

THE FLUTE IN *AARON'S ROD*

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Lawrence did not explain why he chose to write a novel about a flute player and on the face of it this was an unusual thing to do since there were no significant precedents.¹ However, the novel's title alludes to a recurrent image in literature – the biblical Aaron's rod (first mentioned in Exodus 7:12), a staff which had exceptional powers and blossomed – which Lawrence develops by way of a fictional character named Aaron Sisson, who plays a flute which he calls a rod (AR 258).² This was indeed imaginative as the biblical Aaron was not associated with pipes of any kind, and there is no record of flutes having been called rods before *Aaron's Rod* (1922) was published. Lawrence invokes the biblical analogy explicitly on several occasions and the character Rawdon Lilly even refers to the flute "blossoming" (cf. Numbers 17:8).³ The limits of the biblical parallels are obvious: the fictional Aaron lacks both the eloquence and priestliness of his biblical namesake, and flutes do not blossom.

Few critics have considered the relevance of Aaron's instrument. For example, Eliseo Vivas suggests it "merely baffles" and is a "concocted [symbol which] fails to organize the story".⁴ Attempts to define the flute's role include the suggestion that it is an economic tool enabling Aaron to make social contacts and survive when he escapes from domestic unhappiness and workplace drudgery.⁵ And parallels have been drawn between Aaron's flute and that in Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte* [*The Magic Flute*] (1791); it being suggested that Lawrence may have begun the novel in the light of seeing the opera.⁶ Lilly's allusion to Aaron's flute as a reed, in the context of Aaron's character and development, has prompted the idea that the novel refers to the "vital powers of Pan",⁷ a god of nature who, according to Ovid, constructed the syrinx – mythologically the first flute – from reeds.⁸ But, although frequently referenced elsewhere by

Lawrence, Pan is never mentioned in this novel. On the basis that theologians connected the blossoming biblical rod with Christ's appearance and possible reappearance on earth, *Aaron's Rod* is sometimes thought to be about "Christianity's origins and decline".⁹ This argument is strengthened by the novel's opening on Christmas Eve, a time of birth and new beginnings. The Ovidian and Christian references have thus been conflated in a description of Aaron as a "Pan-Christ", while themes of resurrection and regeneration are perceived as integral to the novel.¹⁰

As the novel progresses, the flute repeatedly fades in and out of the action.¹¹ One commentator has recognised that it is "present and involved" at "major turning points in the novel".¹² There is more to this, however. The flute is particularly significant at the beginning of the novel when Aaron chooses a new and unclear path and again at the end when a new and unclear way of life is forced upon him. Aaron's playing repeatedly heralds new departures: he plays in his kitchen and leaves home soon after, he plays for Lady Artemis then leaves for Novara, then with Lady Franks before leaving for Milan, where his playing is heard by Francis and Angus with whom he leaves for Florence. The flute is thus symbolic of Aaron's rootlessness and changing fortunes. In this respect the story reflects a long-standing relationship between the flute and fate, to which Lawrence alludes when Arthur and Sir William stress the extent to which Aaron is guided by "Lady Fortune" (*AR* 169–70).¹³ The wandering Aaron of the novel is supported by the flute just as the rod supported the biblical Aaron, although there are other parallels here since Aaron Sisson also resembles the staff-bearing wanderer in Schubert's *Winterreise* (1828).¹⁴

Aaron's description of his flute as a "black rod of power" (*AR* 258) firmly associates the instrument with the powerful rod of biblical Aaron. The biblical rod had no sexual associations but, in the context of his affair with the Marchesa, Aaron's description strongly suggests that seductive powers may accrue from his "rod". Thus, the most frequent interpretation of the flute is that it has phallocentric significance.¹⁵ Such phallocentric readings, however, while credible,

stifle appreciation of nuances in the flute's symbolism and overshadow other ideas and influences which are raised in Lawrence's text and examined in the rest of this essay.¹⁶

The flute in context

Aaron Sisson is an early-twentieth-century colliery worker. Musical activity in colliery communities focused mostly on brass bands, which do not include flutes, so Aaron's instrument distances him from his workplace. Initially an amateur musician, he is "esteemed a good player", who is "in request at concerts and dances, also at swell balls" (AR 14), but then he becomes a professional flute player at the opera in London and subsequently an itinerant soirée performer.¹⁷

Lawrence places the flute within a broad spectrum of aural references. A backdrop of noise throughout the novel – laughter, shouting, gushing, clinking, banging, bubbling, singing, hissing, splashing, humming, rattling, ringing and jingling – is juxtaposed with the structured sounds played by Aaron. There are numerous references to composers and some to specific works, including operas such as Verdi's *Aïda*, Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina* (spelt "Kavantchina" [AR 136]) and Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. But for the most part it is unclear what music Aaron plays. Mozart's piccolo and flute music is mentioned but not specified (AR 14, 177). Elsewhere Francis says that Aaron is playing a Scriabin piece (AR 189). Aaron also studies Pergolesi, Scarlatti and Corelli (AR 210).¹⁸

Five French chansons traditionnelles are mentioned: 'Malbrouk s'en va-t'en guerre', 'Derrière chez mon père', 'Trois jeunes tambours', 'En passant par la Lorraine' and 'Auprès de ma blonde' (AR 255, 259). Most are military in origin and all became nursery rhymes with simple lyrics and melodies, which Aaron would have played extremely easily. When the Marchesa sings she avoids the burlesque 'Malbrouk', a song to which Lawrence had already referred in *Women in Love* (WL 92), choosing instead 'Derrière chez mon père', two stanzas of which are given.¹⁹

As far as is known, Lawrence could not play a flute. It is likely he acquired some knowledge of the instrument from Thomas Cooper, a flute-playing neighbour of the Lawrence family in Lynn Croft, Eastwood, and a possible inspiration for other features of the novel.²⁰ It was a period when developments in flute technology facilitated more subtlety in playing, characterised by the so-called French School,²¹ which Lawrence reflects in his descriptions of Aaron's playing – with “fluidity”, “like a bird singing”, “quick”, “wild”, “lilts”, “soft firmness”, “gliding” (AR 13, 227, 255, 256). Debussy embraced this lighter touch in the introduction, played by a flute, to *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1894), a composition which musicologists regard as the beginning of modern music, and thereby firmly cast the instrument as a harbinger of changing circumstances – as it is for Lawrence's Aaron.²²

Chiefly through contrast with the piano, the flute helps to define and develop Aaron's character. References to the piano are negative from the outset. Looking at the whole row of houses in his street from the shed in his garden, Aaron compares the blocks of light and dark to “the keyboard of a piano” and finds the sight of such close communal existence “revolting” (AR 39). Earlier he chose to play his flute, which is light and portable, in the warm kitchen (AR 12), while the Sisson family piano stands heavy, fixed and apparently unplayed in the parlour: “a cold and clammy room” reserved for social occasions (AR 41). Unlike the piano, the flute, like the wind that drives it, is not tied to place and is thus perfectly suited to Aaron, who “never went with the stream” (AR 14). Facilitating movement and independence, it is an entirely appropriate tool for Aaron, who plays “in sheer bliss” and “as an artist, not as an accomplishment” (AR 13, 220).

The subject of piano music arises in connection with the narrow-minded and self-satisfied Lady Franks, a product of society's codes and exigencies. She believes that chords (for the Marchesa they are discords) are superior to melody and argues that the piano has “more range” (AR 135; meaning more octaves and the ability to produce tones simultaneously). For Lady Franks, the flute is “just a pipe!”

(AR 136), and the dialogue at this point draws attention to the essential simplicity of the pipe. Aaron, whose instrument plays one note at a time, prefers “melody pure and simple” (AR 136), as does the Marchesa for whom one single pipe note is calming: “I can think of it quite, quite calmly” (AR 226). In contrast to the flute, the piano is a “ponderous, nerve-wracking steam-roller of noise” and the violin “a hateful, wire-drawn nerve-torturer” (AR 227). This association of piano and violin is significant. On these instruments string length and pitch are formulaic, but on the flute the size of holes and their positions on the pipe are not related to pitch in an entirely systematic way.²³ Unlike the piano and violin, the flute is metaphorically irregular, a characteristic which suits Aaron’s independent and unorthodox character.

The effect of the flute

With the exception of Lady Franks, most of the characters positively enjoy the sound of Aaron’s flute. This reflects long-standing folklore associated with the charm of pipe music. Among many possible examples, Plato mentioned that the flute (an aulos) beguiles and melts the spirit; in agrarian economies hunters used pipes to attract birds (the most famous example being Papageno the bird-catcher in *Die Zauberflöte*); animals are attracted to the flute (for instance the biblical King David calms animals and creates harmony with a flute);²⁴ and in folklore, the Pied Piper enchants both rats and children. In *Aaron’s Rod*, Francis is explicitly “enchanted” by the flute (AR 196), and the Marchesa becomes “still, and yielding”, there is “a natural relaxation in her soul, a peace”, and she enters a “trance” (AR 253, 254, 256). There are some notable musical precedents for this reaction in women: for example, in Handel’s cantata ‘Nell dolce dell’oblio’ (1710–15), Donizetti’s opera *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835), and in Ravel’s/Klingsor’s ‘La flûte enchantée’ in the song cycle *Shéhérazade* (1903).

Strikingly, *Aaron’s Rod* contains numerous references to the word bird/s and specific references to the hen, swan, stork, chaffinch,

sparrow, thrush, blackbird, owl, nightingale, peacock, and the imaginary phoenix.²⁵ And in the context of Lady Franks, Lawrence quotes Civilia Martin's lyrics 'His eye is on the sparrow ...' (AR 175), a Gospel song developed in part from Matthew 6:26/10:29–31 which refers to God being ever watchful and taking care of bird-like free spirits.²⁶ (Lawrence had elsewhere commented, reflecting Matthew, that "Birds [are] symbols of the spirit" [PFU 103], but whether he had a spiritual imperative for quoting Martin's song in *Aaron's Rod* or simply wished to illustrate Lady Franks's watchfulness is unclear.) The proliferation of bird references does however serve to draw attention to the well-known attraction exerted by the sound of flutes on birds. When Francis and Angus are attracted to Aaron's music, they are described as "birds" (AR 190) and when the Marchesa either cannot or will not sing, Algy suggests Aaron's playing might "call out the bird of song" (AR 222).

There is considerably more to be said about the references to one particular bird in *Aaron's Rod* – the nightingale. When Aaron starts to play, he produces "a clear, sharp, lilted run-and-fall of notes ... like a bird's singing ... an animate sound", like the "wild sound" of a nightingale (AR 227). The nightingale and flute have often been linked, on the basis of similar timbre. Beethoven, for instance, introduced a flute to represent a nightingale in the second movement of 'Symphony No. 6' (1807–8), and James Barrie connected the nightingale and pipe in 'The Little White Bird' (1920).²⁷ The nightingale usually sings unseen in the dark, and this characteristic is suggested when Aaron plays alone and unseen in the dark for the Marchesa (indeed Aaron tells Manfredi not to switch on the lights [AR 226]). Aaron playing in the dark and the Marchesa's reaction – she is profoundly moved – evoke Shelley's 'A Defence of Poetry' (1840) in which the nightingale "sits in darkness" and people are "entranced by the melody of [this] unseen musician" and "feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not why".²⁸

For the Marchesa, hearing Aaron's invisible nightingale-like performance, the sound comes "like a call-note ... telling her something" (AR 253). Its effect is sudden: her soul is soothed and, as

Algy hoped, the bird is called out. The bird allusion is developed further when she sings and the flute is "gliding along with her" (AR 256). Like the nightingale, the soprano voice shares the same timbre as a flute; hence the popularity of compositions featuring flute and soprano. When Aaron plays with the Marchesa he catches the "timbre of her voice" (AR 256). As she describes her voice as "contralto" (AR 221), the lowest female voice, this means she is a rare "soprano sfogato", a contralto who is able to manipulate her voice to a much higher register, to become a lyric coloratura soprano, some of whom became known as "nightingales".

When the Marchesa sings 'Derrière chez mon père' she proposes not to do so like Yvette Guilbert, a popular Belle Époque cabaret artist with a reciting style, but "like Trilby" (AR 255). She means like Trilby O'Ferall, the female character who sang 'Malbrouk' (among other songs) in George du Maurier's popular novel *Trilby* (1894), and who was played by Dorothea Baird in Paul Potter's 1895 stage version of the story.²⁹ However, it is not Baird that the Marchesa wishes to emulate. The explanation of the Marchesa's proposal is that neither she nor Trilby can sing until they are entranced. Both are entranced by male characters who play a flute (in *Trilby* the entrancer is Svengali, who plays a flageolet, a form of flute), both are associated with nightingales, and both enjoy commonplace songs yet become a soprano sfogato (Trilby is called "the greatest contralto, the greatest soprano").³⁰ Moreover, through her singing the Marchesa reaches a state of contented perfection similar to that reached by Trilby (AR 256).

Parallels emerge therefore not only between Aaron's flute playing and the song of the nightingale, but also between the Marchesa's singing and that of the nightingale. The shared metaphor evokes Milton's description of the nightingale as a bird for lovers,³¹ and reinforces the sexual undercurrent both of Aaron's flute playing to the Marchesa and of her reaction and participation. Presumably when Manfredi, her cuckolded husband, says he too "shall have to play [the flute]" (AR 238), he hopes to have a similar effect on his wife.

The Marchesa's love of singing, her initial inability to sing, and

her affinity with the nightingale cumulatively allude to the myth of Philomela.³² In the most popular version of the tale, the beautiful ancient Greek princess Philomela was raped by her brother-in law Terseus, who cut out her tongue to prevent her relating the ordeal. Unable to sing, she explained her story in a tapestry and, together with her sister Procne, tormented Terseus by feeding him his dead son. The sisters escaped by becoming birds (one a swallow and the other a nightingale). Aeschylus compared the sorrow of a nightingale's song with Philomela's woes, as did Roman authors, and Renaissance poets symbolically extended her misery by portraying her with a thorn in her chest.³³ Awareness, and dismissal, of the association between the nightingale's song and sorrow emerges in *Aaron's Rod* when, in connection with Aaron's flute playing, Lawrence writes "To read all the human pathos into nightingales' singing is nonsense" (AR 227).³⁴

The precedents of Ovid and Mallarmé

When Aaron first plays his flute, he moves with "the odd gesture of a diver taking a 'plunge'" and a "stream of music ... fluid ... poured out" (AR 12). This water imagery continues through the novel: for example, the words "bubbling", "pour", "drown", "float" and "wave" (AR 12, 18, 23, 41, 70) all appear in connection with Aaron and prefigure events in the penultimate chapter when Lilly tells Aaron to throw the damaged parts of his flute into the river. He says: "It'll grow again. It's a reed, a water-plant—you can't kill it" (AR 285).

In calling the wooden flute a reed, Lilly references Ovid's story about Pan manufacturing the original flute from reeds – the giant reed that grows in water margins in the Mediterranean basin and produces plumes of white flowers.³⁵ In summary, Ovid recounted that Pan chased a nymph named Syrinx who, desperate to escape his clutches, prayed to be transformed into such a reed. The reeds produced "a low and complaining sound ... sweet tones" so Pan cut them into different lengths and joined them, making a set of proportionate pipes, each

open at one end, which has since been called a syrinx in memory of the nymph.³⁶

The syrinx operates on the flute principle, whereby a tone is produced when air is directed onto the edge of a resonator, usually a pipe (an external edge in the syrinx and transverse flute, an internal edge in the recorder and whistle). This differs from the operation of instruments which produce tone by means of a vibrating reed (the ancient aulos, oboe, clarinet and saxophone), but Ovid's emphasis on sound being made by a reed resulted in reed instruments, which are not flutes, confusingly being considered flutes in much art, literature and archaeology (the Greek aulos is the prime example).³⁷ Texts available to Lawrence reinforced the confusion and he himself echoes it, since Aaron's concert instrument is impossibly called both a reed and a flute.

Aspects of both the reed and the flute contribute to the development of Aaron's character. When Lilly tells Manfredi that playing a flute would "run the risk of spoiling the shape of [his] mouth – like Alcibiades" (AR 238), he refers to the story told by Alcibiades, the ancient Athenian statesman, who said Athena discarded the flute (actually an aulos, an instrument which produced sound from a reed) when, seeing a reflection of her puffed and swollen cheeks, she realised the instrument distorted her face. Alcibiades despised it too, saying the instrument "closed and barricaded the mouth, robbing its master both of voice and speech".³⁸ The reference hints at the flute-playing Aaron's speech difficulties: he habitually "said little" and "even his deepest ideas ... were not word-ideas ... his very thoughts were not composed of words" (AR 164).

Having been constructed in a moment of sexual passion, the reed/syrinx came to symbolise natural but impure emotions. For example, it is a symbol of unrestrained passions in Poussin's painting *The Triumph of Pan* (1636); in the libretto of Handel's opera *Acis and Galatea* (1731), from which Lawrence quotes (AR 170, see also AR 321);³⁹ and in Wagner's *Siegfried* (1876) the hero makes a reed pipe in a state of emotional turmoil. Having a reed casts Aaron's lusty

enjoyment of Josephine and the Marchesa in terms of the natural desires associated with Pan, a casual matter of sexual gratification lacking spiritual commitment.

The contrasting spiritual aspect of Aaron's character is also related to his flute and to Ovid's story. When Pan made the instrument from Syrinx's transformed body, he exclaimed: "This union, at least, shall I have with thee".⁴⁰ He was expressing the fact that while her transformation made physical union impossible, the instrument's sound would enable spiritual union. In this tradition the flute was associated with heaven and the underworld. There are numerous examples; the Bible refers to the Holy Spirit piping with joy (Matthew 11:17; Luke 7:32), the instrument is the sound of blissful Elysium in Gluck's *Orphée et Eurydice* (1774) and Debussy scored an unseen flute – in preference to a reed instrument which would have been mythologically correct – to accompany the dying Pan in Mourey's 'Psyche' (1913). The spirituality/purity of the flute sound became myth and is evoked in *Aaron's Rod* (AR 13, 136, 227, 253) when Francis, appropriately, twice calls the flute sound "perfectly divine" (AR 189). The flute was thus an entirely suitable instrument to represent what many have noted as Aaron's alter-ego, as Christ-the-shepherd.⁴¹ Moreover, Aaron's adventures frequently occur in the dusk/darkness – relating a common perception of the spiritual underworld as dark – and this culminates in Aaron's dream of entering the underworld at the end of the novel.

When Aaron's flute is finally destroyed by a bomb, its Pan-Christ symbolism is also destroyed. He discards the remaining parts of his flute in water and, Lilly says, "It'll grow again" (AR 284–5). The scene is an extension of Ovid's tale which echoes Mallarmé's 'L'après-midi d'un faune', in which the faun similarly throws his flute – actually a twin-pipe aulos but Mallarmé calls it a flute – into water in the expectation that its reed will at some point flower again.⁴²

In Mallarmé's text, the faun's flute represents spiritual/intellectual endeavour: he wrote "les creux roseaux domptés/ Par le talent" [the hollow reeds tamed/ By talent]. And by

discarding the instrument – immersing it in water – indefinitely defers spiritual/intellectual fulfilment, allowing the faun to indulge instead in sensory pursuits. Only when those sensory elements of life are experienced and satisfied can the mind be drawn towards spiritual/intellectual realisation. By linking Aaron's flute to a reed – and thus combining its spiritual and passionate mythologies – Lawrence adopted an idea similar to Mallarmé's for a broader purpose: throwing the broken flute into water gives Aaron time to fulfil Lilly's prescription of self-contained self-enrichment. Lilly says the destruction of Aaron's flute is "an end" (AR 284), but actually it signals renewal. New growth is now possible for Aaron, a new beginning from which to explore the world in ways which over the course of the novel he has found difficult to negotiate. Only then can Aaron experience existential renewal, presumably play a flute again and be like the faun, who Mallarmé says "will wake again with new fervour/ Upright and alone, bathed in antique light" ["Alors m'éveillerai-je à la ferveur première / Droit et seul, sous un flot antique de lumière"].⁴³

Other features of *Aaron's Rod* also resonate with Mallarmé's eclogue. For example, the description of Aaron's music as fluid and Lady Artemis's comment that Aaron is able to pour himself down his flute recall Mallarmé's consistent association of music with water. It is water, and the all-important association of wood with water, breath and new life, which sustain both eclogue and novel. Moreover, Ovid and Mallarmé's emphasis on progress from the sensual to the spiritual, from metaphoric darkness to light, is reflected in *Aaron's Rod* in the idea of a black flute (AR 258) which has been consigned to a watery tomb eventually sprouting flowers, and in Aaron's underworld dream of the final chapter, which leads to self-enrichment.

Aaron's flute

Contrary to what many commentators have assumed, *Aaron's Rod* is a cleverly constructed novel and the flute emerges as an essential

feature. But what, finally, can be deduced about Aaron's actual flute? About this, the text says very little. While Lawrence's description of Aaron's playing alludes to the French School that adopted metal flutes, his flute is evidently made from wood since, as a result of the bomb, "it was split right down ... and a long thin spelch of wood was curiously torn off" (AR 284). Lawrence also says Aaron is "screwing [his flute] together" (AR 226), an expression which also appeared in du Maurier's *Trilby* and which is correct in the sense of twisted together, but misleading because the need for accurate hole alignment means flute joints never have screw threads. And Aaron's flute is black (AR 258). This limited description of a professional flute would nevertheless in 1922 have identified it as an instrument made from cocus, or the Jamaican Rain Tree (a now exhausted hardwood) which became extremely popular for the manufacture of wind instruments. Such instruments were deep brown in colour and turned black with age (hence the reference to Aaron's "black rod" [AR 258]). The Jamaican Rain Tree is hermaphroditic and produces yellow flowers sporadically after rain (hence its name), so Lilly's comment about Aaron's flute growing in water was in a sense correct, although Lilly refers to red Florentine flowers, not the yellow flowers of the cocus nor the white/pale pink flowers of the biblical almond rod. Lawrence's idea rests on a flute made from a tree which flowers in water having the mythological characteristics of an instrument made from a reed which grows in water. The allegory can only be faulted in so far as the biblical rod was made from almond which will not grow in wet conditions.

Given that all cocus instruments would blacken, and Lawrence's reliance on historical misuse of the term "flute", it is a matter for debate whether Aaron has a flute or, say, a clarinet or oboe (the modern successor to the aulos, the reeds of which have to be kept wet). The way in which Lawrence introduced nightingales, playing style, *Trilby*, Fortune, phallocentricity and entrancement support one option: the reed, Mallarmé, Alcibiades and water support the other. However, the balance of probability is that Aaron plays a flute, and almost certainly a cocus flute of the type made by Rudall & Carte

in London. These were the instrument of choice among professional players until metal flutes became commonplace. To protect the mechanism, these flutes were carried in a lined case, often with space for a piccolo. And the case, together with music, would have been carried in a bag. All these details appear in connection with Aaron's flute (AR 12). An image of one, in a case, is at Figure 1 below.⁴⁴



Figure 1: A cocus-wood flute.
Image courtesy of Jonathan Myall Music.

¹ Other notable references to flutes appeared in plays by Aristophanes, the medieval tale 'Pied Piper of Hamelin', Blake's 'The Piper' (1794), Hugo's 'Viens! – une flûte invisible' (1856) and Mallarmé's 'L'après-midi d'un faune' (1876).

² D. L. Jeffrey, 'Aaron', *Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmann, 1922), 1–4.

³ The poetic flowering of Aaron's flute has prompted its association with the mullein, a flowering plant commonly called Aaron's Rod (AR 313).

⁴ Eliseo Vivas, *D. H. Lawrence: The Failure and Triumph of Art* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1960), 23.

⁵ U. N. Srivastava, *Symbolism in the Novels of D. H. Lawrence* (Delhi: Parkash Chand Narang for Capital Pub. House), 1994, 187.

⁶ Lawrence saw Beecham's production with an English libretto on 14 November 1917 at Drury Lane (3L 181). For relationship with *Aaron's Rod* see Baker 90–1 and Susan Reid, "The insidious mastery of song": D. H. Lawrence, Music and Modernism', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies* 2.3 (2011), 109–20.

⁷ Jill Franks, *Revisionist Resurrection Mythologies* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 40.

⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Miller, Loeb, 2 vols (London: Heinemann and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), Vol. I, VI, 51–3.

⁹ Virginia Hyde, *The Risen Adam* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State UP, 1992), 124–40.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹¹ A manual count (subsequently supported by online counts using Project Gutenberg and iBooks) indicates that the flute is mentioned 79 times and on a further four occasions is called a pipe (two occasions when the word pipe appears but is not directly associated with Aaron's flute have not been included). The references are concentrated in the second half of the novel (70%), and a majority of references (over 58%) occur in only four chapters (12, 16, 18 and 20).

¹² Paul Geoffrey Baker, *A Reassessment of D. H. Lawrence's 'Aaron's Rod'* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1983), 95.

¹³ Lady Fortune is the goddess Fortuna, whose influence has been associated with flutes. See Ian Thomson, 'The Fatal Flute: the sweet sound of deceit and death', *Journal of the British Flute Society* 35.2 (2016), 44–6.

¹⁴ For example, leaving a woman in winter, going out in snow, the tree, lighted room and staff.

¹⁵ See, for example, Hyde, *The Risen Adam*, 124–5, 132.

¹⁶ The widely accepted phallogocentric interpretation, which has not been fully explained to date, rests on an association between the flute, the phallus and the rod. This tri-partite analogue is supported by three relationships: by the word "rod", which although not a slang term for a flute, was recorded as one for the phallus in 1902 (and was probably in common use long before that [*OED* 2001, 29]); by the fact that a flute tube is rod-like; and, most importantly, by the flute's association with the phallus. This latter

association is longstanding and derives from the suggestion of fellatio inherent in the image of a woman playing an end-blown wind instrument, an image which over time was transferred to the transverse flute. Early-eighteenth-century conduct books published in England, for example John Essex's *The Young Ladies Conduct etc.* (1722), considered end-blown wind instruments to look "indecent in a Woman's mouth" and directed women to avoid them. The phallocentric perspective, together with Aaron leaving his wife, have resulted in the book being "traditionally read as doctrinally anti-feminist" as reflected by Robert Burden, 'Gender Politics and Modernism: D. H. Lawrence's Fictions of Masculinity', in *D. H. Lawrence and Literary Genres*, eds Simonetta de Filippis and Nick Ceramella (Napoli: Loffredo Editore, 2004), 239. Lawrence also alludes to mythologies associated with other instruments, for example, reflecting the old idea that women are like strings by saying "a woman is like a violinist" (AR 107) and refers to the traditional role of trumpets as instruments of revelation in "a sudden startling challenge of trumpets" (AR 185).

¹⁷ In fact, flutes seldom appeared in dance halls as they lacked the appropriate timbre and amplitude (although there may of course have been exceptions where bands relied on talent available locally).

¹⁸ Carrying this music while wandering across the continent was a tall order and Lawrence may have had in mind the scores in small booklets which began to be published from the early-twentieth century.

¹⁹ 'Malbrouk' is about the Duke of Marlborough (Malbrouk) not returning from the war; perhaps the Marchesa rejects it because she is pleased her husband has returned from one.

²⁰ Harry T. Moore, *The Intelligent Heart* (Melbourne, London, Toronto: William Heinemann, 1955), 40.

²¹ Claude Dorgeuille, *The French Flute School 1860–1950*, tr. Blakeman (London: Tony Bingham, 1986), 16.

²² This *Prélude* is a symphonic illustration of Mallarmé's eclogue (see note 42).

²³ For a given note, manufacturers place holes in marginally different positions on the tube. The relationship between holes along the tube is called a scale (examples include the Cooper scale and Bennett scale).

²⁴ On David, see Theodore of Caesarea's image, ca. 11, British Museum f.189v.

²⁵ There are 25 references to bird(s) (excluding blackbird). This number was derived from both manual and online counts (see note 11).

²⁶ Civilia D. Martin wrote the lyrics in 1905; Charles H. Gabriel wrote the music.

²⁷ J. M. Barrie, *The Little White Bird* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1902), 188.

²⁸ Percy B. Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*: <www.gutenberg.org/files/5428/5428-h/5428-h.htm>.

²⁹ George du Maurier, *Trilby*, 3 vols (London: Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., 1894), vol. II part 6, 234–5.

³⁰ Ibid., vol. III part 8, 169–70.

³¹ “[The nightingale] with fresh hopes the Lover’s heart doth fill”: Milton, ‘Ode to the Nightingale’, *Poetical Works* (London: Ward Lock & Co., 1878), 345.

³² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, vol. I, part VI, 319–39.

³³ Lawrence alludes to the thorn indirectly when Aaron says the budding flute-rod – the means by which the Marchesa is weakened – produces thorns (AR 257–8). On the singing point, it was thought in former times that only the female could sing. There was contemporary interest in the myth: for example, T. S. Eliot referred to it in *The Waste Land* (1922).

³⁴ A perspective Lawrence shared with Coleridge: see John Worthen, ‘Lawrence and Some Romantic Poets’, *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies* 3.3 (2014), 11–22.

³⁵ Annette Giesecke, *The mythology of plants: botanical lore from ancient Greece and Rome* (Los Angeles: J Paul Getty Museum, 2014).

³⁶ See note 8.

³⁷ See the examples from Plutarch and Mallarmé that follow.

³⁸ Plutarch, ‘Life of Alcibiades’, in *Plutarch’s Lives*, ed. Bernadotte Perrin (London and New York: Heinemann, 1916), vol. II, 4.

³⁹ Polyphemus expresses many passions (“I rage, I melt, I burn! ...”) with a pipe made from one hundred reeds (a direct reference to Ovid’s tale): John Gay, Alexander Pope, John Hughes, *Acis and Galatea* (c.1718), section 14. The story derives from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, vol. II, XIII, 283.

⁴⁰ Ovid *Metamorphoses*, vol. I, VI, 53.

⁴¹ Hyde, *The Risen Adam*, 124–40.

⁴² Stéphane Mallarmé, *L’après-midi d’un faune*, Édition définitive (La Revue indépendante: Paris, 1887).

⁴³ Ibid., n.p.

⁴⁴ I am grateful to Andy Lamb (Curator, The Bate Collection, Oxford) and Robert Bigio, for their advice on this subject, and to Jonathan Myall of Just Flutes for the image.