.

"He should have loved me," he said. "I offered him."
"She, afraid, white, with mute lips answered:
"What difference would it have made!"
"It would!" he said, "It would."

He forgot her, and, turned to look at Gerald, with head oddly lifted, like a man who draws his head back from an insult, half haughtily, he watched the cold, mute, material face. It had a bluish cast. It sent a shaft like ice

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9. Ibid. 10. Ibid., p. 506.
through the heart of the living man. Cold, mute, material! Birkin remembered how once Gerald had clutched his hand, with warm, momentaneous grip of final love. For one second then let go again, let go for ever. If he had kept true to that clasp, death would not have mattered. Those who die, and dying still can love, still believe, do not die. They live still in the beloved. Gerald might still have been living in the spirit with Birkin even after death. He might have lived with his friend, a further life.

But now he was dead, like clay, like bluish corruptible ice. Birkin looked at the pale fingers, the inert mass. He remembered a dead stallion he had seen: a dead mass of maleness, repugnant. He remembered also the beautiful face of one whom he had loved, and who had died still having the faith to yield to the mystery. That dead face was beautiful, no one could call it cold, mute, material. No one could remember it without gaining faith in the mystery, without the soul's warming with new, deep life-trust. 11

At the end of the novel Birkin tells Ursula that he wanted "a man friend as eternal" as their own relationship was eternal. To Ursula's "Aren't I enough for you?", his reply is: "Having you, I can live all my life without anybody else, any other sheer intimacy. But to make it complete, really happy, I wanted eternal union with a man too; another kind of love." 12 Thus, in Women in Love, Lawrence seems to suggest that in order to come to his own fullness of being man must supplement his marriage with a woman by a male friendship as irrevocable and sacred as the marriage itself. Birkin describes friendship between two men as 'soul intimacy'. The story suggests that Gerald, the creature of the mental-material world, is incapable of soul intimacy. In the chapter "Man to Man" Birkin tells Gerald that their friendship would be "an impersonal union that leaves one free" and "not sloppy emotionalism." 13 Nevertheless, the nature of man to man friendship in the novel remains only vague.

"A friend means one who is at one with me in matters of life and death" is how Radon Lilly defines friendship to Aaron Sisson in Aaron's Rod. Lilly offers Aaron what D'Arcy had offered Gerald in Women in Love—the soul-intimacy. The relationship between two friends should be based on total faith in each other. Friends must agree on the matters of ultimate importance and act in unison. There can be no true friendship if the two men cannot agree on the fundamental things of life. There is no question of equality or inequality in friendship, nor does the question of superiority or inferiority arise. Equality and inequality; superiority and inferiority are material concepts. Friendship goes beyond materialism and is more a matter of the soul. There is no compulsion in friendship. But in the matters of profound importance, the 'matters of life and death', the final judgement of only one of the two men must prevail. The one will voluntarily and gladly submit to the judgment of the other. Who will submit to whom depends on who 'knows' the higher truth i.e. who has realized a higher state of being. The true friends will always know who is who between them. Lilly believes that it is far better to submit to the individual man than to mob power or to money power or to the power of the nation, the politician, the dictator or the police. The power of money and the power of the politician or the dictator or the nation is, in the final analysis, the power of the mob.

They don't care how much power the mob has over them, the nation. Lloyd George and Northcliff and the police and money. They'll yield themselves up to that sort of power quickly enough, and immolate themselves pro bono publico by the million. And what is the bonum publicum but the mob power? Why can't they submit to a bit of healthy individual authority?  

Lawrence had dealt with the theme of friendship rather vaguely in *Women in Love*. It was only appropriate to take up this theme again in his next novel, *Aaron's Rod*. It is, in fact, the central theme of *Aaron's Rod*, though the novel begins with the description of the failure of a man-woman relationship. Aaron Sisson, who has been married to Lottie for twelve years, leaves his wife and children and goes to London with his Rod (a flute). He is a good flute player, and his flute not only gives him emotional satisfaction but also keeps him above material want. In London he plays at an opera house and lives alone at a cheap lodging. But it is not long before he is seduced by the lonely woman Josephine Ford. But having casual sex with Josephine seems to have violated his very soul. He is psychologically bruised and later becomes ill with flu. He is nursed back to health by Lilly with whom he has had only a casual acquaintance so far.  


other in a mysterious way:

The two men had an almost uncanny understanding of one another—like brothers. They came from the same district, from the same class. Each might have been born into the other’s circumstances. Like brothers, there was a profound

The part of the scene that has provoked the critics may be reproduced here in the author’s own words.

'I'm going to rub you with oil,' he said. 'I'm going to rub you as mothers do their babies whose bowels don't work.'

Aaron frowned slightly as he glanced at the dark, self-possessed face of the little man.

'What is the good of that?' he said irritably. 'I'd rather be left alone.'

'Then you won’t be.'

Quickly he uncovered the blood-covered lower body of his patient, and began to rub the abdomen with oil, using a slow, rhythmic, circulating motion, a sort of massage. For a long time he rubbed firmly and steadily, then went over the whole of the lower body—the abdomen, the buttocks, the thighs and knees, down to the feet, rubbed it all warm and glowing with camphorated oil, every bit of it, chafing the toes swiftly, till he was almost exhausted. Then Aaron was covered up again, and Lilly sat down in fatigue to look at his patient.

He saw a change. The spark had come back into the sick eyes, and the faint trace of a smile, faintly luminous, into the face. Aaron was regaining himself. But Lilly said nothing. He watched his patient fall into a proper sleep (p.112).

A reader without prejudice will find no homosexuality involved in the scene. However, Lawrence’s own observations like the following have made critics suspect that he had homosexual tendencies which erupted into his art in the form of scenes of physical intimacy between men:
hostility between them. But hostility is not antipathy.

There are many people in London who are 'friendly' with Lilly, but it is Aaron with whom he wants to establish a real relationship. Aaron and Lilly seem to agree on some fundamental issues of life. Lilly tells Aaron that a man or a woman should be responsible only to himself or herself and to no one else. Every

I should like to know why nearly every man that approaches greatness tends to homosexuality, whether he admits it or not: so that he loves the body of a man better than the body of a woman — as I believe the Greeks did, sculptors and all... (D.H. Lawrence, Collected Letters, ed. Harry T. Moore, Heinemann, London 1962, p. 251.).

But Lawrence viewed his own desire for friendship with a man not as homosexuality but something nobler:

All my life I have wanted friendship with a man — real friendship, in my sense of what I mean by that word. What is this sense? I should like to see anybody being 'friendly' with me. Intellectual equals? or rather equals in being non-intellectual. I see your joke. Not something homosexual, surely? Indeed you have misunderstood me — besides this term is so imbedded in its own period. I do not belong to a world where that word has meaning. Comradeship perhaps? No, not that — too much love about it — no, not even in the Calamus sense, not comradeship — not manly love. Then what Nietzsche describes — the friend in whom the world standeth complete, a capsule of the good — the creating friend, who hath always a complete world to bestow, well, in a way. That means in my words, choose as your friend the man who has centre... (quoted in Knud Merrild, A Poet and Two Painters (London 1938), p. 94.) (See D.H. Lawrence; Novelist, Poet, Prophet, ed. Stephen Spender, London, 1955, p. 137.)

This view approximates to the idea of man to man friendship as revealed in his novels.

17. Aaron’s Rod, p. 149.
individual should first be able to stand alone, only afterwards can he or she enter into a worthwhile relationship with any other individual. Aaron agrees with Lilly when the latter says: "Everybody ought to stand by themselves, in the first place—men and women as well. They can come together, in the second place, if they like. But nothing is any good unless each one stands alone, intrinsically." Aaron's relationship with his wife had been a battle of wills between them. But he is not very clear in his mind why he had deserted her. In London when Josephine asks him why he had left his wife and children, he replies that he had 'felt forced to love' his wife and he did not like it:

'Ah well! A breath of fresh air, by myself. I felt forced to love. I feel if I go back now, I shall be forced--forced to love—or care—or something.'

'Perhaps you wanted more than your wife could give you,' she said.

'Perhaps less. She's made up her mind she loves me, and she's not going to let me off!'

'Did you never love her?' said Josephine.

'Oh yes. I shall never love anybody else.

But I'm damned if I want to go on being a lover, to her or anybody. That's the top and bottom of it. I don't want to care, when care isn't in me. And I am not going to be forced to it!'

Earlier he had told Josephine Ford that he had arranged for the major portion of his income from his bank deposit to be paid to his wife and children and was keeping only a small portion

for himself. He feels no guilt in his conscience in leaving his wilful wife. He wants to stand alone and never be forced to love anybody, and yet he allows himself to be seduced by Josephino. The fact is that he does not really know what to do with himself. It is in this context that Lilly's offer of friendship to him must be understood. Lilly recognizes a kindred soul in Aaron, but he also believes that he himself has attained a higher state of self-realization, and, therefore, Aaron should submit to him for his own good. Aaron is not willing, at this stage, to submit to the higher 'knowledge' of Lilly, yet he questions him persistently on the subject. Lilly describes his state of higher awareness in the following words:

*I think a man may come into possession of his own soul at last—as the Buddhists teach—but without ceasing to love, or even to hate. One loves, one hates—but somewhere beyond it all, one understands, and possesses one's soul in patience and in peace.*

It means active involvement in the affairs of life on the one hand and complete non-attachment on the other. It means self-realization; and it also means the attainment of the state of 'peace that passeth understanding.' Lilly tells Aaron later that he (Lilly) has got "a bit of the real quietness inside" him. It appears that Aaron, in the heart of his hearts, believes in Lilly, but is only unsure of his own self. He realizes that "Lilly had made a certain call upon his, Aaron's soul; a call which he, Aaron, did not intend to obey." And yet, he pursues Lilly to Italy in quest of a new relationship. When he reaches Savona in Italy, he is still not

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clear about his own position. He has vaguely realized that love is a battle in which each party strove for the mastery of the other's soul. The white man of the North had yielded the mastery to woman and it was too late for him to fight it back again. But he himself is determined not to yield the mastery of his soul to the woman:

But whether the woman yielded or not, he would keep the mastery of his own soul and conscience and actions. He would never yield himself up to her judgment again. He would hold himself forever beyond her jurisdiction.

Henceforth, life single, not life double. ------
To be alone, to be oneself, not to be driven or violated into something which is not oneself, surely it is better than anything. 23

He thinks that it was his fate to leave his wife. At Navora when a guest of Sir William Franks asks him if it was 'mere caprice' on his part to leave his wife, he replies: 'If it's caprice to be begotten—and a caprice to be born—and a caprice to die—then that was a caprice, for it was the same.' 24 Navora, the 'first southern flower', startles him into a new awakening even though he is still not consciously willing to "wake up and enter on the responsibility of a new self in himself." 25 He realizes vaguely that it is the urge of his soul to uphold the integrity of his "intrinsic and central aloneness." 26 His wife had wanted to break the integrity of his self and reduce him to a human entity of automatic habits of mind. His wife had wanted to force him to live up to the mental image that she had formed of him in her mind. Now he wants to break even his own mental-materialistic image of himself—and reach his

intrinsic self:

Now at last, after years of struggle, he seemed suddenly to have dropped his mask on the floor, and broken it. His authentic self-describing passport, his complete and satisfactory idea of himself suddenly became a rag of paper, ridiculous. What on earth did it matter if he was nice or not, if his chin was normal or abnormal?...

Vaguely he realises the reality of that 'bit of real quietness', that is reached with the realization of the self—the 'life', as the narrator/author calls it in the novel.

The life is life-rooted, life-central. She cannot worry. She is life itself, a little, delicate fountain playing creatively, for as long or as short a time as may be, and unable to be anxious. She may be sad or sorry, if the north wind blows. But even then, anxious she cannot be whether her fountain play or cease to play, from out the cold, damp earth, she cannot be anxious. She may only be glad or sorry, and continue her way. She is perfectly herself, whatever befalls; even if frost cuts her off. Happy life, never to be ailed with an idea like, never to be in the grip of delusion for happiness or love or fulfilment. It is not laissez-faire. It is life-rootedness. It is being by oneself, life-living, like the much-rooted lily. One toils, one spins, one strives; just as the lily does. But like her, taking one's own life-way amidst everything, and taking one's own life-way alone. Love too. But there also, taking one's way alone, happily alone in all the wonders of communion, swept up on the winds, but never swept away from one's very self. 28

And vaguely he seeks Lilly (symbolism of the name may be noted), the man who had claimed that he possessed the 'real quietness' within him and who had offered him the bond of deathless friendship: "He had perhaps a faint sense of Lilly ahead of him; an impulse in that direction: or else merely an illusion." 29 He has a mysterious feeling that by breaking all his old ties and by pursuing Lilly, he is "fulfilling his own inward destiny." But before his 'Destiny' takes him to Lilly, he is once more caught

unawares by the chances of life. In Florence, by chance, he meets
Marchesa del Torre, an aristocratic American woman married to an
Italian Army Officer, and becomes intimate with her almost immedi-
ately. Marchesa is thrilled by the melody of his flute, and he
is sexually attracted by her. After promising the Marchesa that
he would visit her again, he leaves her house to go to his own
lodging. On his way home he is robbed by some Italian soldiers.
Later he discovers that he had been robbed of all his cash. It is
a material loss, but it gives him a spiritual shock: "It was as if
the power of evil had suddenly seized him and thrown him and he wanted
to say it was not so, that he had imagined it all, conjured it up.
He did not want to admit the power of evil — particularly at that
moment. For surely a very ugly evil spirit had struck him, in the
midst of that gang of Italian soldiers. He knew it — it had pierced
him. It had got him." 31 He feels that he had been struck by the
'evil spirit' because by getting worked up with the Marchesa, he had
been off his guard: "Yes — and if I hadn't rushed along so full of
feeling: if I hadn't exposed myself: if I hadn't got worked up with
the Marchesa, and then rushed all kindled through the streets, with-
out reserve: it would never have happened. — — It is my own fault.
32 I should have been on my guard." Henceforth, somewhere, something in
him is always "awake to the fact that the sentinel of the soul must
not sleep: no, never, not for one instant." And yet he goes twice
to entertain the Marchesa with his flute and has sex with her.
Having run away from a false marriage and yet to find another anchor
of vital relationship, he is unable to avoid the pitfalls in his

quest for the wholeness of being.

When Aaron ultimately meets Lilly, he finds him denouncing every idea and ideal that the Western civilization has produced:

'The ideal of love, the ideal that it is better to give than to receive, the ideal of liberty, the ideal of the brotherhood of man, the ideal of the sanctity of human life, the ideal of what we call goodness, charity, benevolence, public spiritness, the ideal of sacrifice for a cause, the ideal of unity and unanimity—all the lot—all the whole beehive of ideals—has all got the modern bee disease, and gone putrid, stinking. And when the ideal 34 is dead and putrid, the logical consequence is only stink.'

It should be noted that in the background of the main action of the drama of Aaron's pilgrimage in pursuit of his guru-friend, the 'chorus' of minor characters has been along 'singing' of love, war, anarchy, the mobs, revolution, socialism, Bolshevism, slavery etc. The ideal of love on which Christian civilization is based has brought Europe to the state of atrophy. Against this background, Lilly offers a new mode of existence, hitherto unknown to the Europeans. But, while he is yet to define his idea of the new mode, there is a bomb explosion in the cafe where he is sitting with Aaron and other friends. Aaron's flute is broken to pieces in the explosion. He is dumbfounded by the loss of his flute. The destruction of his flute is symbolic of the destruction of the mode of existence of which he was weary: "And the loss was for him symbolistic. It chimed with something in his soul: the bomb, the smashed flute, the end." The flute symbolised the mode of his existence so far—the love mode. After getting away from the stifling 'love' of his wife, he had bumped into casual love with other women only to find himself shattered emotionally and spiritually. His flute had been the means of contact with other men and women thus satisfying his false love urge.

34. Aaron's Bed, p. 320. 35. Ibid., p. 331.
After the loss of his rod, Aaron dreams a strange dream. In the dream he sees his 'two selves' — the material self and the real, invisible self. The material self appears 'unaware' most of the time, while the invisible self is always aware and awake. The real invisible self appears to be mysteriously 'caring' for the visible self. Aaron had vaguely realized that man is responsible only for his own real self and to nothing or no one else. And in order to come to his own fullness of being, he must listen to the voice of his 'real self' and not act by the prescriptions of tradition, custom or habit. The material self is conditioned by traditions, customs and habits, but the real self is free and spontaneous, and the only link with the unknown source of life — 'the beyond' (as Lawrence calls it in his novels). Aaron had done no wrong in refusing to be sacrificed at the altar of love. That is the meaning of his dream.

What Aaron has realized only vaguely is now confirmed and further clarified by Lilly:

'Remember this, my boy: You've never got to deny the Holy Ghost which is inside you, your own soul's self. Never, or you'll catch it. And you've never got to think you'll dodge the responsibility of your own soul's self, by loving or sacrificing or Nirvanning — or even anarchizing and throwing bombs. You never will---'--- If your soul's urge urges you to love, then love. But always know that what you are doing is the fulfilling of your soul's impulse. It's no good trying to act by prescription — not a bit.'

'You are your own Tree of Life, roots and limbs and trunk, Somewhere within the wholeness of the tree lies the very self';

36. Aaron's rod, see pp. 333-334. It may be interesting to compare this concept of the material self and the real self of man with the Sāṅkhya concept of the Ātman and the līṅgārīra. Līṅgārīra, though composed of such subtle elements as mind, intellect and ego, is yet the material reality, while the Ātman is the real, non-material self without which man's life has no substance (See Introduction, p. 10.).
the quick; its own innate Holy Ghost. And this Holy Ghost puts forth new buds, and pushes past old limits, and shakes off a whole body of dying leaves. And the old limits hate being encompassed, and the old leaves hate to fall. But they must, if the tree soul says so . . .'

'We've exhausted our love-urge, for the moment. And yet we try to force it to continue working. So we get inevitably anarchy and murder.
It's no good.' 37

Love is a means of self-fulfilment; but it is not the only and the ultimate means. If the self is its own goal, love cannot be the only and the ultimate basis of human relationship. Lilly tells Aaron that humanity has exhausted its love-urge. And to force it to continue working results in disaster all around. Bullying, murder and war are the extreme love actions in recoil. But, if it is accepted that every man is responsible only to his own soul, and if the love-mode of existence is grafted, what will be the basis of social cohesion and cooperation without which no society or race can survive? According to Lilly, the individual man will obey implicitly the greater soul than himself for his own good. Every man, aware of his own Godhead, will seek and find a greater man to be his friend, philosopher and guide. The woman deeply aware of her own Holy Ghost (the deep self within) will willingly submit to the greater soul of man, who will be her husband and master. Men will submit in their souls to some greater soul and call him their leader. Thus according to Lilly/Lawrence, the foundation of social organization, as of marriage and friendship, will be the soul of man. Lilly calls it the power mode of being. All relationships will be based on

37. Aaron's Rod, pp. 344-345.
the power mode. Lilly tells Aaron that he (Aaron) too needs to submit to a more heroic soul than himself, and who will choose 'the heroic soul'—his guru-friend—for him? Only his own soul can do it:

'I do believe that every man must fulfil his own soul, every woman must be herself, herself only, not some man's instrument, or some embodied theory. But the mode of our being is such that we can only live and have our being whilst we are implicit in one of the great dynamic modes. We must either love, or rule, and once the love-mode changes, an other mode must, for we are worn out, and becoming evil in its persistence, then the other mode will take place in us. And there will be profound, profound obedience in place of this love crying, obedience to the insensible power urge, and man must submit to the greater soul in a man, for their guidance; and woman must submit to the positive soul in man, for their being.'

'You'll never get it,' said Aaron.

'You will, when all men want it. All men say, they want a leader. Then let them in their souls submit to some greater soul than theirs. At present, when they say they want a leader, they mean they want an instrument, like Lloyd George. A more instrument for their use, not it's more than that. It's the reverse. It's the deep, fathomless submission to the heroic soul in a greater man. You, Aaron, you too have the need to submit. You, too, have the need livingly to yield to a more heroic soul, to give yourself.'

38. Lawrence, in his essay "Blessed are the Powerful" defines the word 'power' as "howe'er: to be able to." Earlier in the essay he writes: "It isn't bossing or bullying, hiring a man servant or salvationising your social inferior, issuing loud orders and getting your own way, doing your opponent down. That isn't power." Later in the same essay he explains: "However smart we be, however rich and clever or loving or charitable or spiritual or impeccable, it doesn't help us at all. The real power comes into us from beyond. Life enters us from behind, where we are sightless, and from below, where we do not understand.

And unless we yield to the beyond, and take our power and might and honour and glory from the unseen, from the unknown, we shall continue empty." (Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine, and Other Essays, by D.H. Lawrence, Martin Secker, London 1932, pp. 151-152.)
There was a long pause. Then Aaron looked up into Lilly’s face. It was dark and remote—seeming. It was like a Byzantine eikon at the moment.

‘And whom shall I submit to?’ he said. 39
‘Your soul will tell you,’ replied the other.

The book ends there. About the end of the novel, Richard Aldington observes: "There we have the final appeal of Lilly-Lawrence to Aaro Murry for ‘submission’ and ‘obedience’. I can never read the end of this book which otherwise has in it so much beauty and wisdom without a smile." The end of the novel will certainly provoke a smile in most of the readers even though they may never have known anything about Lawrence-Murry relationship. It is a blemish that spoils the beauty of the novel. A profound idea has been presented in the novel through unintentionally comic situations and too many harangues.

The idea of friendship between a lesser soul and a greater soul, in which the former accepts the latter not only as his friend but also as his master (guru, god, etc.), is not entirely new to the world. The story of the friendship between Arjuna and Krishna is well known to Hindus and other readers of the Mahabharata. But such friendships must be based on the urge of the soul and not on any external compulsions. Before Lilly defines his position finally in the last chapter of the novel entitled "Words", Aaron had already decided to accept him as his ultimate friend and guide:

But no! If he had to give in to something; if he really had to give in, and it seemed he had: then he would rather give in to the devilish little Lilly than to the beastly people of the world. If he had to give in, then it should be to no woman, and to no social ideal, and to no social institution. No! if he had to yield his willful independence, and give himself, then he would rather give himself to the little, individual man than to any of the rest. For to tell the truth, in the man was something incomprehensible, which had dominion over him, if he chose to allow it. 41

men and get men to move" with him, in order to change the world. Acting in unison with other men, he wants to "send out a new shoot in the life of mankind." He wields a forceful pen, and possesses his own deep convictions about life. He is an Englishman and has come to Australia after wandering all over the world. After setting foot on the Australian soil, he is at once struck by the social ethos of the Australians which is basically different from that of the Europeans. He finds that in this new land there are no class distinctions. Some people may be better off than others, but none is better than anyone else. There is no ruler, nor any ruling class. In fact, nobody feels the necessity for 'rule' or a ruler. It is only the name of England that stands between Australia and anarchy. This state of affairs is pejoratively called as 'real democracy' by Somers:

Somers for the first time felt himself immersed in real democracy—in spite of all disparity in wealth. The instinct of the place was absolutely and flatly democratic, heterarch democratic. Demos was here his own master, undisputed, and therefore quite calm about it. No need to get the wind up at all over it; it was a granted condition of Australia, that Demos was his own master. 45

Somers concludes that Australia was in a state of social "irresponsibility! This state of tolerant anarchy may go on for a long time, but ultimately the whole system may collapse. He believe that the social system of Australia is "like a machine running on but gradually running down." This socio-political scene baffles hi


45. Ibid., p. 27. 46. Ibid., p. 28.
He feels uneasy. But in this "newest country: young Australia", he sees an opportunity to put into practice his idea that sincere action by men could transform human life and save it from being reduced to a mere struggle for the acquisition of material possessions. It has been Somer's belief that politics is the game of base people with no human soul in them. He wants a 'new life-form', a 'new social form' to take the place of old politics. For achieving this goal, he believes, "there must be action, brave, faithful action and in the action the new spirit would arise." He hates politics, but he does not believe in that part of Christianity which preaches the despising of the material world. He wants positive intervention in the affairs of the world by men with soul: "Christianity is a religion which preaches the despising of the material world. And I don't believe in that part of it, at least, any longer. I believe that the men with the real passion for life, for truth, for living and not for having, I feel they now must seize control of the material possessions, just to safeguard the world from all the masses who want to seize material possessions for themselves, blindly, and nothing else. The men with soul and with passionate truth in them must control the world's material riches and supplies: absolutely put possessions out of the reach of the mass of mankind, and let life begin to live again, in place of this struggle for wealth." He thinks seriously of accepting Jack Calcott's offer of friendship and comradeship in the cause of the transformation of Australia. All his life, Somers had cherished a beloved ideal of friendship. He had always wanted

47. Kangaroo, p. 111.  
48. Ibid., pp. 111 - 112.
an absolute friend. Here in Australia, Jack Calcott, who is engaged in a 'purposeful male activity', offers him his friendship and absolute loyalty. Jack is an important member of the Diggers organization. The aim of the Diggers movement is to establish a beneficent dictatorship in Australia on the basis of the values of love and life. Somers likes Jack. He trusts him too, and believes that his affection is genuine. He is tempted to pledge himself to be 'life and death mates' with him. "But"—when the moment of giving his word of irrevocable commitment comes, he finds that he does not want it. His innermost soul does not want it. His soul rejects what he thought he had wanted:

It took Lovat Somers some time before he would really admit and accept this new fact. Not till he had striven hard with his soul did he come to see the angel in the way; not till his soul, like Balcom's Acc, had spoken more than once. And then, when forced to admit, it was a revolution in his mind. He had all his life had this craving for an absolute friend: a David to his Jonathan, Pyndas to his Creoste: a blood-brother. All his life he had grieved over his friendlessness. And now at last, when it really offered—and it had offered twice before, since he had left Europe—he didn't want it, and he realized that in his innermost soul he had never wanted it. 49

In his zeal to 'move with men and not men to move' with him, he had been attracted to Jack. But soon he realized that his desire to hob-nob with the Diggers is merely a materialistic aspiration and it is not prompted by his soul.

Yet in his soul he wants a living relationship with some man or men. But the nature of this relationship is not yet very clear to his mind. The interpretation of this 'living relationship' between men, given by the narrator of the story, makes it appear to be esoteric. The narrator comments that this relationship, based on

natural instinct for authority and obedience, is known to the Hindus:

Yet he wanted some living fellowship with other men:
as it was he was just isolated. May be a living fellow-
ship!—but not affection, not love, not comradeship. Not
mates and equality and mingling. Not blood-brotherhood.
None of that.

What else? He didn't know. He only know he was never
destined to be mate or comrade or even friend with any
man. Some other living relationship. But what? He did
not know. Perhaps the thing that the dark races know: that
one can still feel in India: the mystery of lordship. That
which whitesmen have struggled so long against, and which is
the clue to the life of the Hindu. The mystery of lordship.
The mystery of innate, natural sacred priority. The other
mystic relationship between men, which democracy and equality
try to deny and obliterate. Not any arbitrary caste or birth
aristocracy. But the mystic recognition of difference and
innate priority, the joy of obedience and the sacred responsi-
bility of authority. So

The idea of 'aristocracy' and the denigration of democracy and
equality in the passage may create the impression in the reader's
mind that some sort of autocracy is being put forward as an alter-
native to the liberal social systems of the West. However, the
paramountcy given to the soul of man, the rejection of cast or birth
as the basis of aristocracy, the 'sacred responsibility of authority'
and the voluntary nature of the obedience of the follower must
reassure the reader that no sort of autocracy is suggested. When
the narrator/author explains the term "some living fellowship" as
"the other mystic relationship between men, which democracy and
equality try to deny and obliterate", he does not suggest a master
and slave relationship. What he tries to emphasize is that man does
not live by bread alone. The concepts of equality and inequality in
relation to men are meaningless. These terms apply only to the material world. Men is not just only a material entity. He is not merely an economic unit. His inner, real self has precedence over his material self. Any social system that reduces man to just an economic unit does great injustice to his integral self.

In "Democracy", Lawrence writes:

"Since every individual, in his first reality, a single, incommutable soul, not to be calculated or defined in terms of any other soul, there can be no establishing of a mathematical ratio. We cannot say that all men are equal. We cannot say A=B. Nor can we say that men are unequal. We may not declare that A=B+C. ---

Men have reached the point where, in further fulfilling their ideals, they break down the living integrity of their being and fall into sheer mechanical materialism. They become automatic units, determined only by mechanical law.

This is horribly true of modern democracy—socialism, conservatism, bolshevism, liberalism, republicanism, communism; all alike. The one principle that governs all the isms is the same: the principle of the idealized unit, the possessor of property. 51

A careful study of the story and the comments of the narrator/author reveals that a social system based on some religious faculty in men has been envisaged. This religious faculty has nothing to do with the doctrines of the Church or any organised religion. It has everything to do with the soul of man. Some men are deeply aware of the soul within them and have the ability to know what it wants. Others are less aware, or not at all aware, of their soul and do not listen to its voice. They need to be initiated into this mystery. They should be, at least, educated

about it. The men with profound religious faculty are the natural aristocrats. They should be the leaders among men. The aristocrat-leader must also be what the Hindus call the 'guru' of his people. Lawrence writes in "Education of the People":

"So, the new system will be established upon the living religious faculty in men. In some men this faculty has a more direct expression in consciousness than in other men. Some men are aware of the deep troublings of the creative sources of their own souls, they are aware, they find speech or utterance in act, they come forth in consciousness. In other men the troublings are dumb, they will never come forth in expression, unless they find a mediator, a minister, an interpreter." 52

Jack had offered Somers to take him to meet Kangaroo, the supreme leader of the Diggers movement. But even before going to meet Kangaroo, Somers comes to the decision that he will never pledge himself to Jack, nor to his Diggers movement because the highest aspirations of both are merely materialistic. This is the decision of his soul. The subsequent events in the story only confirm the rightness of this decision.

Kangaroo justifies his aim of establishing a dictatorship in Australia on moral grounds. He believes that in the organized societies throughout the world, people have become selfish and cold-blooded. Men and women with fellow-feeling and human warmth in them are forced to join one "ant-hill" of an organization or the other. But now they have become tired of such existence:

"Man that is born of woman is sick of himself. Man that is born of woman is tired of his day after day." So Kangaroo wants to

establish a sort of benevolent dictatorship in Australia in order to "take away the strain, the nervous tension out of life, and let folks be happy again unconsciously, instead of unhappy consciously." And he regards it "not quite a political thing." He wants Somer's help in achieving his aim. He wants the help of his pen in teaching the Australians to love one another with 'pure and fearless love'. "I want one central principle in the world: the principle of love," says he. He wants the society to operate on the principle of love. He believes that men can know and understand each other only by 'pure soul intuition', and Somers fully agrees with him. Kangaroo also believes that only one thing can be known and must be known about a man: we must know whether he is true to the flame of love and life within him or he is false to it. The man who is true to the flame of love within him must be recognized as a friend and the man who is false to the flame of love within him must be regarded as an enemy. Kangaroo says that he uses his reason in the service of love. In a 'cold and static' voice he talks of love to Somers:

'I believe in the one fire of love. I believe it is the one inspiration of all creative activity. I trust myself entirely to the fire of love. This I do with my reason also. I don't discard my reason. I use it at the service of love, like a sharp weapon. I try to keep it very sharp — and very dangerous. Where I don't love, I use only my will and my wits. Where I love, I trust to love alone'.

But for Somers/Lawrence love, reason, will and wits are made of the

some stuff. All these belong to the material reality. Love is the one face of a coin the other face of which is hate. (Kangaroo is showing him his face of love at present and soon he will show him his face of hate). Love, according to Somers is not "the all in all". It is not the only inspiration of creative activity. Love is not the "one and only exclusive force or mystery of living inspiration". "What else is there?", asks Kangaroo. "There is something else", says Somers. When Kangaroo insists that he should explain what this "something else" is, Somers tells him that his (Kangaroo's) ears and his critical mind are not enough for understanding this "something else". And yet he tells him: "Why, it means an end of us and what we are, in the first place. And then a re-entry into us of the great God who enters us from below, not from above." This "great God" is beyond the mental comprehension of man. In fact, complete stillness of mind is the first condition for 'knowing' this God.

Willy Struthers, the leader of the Australian Labour party, also offers Somers a leading role in bringing about a socialist revolution in Australia. Struthers wants to build a new society on the basis of a new bond of trust between working men:

'Now what we want is a new bond between fellow-men. We've got to knock down the middle-class fetish and the middle-class medicine-men. But you've got to build up as you knock down. You've got to build up the real fellow-feeling between fellow-men. You've got to teach us working men to trust one another, absolutely trust one another, and to take all our trust away from

59. Kangaroo, p.140. 60. Ibid. 61. Ibid., p.150, 62. Ibid.
the Great Washed (middle classes) and their medicine men
who bleed us like leeches. Let us mistrust them — but
let us trust one another. First and foremost, let us
trust one another, we working men." 63

He wants the love between comrades to be the new passion of the new society:

"Our society is based on the family, the love of a man
for his wife and his children, or for his mother and
brothers. The family is our social bedrock and limit.
Whitman said the next, broader, more unsalish rock
should be the Love of Comrades. The sacred relation of
a man to his mate, his fellow-man.

If our society is going to develop a new great phase,
developing from where we stand now, it must accept this
new relationship as the new sacred social bond, beyond the
family. You can't make bricks without straw. That is, you
can't hold together the friable mixture of modern mankind
without a new cohesive principle, a new unifying passion.
And this will be the new passion of a man's absolute trust
in his mate, his love for his mate." 64.

Somers knows that love is a great thing when it happens. But wilful
love is always a disaster: "Man- and - woman love is a disaster
now-a-days. What a holy horror man-and-man love would be: mates or
comrades!" Human love is a relative thing. It is not "absolute".
Yet man wants an "absolute". It is a condition of being human.
Somers believes that the only absolute thing is "the God", who is
the source of all passion. Without "God-passion", the love of
comrades would be a disaster:

With no deep God who is source of all passion and life
to hold them separate and yet sustained in accord, the
loving comrades would smash one another, and smash all
love, all feeling as well. It would be a rare grue-
some sight.

Any more love is a hopeless thing, till we have found
again, each of us for himself, the great dark God who alone
will sustain us in loving one another. Till then, best not
play with more fire. 66

63. Kangaroo, pp. 218-219 64. Ibid., p. 219 65. Ibid., p. 220.
66. Ibid., p. 221.
Somers also knows that the theoretical socialism of Marx appeals only to the will-to-power of the masses. It makes money the only god. It is a "great treacherous conspiracy against the generous heart of the people." And here, in Australia, Willie Struthers is inviting him to take charge of the communist paper to "breathe the new air of trust and comradeship" into the working people in order to establish "Christ's Democracy!" Somers declines the offer by saying that the "belief of men in each other" is not enough.

"But what else is there to believe in? Quacks, medicine men? Scientists? politicians?", asks Struthers mockingly. "It does need some sort of religion", replies Somers. Earlier, he had told Kangaroo that he (Somers) knows "another God". This 'God' is none other than the primal spontaneous self in every man and woman, and the religious faculty in a human being is the awareness of this primal spontaneous self deep within him.

Obviously, for Somers/Lawrence it is futile to work for the creation of a new mechanical social system based on the principle of the wage. However, it is a different matter to work for a new organic social system which depends on the spontaneous soul of men. Lawrence writes in "Education of the People":

"What good is our intelligence to us, if we will not use it in the greatest issues? Nothing will excuse us from the responsibility of living: even death is no excuse. We have to live. So we may as well live fully. We are doomed to live, and therefore, it is not the smallest use running into p's alias and trying to shirk the responsibility of living: we can't get out of it.

And therefore the only thing to do is to undertake the responsibility with good grace. What responsibility? The

67. Ibid., p. 223. 68. Ibid., p. 234 69. Ibid., p. 243.
70. Ibid., p. 153.
responsible for establishing a new system: a new, organic system, free as far as ever it can be from automatism or mechanism: a system which depends on the profound soul of man." 71

Kangaroo has no use for the 'God' of Somers. Willie Struthers is not interested in his 'religion.' Each one of them wants to use him for his own ends. When Somers refuses to play Kangaroo's game, he becomes furious and accuses him of being deceitful. His face of love changes into the face of hate:

He had become again hideous, with a long yellowish face and black eyes close together, and a cold, mindless, dangerous hulk to his shoulders. For a moment Somers was afraid of him, as of some great ugly idol that might strike. He felt the intense hatred of the man coming at him in cold waves. He stood up in a kind of horror, in front of the great, closed eyed horrible thing that was now Kangaroo. Yes, a thing, not a whole man. A great Thing, a horror. 72

Kangaroo intimidates Somers and even suggests that he should leave Australia at once. It arouses great fear in Somers and he is reminded of his wartime nightmarish experiences in Cornwall. The memories of the fear "that he had known during the war: the fear of the base and malignant power of the mob-like authorities" come to his mind. He is reminded of the fact that the so-called democracies based on mere materialistic values are ultimately run by 'the vast mob spirit'. Men in the mob have no 'inward, individual integrity'; they have no 'independent soul'. He remembers how "the English soul went under in the war, and, as a conscious, proud, adventurous soul, it was lost." 73

72. Kangaroo, p. 234 73. Ibid.
The later incidents further clarify the central thought contained in the novel. Jack accuses Somers of being a spy. He insults the man for whose friendship he had been so eager. Kangaroo's men disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of the Labour party where Willie Struthers is delivering a speech. Kangaroo is fatally wounded in the shoot-out that follows the disturbances at the meeting, and dies within a few days. Jack inflicts mortal wounds on a few labour party sympathisers, and gets deep satisfaction out of the act. The wheel of wilful love had come full circle. There was only hate all around. The incidents prove that Somer's decision not to accept Jack's or Kangaroo's or Willie Struther's hand of friendship and comradeship had been right. It had been the decision of his soul; and the soul can never err. Though he had always wanted to 'move with men and get men to move with him', yet he refuses to join either the socialist revolution of Willie Struthers or the semi-fascist movement of Kangaroo. But he does not abandon the adventure into 'the consciousness of the self'. Kangaroo had called him 'the enemy of civilization'. He does not contradict him. He has no use for the mechanical civilization of either Kangaroo or Willie Struthers. His own definition of civilization is different. What he means by civilization is "the deep, self-responsible consciousness in man!"

74. Kangaroo, p.303
75. Ibid.
Kangaroo is the least rated novel of Lawrence. It is certainly not a great novel as the author fails to strike a balance between the idea and the plot. The author's message is not well integrated with plot and character. However, Lawrence was interested more in his 'thought adventure' than anything else in this novel. He seems to be apologetic about the form of the novel when he intrudes in person into the story to make the following observation in the chapter "Bits" Now a novel is supposed to be a mere record of emotion-adventures, floundering in feelings. We insist that a novel is, or should be, also a thought-adventure, if it is to be anything complete. 77

But the moral of Kangaroo (if it is not blasphemous to talk of a moral in a work of art) is loud and clear: You cannot establish a living social system on materialistic values. The social system based merely on materialistic values will only be a mechanical system and, therefore, a lifeless system. A new, living, organic social system can only be established on, and sustained by, the profound soul consciousness in men.

Kangaroo and Willie Struthers appear to be powerful leaders of men, but in reality they only follow the great revengeful mob. They are only capable of taking revenge on the old system and old ideals. They are men with only faculties, however sharp, but no divinity. Their mental conceit prevents them from listening to the voice of the soul. They cannot establish and sustain a really new and living system that can be done only by natural aristocrats, the men who have realized their divinity. Don Ramon of The Plumed Serpent is one such

6. Eliseo Vivas refers to the novel as "this no-novel" (D.H.Lawrence: The Failure and the Triumph of Art, Allen and Unwin, London p. 89.) Julian Huxley has called it "the most padded and redundant of all Lawrence's novels" (The Deed of Life: The Novels and Tales of D.H. Lawrence, Oxford University Press, London 1963, p. 161.).

aristocrat, the Lawrentian 'Super man', who has realized his real self:

Because, admitting his blood unison, Ramon at the same time claimed a supremacy, even a godliness. He was a man, as the lowest of his peasans was a man. At the same time, rising from the same pool of blood, from the same roots of manhood as they, and being, as they were, a man of the pulsing blood, he was still something more. Not in the blood nor in the spirit lay his individuality and his supremacy, his godhead. But in a star within him, an inexplicable star which rose out of the dark sea and shone between the flood and the great sky. The mysterious star which unites the vast universal blood with the universal breath of the spirit, and shines between them both.

Not the rider on the white horse: nor the rider on the red. That which is beyond the riders and the horses, the inexplicable mystery of the star whence no horseman comes and to which no horseman can arrive. The star which is a man's innermost clue, which rules the power of the blood on the one hand, and the power of the spirit on the other.

For this, the only thing which is supreme above all power in a man, and at the same time, is power, which far transcends knowledge, the strange star between the sky and the waters of the first cosmos: this is man's divinity. 78

(Emphasis mine)

Ramon's meditations and his prayers remind us of the Hindu Yogis. He is capable of achieving a complete stillness of mind, that enable him to reach the state of timelessness. This state of timelessness frees him from the conditioning of not only his own past but also the past of his whole race, thus enabling him to see into the true nature of things in the living present.

Invisible in the darkness, he stood soft and relaxed, staring with the wide eyes at the dark fecundity of the inner tide whispering over his heart, over his belly, his mind dissolved away in the greater, dark mind, which is

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He covered his face with his hands, and stood still, in pure un-consciousness, neither hearing nor feeling nor knowing, like a dark sea-weed deep in the sea, with no Time and no World, in the deeps that are timeless and worldless. 79

(Emphasis mine)

His prayer is not the prayer of a self-proclaiming sinner begging for his sins to be forgiven by an invisible God or a historical Christ. His prayer is the prayer of a self-realized soul who is as God is, here and now:

Then Ramen's voice was heard, and the men were suddenly silent, listening with bent heads. Ramen sat with his face lifted, looking far away, in the pride of prayer.

'There is no Before and After, there is only Now', he said, speaking in a proud, but inward voice.

'The great snake coils and uncoils the plasm of his folds, and stars appear, and worlds fade out. It is no more than the changing and easing of the plasm. —-

'and the perfect sleep of the Snake I am is the plasm of a man, who is whole.

'When the plasm of the body, and the plasm of the soul, and the plasm of the spirit are at one, in the Snake I am.

'I am Now

'Was-not is a dream, and shall-be is a dream, like two separa heavy feet.

'But Now, I Am.

He can dive deep into the oblivion and come up again after rest and renewal. In his meditations he looks into the heart of the cosmos and his 'manhood' is fulfilled. He receives his 'power' and his strength from the cosmos:

79- Ibid., p.230.

80- The Plumed Serpent, pp. 211-212.
He was looking into the heart of the world; because the faces of men, and the hearts of men are hopeless quicksands. Only in the heart of the Cosmos man can look for strength. And if he can keep his soul in touch with the heart of the world, then from the heart of the world new blood will beat in strength and stillness into him, fulfilling his manhood.  

Ramon hates mental attachment, which he calls 'intimacy', to person and things. He practises non-attachment in personal and social relations:

He had to meet them on another plane, where the contact was different; intangible remote, and without intimacy. His soul was concerned elsewhere. So that the quick of him need not be bound to anybody. The quick of a man must turn to God alone: in some way or other.

With Cipriano (his friend and disciple) he was most sure. Cipriano and he, even when they embraced each other with passion, when they met after an absence, embraced in the recognition of each other's eternal and abiding loneliness; like the Morning Star.  

He has all the attributes of a Super man, the one whom the Hindu would call a 'Karma Yogi'. Only such a man has true wisdom and is qualified to guide others. Don Ramon wants to transform the Mexican Indians and establish a new social system in Mexico upon the living religious faculty in man. He calls his integral self his "Whole manhood". Having found his own "whole manhood", he endeavours to awaken every Mexican man to his own manhood and every Mexican Woman to her own womanhood. He believes that man gets the wholeness of his being from God. When people lose their connection with God, they lose the wholeness of their being. He sees hope in the Mexican Indians as, perhaps, they are not too hardened in their

81. Ibid., p. 230

82. The Plumed Serpent, p. 289. Lawrence's rejection of the love mode, which he regards as nothing but mental attachment to persons and things, may thus be better understood.
mental conceit. He uses the Quetzalcoatl myth for establishing "a new connection between the people and God." To his wife, Carlota, who is also the greatest critic of his Quetzalcoatl religion, he says:

"Quetzalcoatl is just a living word, in these people, no more. All I want them to do is to find the beginnings of the way to their own manhood, their own womanhood. Men are not yet men in full, and women are not yet women. They are all half and half, incoherent, part horrible, part pathetic, part good creatures. Half arrived.—I mean you as well Carlota. I mean all the world.—But these people don't assert any righteousness of their own, these Mexican people of ours. That makes me think that grace is still with them. And so having got hold of some kind of clue to my own whole manhood, it is part of me to try with them."84

Ramón believes that the leader should not depend on the support of the masses, nor should be seek the support of the masses. Authority and obedience should depend on the recognition by men of each other's soul power: "We will be masters among men, and lords among men. But lords of men and masters of men we will not be." It is Don Ramón's soul-power that compels obedience from his friend and disciple, General Cipriano:

"How not believe? I not believe in Ramón?—Well, perhaps not, in that way of kneeling before him and spreading out my arms and shedding tears on his feet. But I—I believe in him, too. Not in your way, but in mine, I tell you why. Because he has the power to compel me. If he hadn't the power to compel me, how should I believe?

'It is a queer sort of belief that is compelled', she said.

"How else should one believe, except by being compelled? When I grew up, and my god-father (a Bishop) could not compel me to believe, I was very unhappy. It made me very unhappy. But Ramón compels me, and that is very good. It makes me very happy, when I know I can't escape.'86

Ramon wants the Christian Church to stop imposing an alien religion on the Mexican people. He tells the Bishop that the Christian church is just one among many churches, but it is hostile to other churches of the world. There must be a universal church of all religions. It must be like "a big tree under which every man who acknowledges the greater life of the soul can sit and be refreshed." The final mystery, according to Ramon, is one mystery, but the manifestations of this mystery are many. He resurrects the old god of Mexico and gives it a new meaning. The religion of Quetzalcoatl, the 'Lord of Two Ways', is a way of life which involves a connection between the conscious and unconscious levels of existence. He gives the Mexican people new rituals to perform and new hymns to sing—the rituals and hymns that they can understand. However, Quetzalcoatl is to him only the symbol of the best a Mexican man may be in the future. The Christian Church does not possess the key-word to the Mexican soul. Mexicans must have their own God: "God must come to Mexico in a blanket and in huaraches, else he is no God of the Mexicans. They cannot know him. Naked all men are but men. But the touch, the look, the word that goes from one naked man to another is the mystery of living. We live by manifestations." But he tries, as far as possible, to spread his message without arousing resistance or hate. When Cipriano wants to 'meet metal with metal', and suggests that Montes, the President of the Republic, should be asked to declare the 'Religion of Quetzalcoatl' as the religion of Mexico and then back up the declaration with the army, Ramon says: "But, no! no! Let it spread of itself."

87. Ibid., p. 301. 88. Ibid., p. 809. 89. Ibid., 325.
It is true that Cipriano executes the bandits and murderers gruesomely, and Ramon approves of these executions. The description of these executions may be repugnant to many readers of the novel. But it is a fact, as has been pointed out by L.D. Clark, that these bandits and murderers "would suffer death by condemnation in most societies." Moreover, the way these criminal killers of men are executed may be regarded as a ritual that the Mexican peon could understand, and which could be replaced, with the passage of time, by another ritual for the same purpose.

Ramon is not interested in politics, which he regards as trivial. He is interested in life; and politics cannot give life.

"Politics and all this social religion that kites has got is like washing the outside of the egg, to make it look clean. But I, myself, I want to get inside the egg, right to the middle, to start it growing into a new bird. --- The United States can't die, because it isn't alive. It is a nestful of China eggs, made of pot. So they can be kept clean. --- But here, Cipriano, here, let us hatch the chick before we start cleaning up the nest." ---

"We've got to open the oyster of the cosmos, and get our manhood out of it." 91

Ideals cannot save humanity. Christ is an ideal. Socialism and liberty are also ideals. Humanity can neither be saved by Christ, nor by materialistic ideals like 'Socialism' or 'liberty':

"But believe me, if the real Christ has not been able to save Mexico — and He hasn't — then I am sure the White Anti - Christ of charity, and socialism, and politics, and reform, will only succeed in finally destroying her. That, and that alone makes me take my stand. — You, Carlota, with your charity works and your


91. The Plumed Serpent, pp. 228-229.
city; and men like Benito Juarez, with their Reform and their liberty; and the rest of the benignant people, politicians and socialists and so forth, surcharged with pity for living men, in their mouths, but really with hate—the hate of the materialist have-nots for the materialist have: they are the Anti-Christ." 92

Julian Huxley wonders how man ("this idle, intensely vain hidalgo") is going to solve the problems of food, housing and education of the Mexicans. There is a definite answer to this question in the book. The wants of man can never be totally satisfied. Material desires are hydra-headed. As soon as one want is satisfied, another crops up in its place. In solving one problem, the conditioned man creates ten more problems. Life itself has the power to solve the genuine problems of man including the problems of food and shelter. Men must fight for life and for nothing else. Neuman writes to the socialists and agitators:

"Let us seek life where it is to be found. And, having found it, life will solve the problems. But every time we deny the living life, in order to solve a problem, we cause ten problems to spring up where was one before. Solving the problems of the people, we lose the people in a poisonous forest of problems. ——— When man seek life first, they will not seek land nor gold. ———

'Seek life, and life will bring the change. ———

'Lay forcible hands on nothing, only be ready to resist, if forcible hands should be laid on you. For the new shoots of life are tender, and better ten deaths than that they should be torn or trampled down by the bullies of the world." 94

And where to find life? Life is found in every living-being.

Life is found in every living man and every living woman. And the

92. The Plumed Serpent, p.247.
source of life is in the soul of man, and the soul of woman. Cipriano tells his men that they "must march to life". They must acquire "the second strength". Hitherto they have known only one strength — "the strength which is the strength of oxen and mules and iron, of machines and guns, and of men who cannot get the second strength." The Europeans and the Americans have also acquired a 'second strength', but it is the strength of the mind, which enables them to manufacture goods and guns. The Mexicans must acquire a different 'second strength' — the strength that comes from the soul. Cipriano speaks to his men:

'Are we men? Can we not get the second strength? Can we not? Have we lost it forever?

'I say no! Quetzalcoatl is among us. I have found the red Huitzilopochtli: The second strength!

'When you walk or sit, when you work or lie down, when you eat or sleep, think of the second strength, that you must have it.

'Be very quiet. It is shy as a bird in a dark tree.

'Be very clean, clean in your bodies and your clothes. It is like a star, that will not shine in dirt.

'Be very brave and do not drink till you are drunk, nor soil yourself with bad women. Because a drunken man has lost his second strength, and a man loses his second strength in bad women, and a thief is a coward, and the red Huitzilopochtli hates a coward. 96

(Emphasis mine)

It is a Yogi’s prescription for Self-Realization. Even a layman among the Hindus can read this 'prescription'. The emphasis in this speech is clearly on the control of the senses and the stillness of the mind.

95. Ibid., p. 397. 96. Ibid., p. 397. 97. Ibid., p. 398.

98. Ibid., pp. 399-400.
Ramon, like Lawrence himself, believes that the greatest service that a man can do to his fellow-men is to help them to get into contact with the source of life through self realization. How far he succeeds in transforming the lives of the Mexican Indians has been left unsaid in the book. Ramon knows that the task is formidable; and he has only been able to make a beginning: "I do what I believe in. Possibly I am only the first step round the corner of change." But he, like Lawrence, is convinced that men can truly meet only on the religious plane.