

Lake Garda

Cover: “On the road from Gargnano to San Gaudenzio, Lago di Garda”, D.H. Lawrence. Watercolour, 23.5 x 30 cm, circa April 1913.

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NB As argued by Umberto Perini, a local photographer, the actual view shown in the painting is the village of Malcesine. In fact, anybody familiar with Lake Garda would agree with that. But, most interestingly, this leads to another little-big revelation; the date, which is officially associated with the painting (see above), is not exact. According to Peter Preston’s *A D. H. Lawrence Chronology* (36), Lawrence and Frieda went to San Gaudenzio, which is on the opposite bank of Malcesine, on 30 March, and stayed there till 11 April when they continued their trip to Munich. Therefore, it is most likely that Lawrence made “On the Road ...” as early as November 1912, which can be deduced from a couple of letters to his close friend and fellow-teacher at Croydon, Arthur McLeod. The first one, dated 28 November, reads: “Tomorrow I’m going to Riva, to fetch some of my things – my paints among them. Then I shall paint you your picture for Christmas.” (*The Letters of D. H. Lawrence, Vol. I*, 481). The second one, was written on 2 December, and reads: “Oh, I’ve actually painted two pictures. I’m doing several – when they’re finished I shall send them and let you have your pick.” (*LI*, 482). Hence, we can reasonably assume that Lawrence made the “two pictures” on his way back from Riva del Garda on 29 November. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that the other painting, known as “Italian Scene with Boat”, does exist and clearly shows a boat at Malcesine harbour, which we know McLeod’s sister, Edie, gave to Mrs Mary Wood. (So, Lawrence did send McLeod the painting). Curiously enough in the book *Paintings of D. H. Lawrence*, we can read not only about that, but also that “it is most probable that the picture was painted at some point during Lawrence’s stay at the fishing village of Fiascherino.” (*Paintings of D. H. Lawrence*, 72) Of course, that cannot be so, for two good reasons: a) because the place is clearly not Fiascherino, but Malcesine, and b) because Lawrence moved there only six months later, in October 1913, and stayed till June 1914. What a coincidence! Both paintings are known in association with wrong locations as well as dates.

Nick Ceramella

Lake Garda:
Gateway to D. H. Lawrence's Voyage to the Sun

Edited by

Nick Ceramella

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

Lake Garda:
Gateway to D. H. Lawrence's Voyage to the Sun,
Edited by Nick Ceramella

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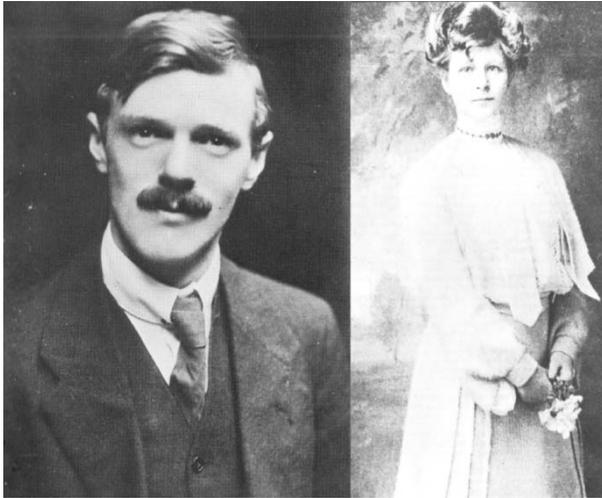
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D. H. Lawrence and Frieda, between 1912-13, when they were staying in Gargnano (Lake Garda).

*To the Maestro
Peter Preston*



Fig. 1: Peter Preston lecturing on “D. H. Lawrence and Departure” at Cagliari Railway Museum, Sardinia, 1st June, 2006

*I live in sunshine and happiness, in exile and poverty,
here in this pretty hole [Gargnano].**



Fig. 2: Gargnano: alley leading to Lake Garda

* *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume I*, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 468.

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FOREWORD

Lake Garda is different every day; we at the conference were always aware of it alongside us or behind us—a great rolling and splashing swell after the storms and lightning of Wednesday night, a smooth milky expanse on the Thursday, a clear and brilliant dark-blue on the Friday, choppy up near Limone on Saturday's boat trip, placid blue-grey back at Gargnano on the Sunday. An image perhaps of our proceedings; indoors at the monastery, sometimes in the courtyard outside; in the quiet expanse of the Sala Castellani, with Paul Eggert's succession of masterful images, or with Robert Fraser's beautiful exposition of Lawrence's thought; crowded rooms heaving at the monastery, voices raised, tea drunk, groups coming together, separating again. And we conference goes always in motion, up the steep paths to the monastery, up the steep cobbles to the Castellani, going thoughtfully to our places, listening and noting, going to lunch, going to listen again; with the lake always just behind us or below us.

And these are the papers; reminding us of voices sometimes raised, sometimes quiet, delivered in such wonderfully beautiful surroundings; now available to be read and re-read. I was the lucky one; uncompelled to speak, and so not here to be read; therefore able to listen, and always able to contemplate. These published proceedings will take all of us who were there back to magical days together, brought together by the brilliance of Nick Ceramella, safeguarded and privileged by the town of Gargnano and its Comitato per Gargnano Storica. And remembering—for ever—Lawrence and the Lake.

Oberhausen, 26 September 2012

John Worthen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As this collection's editor, and Chair of the International Committee of the First International Symposium held in Gargnano (2012), on behalf of myself and the worldwide Laurentian community, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Comitato per Gargnano Storica for taking charge of the organization of this unprecedented event on Lake Garda, and among them especially President Enrico Levi, Alberta Cazzani and Andrea Arosio. I would also like to thank the Mayor of Gargnano, Gianfranco Scarpetta, who gave us the privilege of opening and closing our Symposium at today's Sala Castellani, auditorium, formerly the theatre Lawrence writes about in *Twilight in Italy*. We are equally grateful to the Franciscan Brothers Minors for letting us have our paper presentations in their breathtaking premises at the monastery of San Tommaso which Lawrence was so fascinated by. Incidentally, their support allowed us to pursue our idea of having a very Laurentian symposium in spirit and essence. Another thank-you goes to Richard Dury and Umberto Perini for setting up an exhaustive and successful exhibition on Lawrence's stay in Gargnano. But allow me to take this opportunity to thank Richard for getting the Comitato in touch with me, thus making so many people's dream come true. I would also like to thank Counts Bettoni-Cazzago for hosting the Mozart / Debussy Concert and a Gala Dinner in the wonderful Gardens of their Palace. A big thank you goes to the Capelli family for placing their house and property, in San Gaudenzio, at the participants' disposal, and for cooking an exquisite country style dinner accompanied by a full bodied red wine, recalling the sort of atmosphere experienced by Lawrence and Frieda there 100 years ago.

Needless to say how thankful I am to all my colleagues, both the long standing ones and the new "entries". But let me thank also all the other fellow Laurentians and friends who regretted they could not join us, owing to previous professional and private commitments. I am particularly grateful to John Worthen for showing me his friendship and encouragement and for sharing with all of us his widely recognised knowledge of the Laurentian world.

On the music front, a heart-felt thanks goes to William Neil for offering, as generously and unconditionally, his wonderful music inspired by Lawrence; to Charlotte Stoppelenburg for her mesmerising voice; to

John Worthen for reading some of Lawrence's poems; to the pianist Giacomo Dalla Libera for his velvet touch; and of course, to my dearest friend Bethan Jones for her outstanding clarinet playing. I am personally indebted also to another artist, the German painter Sabine Frank, who has granted me the permission to have seven of her paintings reproduced in this volume, even before her whole sequence of 25 paintings, *Via D. H. Lawrence*, will be published in a book.

Finally, I am also most grateful to my students from the University of Trento (Elisa, Elisabetta, Giada, Katia, Nicole, Martina, Tanya, and Valentina), for their most appreciated help and enthusiasm on assisting us, during the symposium, with such a natural grace, joy, and professionalism. Among them a particular thank-you goes to Elisabetta Campregher and Michela Zandonai for offering the beautiful photos they took before and during the symposium which appear in this book. I will conclude with a big thanks to Alessandro Vatri, whose computing expertise proved to be invaluable to accomplish my editing job.

Yet once again, I owe my personal largest debt of gratitude to my better half, Marianna, for her subtle woman's point of view on giving me advice and support, and, above all, for continuing to bear with me and my "evanescent" presence. It was almost two years ago when we had the first meeting at Gargnano and here I am still working on this fascinating and involving project. I have certainly dedicated myself to this collection with great passion and, hopefully to everybody's intellectual enjoyment and benefit.

Rome, April 2013

Nick Ceramella

REFERENCE ABBREVIATIONS

Works of D. H. Lawrence

- A *Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation*. Edited by Mara Kalnins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
- CAL *Studies in Classic American Literature*. Edited by Ezra Greenspan, Lindeth Vasey, and John Worthen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- CH "The Stream of Desire." In *Challenge of the Heart: Love, Sex, and Intimacy in Changing Times*, edited by John Welwood. Boston: Shambala, 1985.
- CP *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*. Edited with an Introduction and notes by Vivian de Sola Pinto and Warren Roberts. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977.
- CP2 *D. H. Lawrence: The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*. Introduction and Notes by David Ellis. Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2002.
- F/FU *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious*. Edited by Bruce Steele. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- K *Kangaroo*. Edited by Bruce Steele. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- LCL *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Edited by Michael Squires. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- LG *The Lost Girl*. Edited by John Worthen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- WWRA *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986.

- MM* *Mornings in Mexico and Other Essays*. Edited by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- MrN* *Mr Noon*. Edited by Lindeth Vasey. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- PS* *The Plumed Serpent*. Edited by L. D. Clark. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- PU* *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious*. Edited by Bruce Steele. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- S* "Sun." In *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986.
- SE* *Selected Essays*. Edited by Richard Aldington. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1959.
- SEP* *Sketches of Etruscan Places and Other Italian Essays*. Edited by Simonetta de Filippis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- SCAL* *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books in association with William Heinemann, 1971.
- SP* *D. H. Lawrence. A Selection From Phoenix*. Edited by A. A. H. Inglis. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968.
- SS* *Sea and Sardinia*. Edited by Mara Kalnins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- SSS* *Sun-Selected Short Stories*. Edited by Nick Ceramella and Peter Preston. Napoli: Loffredo Editore, 1995.
- STH* *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*. Edited by Bruce Steele. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- TI* *Twilight in Italy and Other Essays*. Edited by Paul Eggert. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- WL* *Women in Love*. Edited by D. Farmer, L. Vasey, and J. Worthen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Letters of D. H. Lawrence

- LI* *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume I: September 1901–May 1913.* Edited by James T. Boulton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- LII* *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume II: June 1913–October 1916.* Edited by George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- LIII* *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence Volume III: October 1916–June 1921.* Edited by James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- LIV* *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume IV: June 1921–March 1924.* Edited by Roberts Warren, James T. Boulton and Elizabeth Mansfield. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- LV* *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume V: March 1924–March 1927.* Edited by James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Works on D. H. Lawrence

- ABL* Fussell, Paul. *Abroad: British Literary Travelling Between the Wars.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- ALC* Peter Preston. *A D. H. Lawrence Chronology.* London: Macmillan St Martin's Press, 1994.
- AMW* Eleanor Bertine. "The Alchemy of Man and Woman." In *Challenge of the Heart: Love, Sex, and Intimacy in Changing Times*, edited by John Welwood. Boston: Shambala, 1985.
- ATG* Mills, Howard. "'Full of philosophising and struggling to show things real:' *Twilight in Italy.*" In *D. H. Lawrence's Non-fiction: Art, Thought and Genre*, edited by David Ellis and Howard Mills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- DG* Ellis, David. *D.H. Lawrence: Dying Game.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- DHLN* Leavis, F. R. *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985.
- DS* Hough, Graham. *The Dark Sun—A Study of D. H. Lawrence.* Surrey: Duckworks, 1983.

- ER* Brandão, Izabel. “Lady Chatterley’s Lover: The Erotic Route Towards Home.” In *Il corpo, la fiamma, il desiderio: D. H. Lawrence, Firenze e la sfida di Lady Chatterley*, edited by Serena Cenni and Nick Ceramella. Firenze, 2008.
- LT* Coroneos and Tate. “Lawrence’s Tales.” In *The Cambridge Companion to D. H. Lawrence*, edited by Ann Fernihough. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- PDHL* *Paintings of D. H. Lawrence*. Edited by Mervin Levy, with Essays by Harry T. Moore, Jack Lindsay & Hebert Read. London: Cory, Adams & Mackay, 1964.
- PL* Moore, H. T. *The Priest of Love—a Life of D. H. Lawrence*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981.
- PNS* Michaels-Tonks, Jennifer. *D. H. Lawrence: The Polarity of North and South—Germany and Italy in His Prose Works*. Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1976.
- RP* Preston, Peter. “Roman Power: The Politics of Etruscan Places.” In *Working with Lawrence: Texts, Places, Contexts*. Nottingham: CCCP (Critical, Cultural and Communication Press), in association with the D. H. Lawrence Research Centre, University of Nottingham, 2011.
- SPA* *The Spirit of Place: An Anthology from the Prose of D.H. Lawrence*. Edited by Richard Aldington. London & Toronto: William Heinemann Ltd, 1935.
- STF* Hubbard Harris, Janice. *The Short Fiction of D.H. Lawrence*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984.
- TBE* Wood, James. *The Broken Estate: Essays on Literature and Belief*. New York: Picador, 2010.
- TDC* Roberts, Neil. *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- TE* Kinkead-Weekes, Mark. *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile 1912–1922*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- WwL* Preston, Peter. *Working with Lawrence: Texts, Places, Contexts*. Nottingham: CCCP (Critical, Cultural and Communication Press), in association with the D. H. Lawrence Research Centre, University of Nottingham, 2011.

Other works

- ACR Viano, Maurizio. *A Certain Realism: Making Use of Pasolini's Film Theory and Practice*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- BI *The Book of Italy. Under the Auspices of Her Majesty Queen Elena of Italy*. Edited by Raffaello Piccoli. London: T. Fisher Unwin for the Pro-Italia Committee, 1916.
- BND Le Grice, Keiron. "The Birth of a New Discipline." In *Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology*, vol.1, no. 1. (Summer 2009): 9.
- CFKM *The Collected Fiction of Katherine Mansfield: 1916–1922*. Edited by Gerri Kimber and Vincent O'Sullivan. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- CLKM *The Collected Letters of Katherine Mansfield*. Edited by Vincent O'Sullivan and Margaret Scott. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- FG Russo, Mary. "Female grotesque: carnival and theory." In *The Female Grotesque: Risk, Excess, Modernity*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- IE Hutcheon, Linda. *Irony's Edge*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005.
- PPP Rohdie, Sam. *The Passion of Pier Paolo Pasolini*. London: British Film Institute, 1995.
- SF Woolf, Virginia. "The Sun and the Fish." In *Virginia Woolf: Selected Essays*, edited David Bradshaw. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- TandE Frazer, James. *Totemism and Exogamy*. 4 Volumes. London: Macmillan, 1910.

INTRODUCTION

LAKE GARDA: GATEWAY TO D. H. LAWRENCE'S VOYAGE TO THE SUN

NICK CERAMELLA

“Life would have been a hundred times harder, if it hadn't been for this lake—”*



Fig. 3: Gargnano, Sep. 2012

* *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume I*, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 499. (Hereafter *LI*).

Lawrence in search of the sun

D. H. Lawrence's life can be considered both literally and metaphorically as a journey. In this respect the opening sentence of *Sea and Sardinia* (1921) is strikingly telling, 'Comes over one an absolute necessity to move.'¹ Indeed, this proved to be a compelling need that accompanied Lawrence all his life and, despite his poor health, he still found the stamina to travel all over the world till the end of his days in Vence, on the Côte d'Azur, in 1930.

As the title of our symposium—"Lake Garda: Gateway to D. H. Lawrence's Voyage to the Sun"—suggests, Lawrence began his life-long quest in Gargnano, in 1912. I have the great pleasure and honour to say that this has been the first significant international Laurentian gathering ever organised on Lake Garda, an event long-awaited by Lawrence scholars worldwide. The symposium was held in Gargnano on 20-23 September 2012 to commemorate the centenary of the writer's stay in that "paradise" from 3 September 1912 until 11 April 1913. Most importantly, the experience Lawrence had in that "pretty hole",² as he calls it in a letter to Ernest Collings, represents a turning point in his life.

At the time he was trying to escape from the moral conventions of England, while seeking for a freer society that he hoped he would find in Italy, which to his eyes was particularly close to the revitalising energy of the sun, seen as a crucial element to both the man and the artist. As Simonetta de Filippis has put it:

his view [Lawrence's] of a natural and spontaneous life, free from the weight of social conventions and above all free from the deathly conditioning of rationality and intellectualism, a view which is at the base of all his literary production, found its first precise formulation as a result of his initial contact with and reaction to life in Italy.³

There is no doubt that both the man and the artist benefited immensely from the Italian experience. Lorenzo, as they used to call him in Gargnano (see letter to his sister Ada⁴), enjoyed there one of the most fruitful periods in his life; and Frieda, in writing to Edward Garnett, referred to him as a

¹ D. H. Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7.

² Lawrence, *LI*, 468.

³ Simonetta de Filippis, introduction to *D. H. Lawrence and Literary Genres*, by Nick Ceramella et al., ed. N. Ceramella and S. de Filippis (Napoli: Loffredo Editore, 2004), 20.

⁴ Lawrence, *LI*, 538.

‘blooming artist.’⁵ In fact, in those months, besides starting *The Lost Girl* and *The Sisters* (later split into *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*), he revised *Paul Morel*, published as *Sons and Lovers* in 1913, one scene in that novel is of relevance to the sun theme of our symposium:

Once more she [Mrs Morel] was aware of the sun lying red on the rim of the hill opposite.

She suddenly held up the child in her hands.

“Look!” she said. “Look, my pretty!”

She thrust the infant forward to the crimson, throbbing sun, almost with relief. She saw him lift his little fist. Then she put him to her bosom again, ashamed almost of her impulse to give him back again whence he came.⁶

This gesture can be interpreted as if Mrs Morel meant to give her baby back to where she believed that he belonged to: the sun. Although the sun symbolism is present even earlier in *The Trespasser* (1912), it is clear that, by the time Lawrence was writing *Sons and Lovers*, it had undergone such changes as to be conferred almost a divine nature.

However, for the purposes of this Introduction, I would like to underline that the direct outcome of the Gargnano experience was his first travel book, *Twilight in Italy* (1916), where it is most telling that Lawrence uses the word *sun*, as many as 81 times, including compounds and the Italian equivalent ‘*sole*’ twice. Therefore, I believe that it is not incidental that from then onwards, Lawrence’s imaginative vision would be invaded by “the absoluteness of the sun”. He fell immediately under the spell of the Italian sun, signalling the impact of primitivism on his artistic production, marked by his travelling to the south of the world in search of a lost cultural and existential identity. But, as we know, before continuing this voyage, he and Frieda had a very distressing experience in England; they were accused of being German spies and were not allowed to leave the country until after the War. Thus, it was only on 15 November 1919 that Lawrence crossed the French-Italian border at Modane and went to Lericci for three days, where he enjoyed the peace and beauty of the bay, known as the Gulf of the Poets, so named after the great English Romantics, Shelley and Byron. It is from there that Lawrence wrote to Cecily Lambert:

⁵ *Ibid.*, 449.

⁶ D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers*, ed. Helen Baron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 51.

Yesterday Italy was at her best, such brilliant sun and sky...—I shall go further south—feel I want to go further and further south—don't know why.⁷

Indeed, it did not take long before Lawrence and Frieda headed south again and went to Sicily “where there is no autumn”,⁸ as he wrote in a letter to John Middleton Murry in 1924. On their way down, they stopped at a tiny village, called Picinisco, in the Abruzzo mountains, about which Lawrence clearly had mixed feelings: “Picinisco was beautiful beyond words, but *so* primitive, and *so* cold, that I thought we should die [...] We got to Naples, caught the Capri boat at 3.00 p.m.”⁹ But it did not take long before he expressed his dissatisfaction in another letter, reading, “It’s funny and sunny here. — But I’m sick of this island: a nice cats cradle of semi-literary and pleni-literary pussies. Oh my dear English countrymen, how I detest you wherever I find you!”¹⁰ He hated them so much that left for Fontana Vecchia, Taormina (Sicily) where he and Frieda stayed from March 1920 till mid-February 1922.

According to the wonderful “Flower” and “Fruit” poems that Lawrence composed there, it is undoubted that he loved Sicily for its revitalising sun. In brief, his time in Italy fostered many poems that embrace the sensuality of nature and the vitality of a sun that he followed in his travels in southern Italy. And behind his sensitively observant poetic images, he illuminates the complexity of human relationships with the intensity of that Mediterranean sun. It also inspired him also the short story “Sun”, written in December 1925 (published in 1928), which is set in a breathtaking environment. The protagonist, Juliet, flees to the sun, away from the dark and deadening atmosphere of New York. The contact with the sun offers her total relief from everyday anger and frustration, but in order to achieve that deep state of relaxation, she must surrender herself to the sun by exposing her naked body to its influence:

Something deep inside her unfolded and relaxed, and she was given to a cosmic influence. [...] she was put into connection with the sun, and the stream of the sun flowed through her, round her womb. She herself, her conscious self, was secondary, a secondary person, almost an onlooker.

⁷ *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume III*, ed. James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 416. (Hereafter *LIII*)

⁸ *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence Volume V*, ed. James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 143.

⁹ Lawrence, *LIII*, 442.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 471.

The true Juliet lived in the dark flow of the sun within her deep body, like a river of dark rays circling, circling dark and violet round the sweet, shut bud of her womb.¹¹

This passage is particularly significant because it relates to the sexual nature of her relationship with the penetrative power of the sun, corresponding to Juliet's sexual abandonment. This very aspect of the story finds a human personification in a Sicilian peasant, the true creature of the sun, who exuded extraordinary sex appeal from the first time his blue eyes met hers,

[...] and she felt the blue fire running through her limbs to her womb, which was spreading in the ecstasy. Still they looked into each other's eyes, and the fire flowed between them, like the blue, streaming fire from the heart of the sun.

[...] But now the strange challenge of his eyes had held her, blue and overwhelming like the blue sun's heart. And she had seen the fierce stirring of the phallus under his thin trousers: for her. And with his red face, and with his broad body, he was like the sun to her, the sun in its broad heat.¹²

And, finally, in Laurentian terms, she becomes a healthy woman in control of herself, who even when naked seems clothed by the "peculiar satiny gleam of the sun on her tanned skin"¹³ but she will not liberate herself completely and will remain bound to the social conventions of her world.

Although Sicily proved to be an extremely inspiring and reinvigorating place to Lawrence himself, he could not resist the compelling wish to keep travelling. Thus, the two-year-long stay there was interrupted by trips to other places like Sardinia, let alone the whole summer spent between Germany and Tuscany. It was in Tuscany that he wrote some of his most beautiful and heart-felt paeans to the sun, which sound almost like a hymn to our splendid star, seen as even able to overcome the fear of death, or rather death itself, to which the sun opposes its eternal light, "sunniness", as Lawrence calls it in one of his Tuscan essays:

In the north, man tends instinctively to imagine, to conceive that the sun is lighted like a candle, in an everlasting darkness, and that one day the candle will go out, will be exhausted, and the everlasting dark will resume

¹¹ D. H. Lawrence, "Sun," in *Sun. Selected Short Stories*, ed. Nick Ceramella and Peter Preston (Napoli: Loffredo Editore, 2nd edition 2004), 285. (Hereafter *SSS*).

¹² *SSS*, 288-289.

¹³ *Ibid.* 292.

uninterrupted sway [...]

But to the southerner, the sun is so dominant that, if every phenomenal body disappeared out of the universe, nothing would remain but bright luminousness, sunniness. The absolute is sunniness; and shadow, or dark, is only merely relative: merely the result of something getting between one and the sun [...]

We can think of death, if we like, as of something permanently intervening between us and the sun: and this is at the root of the southern, underworld idea of death. But this doesn't alter the sun at all. As far as experience goes, in the human race, the one thing that is always there is the shining sun, and dark, shadow is an accident of intervention.

Hence, strictly, there is no tragedy. The universe contains no tragedy, and man is only tragical because he is afraid of death. For my part, if the sun always shines, and always will shine, in spite of millions of clouds of words, then death, somehow, does not have many terrors. In the sunshine, even death is sunny. And there is no end to the sunshine.¹⁴

There again, though, Lawrence's critical spirit was never at rest; consequently, he was never long contented anywhere. On 26 February, the couple sailed off from Naples to Ceylon and Australia, eventually to end up by September 1922 in New Mexico by September 1922 eventually, where he wrote his third travel book, *Mornings in Mexico* (1927). It is evident the sun quest was almost an obsession by now, a constantly present element in most of his works. In fact, in this travel book too, there is a reference to the sun from the first page, almost as if it were the very reason for him to be in America: "Still, it is morning, and it is Mexico. The sun shines. But then, during the winter, it always shines."¹⁵ In a letter to Adele Seltzer from Mazatlan, he writes "Can you imagine how the sun blazes here!"¹⁶ Whereas, in the short story "Sun", Lawrence focuses more on the physical healing powers of the sun which help Juliet, thanks to sunbathing naked in the sun, to rediscover her body and regenerate herself.

But in New Mexico, the sun is different from the Italian one. It is red hot, and can also be the bloody sun of human sacrifices of the Chilchui Indians, a tribe of the American Southwest, living mainly in New Mexico and Arizona, and featuring in the short story "The Woman Who Rode Away", in which a Californian woman ventures on her own into the Chilchui's territory to look for their God. She is captured and is told that white men had stolen the sun from the Indians, and that white women had

¹⁴ "Flowery Tuscany," in *Sketches of Etruscan Places and Other Essays*, ed. S. de Filippis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 237-238. (Hereafter *EP*).

¹⁵ *Mornings in Mexico* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), 9.

¹⁶ Lawrence, *LIV*, 506)

stolen the moon from Indian women. Hence, in order to have the Indians recover the sun and the moon, she is to be offered as a human sacrifice. They seize her and lie her on a large flat stone while the sun is setting:

When the red sun was about to sink, he would shine full through the shaft of ice deep into the hollow of the cave, to the innermost.

She understood now that this was what men were waiting for. The black eyes of the aged cacique were fixed like black mirrors of the sun... Only the eyes of that oldest man were not anxious. Black, and fixed, as if sightless, they watched the sun, seeing beyond the sun. And in their black, empty concentration there was power, power intensely abstract and remote, but deep, deep to the heart of the earth, and the heart of the sun. In absolute motionlessness he watched till the red sun should send his ray through the column of ice. Then the old man would strike, and strike home, accomplish the sacrifice and achieve the power. The mastery that man must hold, and that passes from race to race.¹⁷

That Lawrence was overwhelmingly fascinated by that mysterious world is further stressed in his essay "New Mexico" where, after magnifying the beauty of places like Sicily, Calabria, Tuscany and Australia, he says:

But for a *greatness* of beauty I have never experienced anything like New Mexico. All those mornings when I went with a hoe along the ditch to the Cañon, at the ranch, and stood, in the fierce, proud silence of the Rockies, to look far over the desert to the blue mountains away in Arizona,... What splendour!... It is the most aesthetically-satisfying landscape in the world... Those that have spent morning after morning alone there pitched among the pines above the great proud world of desert will know, almost unbearably how beautiful it is, how clear and unquestioned is the might of the day.

Just day itself is tremendous there. It is so easy to understand that the Aztecs gave hearts of men to the sun. For the sun is not merely hot or scorching, not at all. It is of a brilliant and unchallengeable purity and haughty serenity which would make one sacrifice the heart to it. Ah, yes, in New Mexico the heart is sacrificed to the sun, and the human being is left stark, heartless, but undauntedly religious.¹⁸

Thus, Lawrence's search for the sun led him to discover the religiousness of the living cosmos and made him come across ancestral sun rites, which

¹⁷ "The Woman Who Rode Away," in *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*, ed D. Mehl and C. Jansohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 70-71.

¹⁸ "New Mexico," in *D. H. Lawrence. A Selection From Phoenix*, ed. A. A. H. Inglis (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1971), 127-128.