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THE LEGACY OF D. H. LAWRENCE'S TIME IN CORNWALL

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It is widely acknowledged that Lawrence's experiences of the different places he visited throughout his life were crucial to his personal and artistic development. Yet biographies of Lawrence have all failed to notice the enduring impact on him of his expulsion from Cornwall in October 1917. Therefore it would seem timely to begin to address this omission. In doing so, this essay will also offer insights into Lawrence's responses to places he visited and the books he wrote between 1919, when he left England, and 1922, when he produced *Kangaroo* (published in 1923); the writing of which can be seen as a cathartic experience that finally allowed Lawrence to shed his "sickness" over his expulsion and to move on beyond his yearning for Cornwall.[1]

Lawrence was an unusually autobiographical novelist, so there is an inherent danger in conflating his life and fictional works, which necessitates caution. Nevertheless, there are many instances where the life and the work do merge and this is particularly true of *Kangaroo*, which Bruce Steele concludes "is in many respects thinly disguised autobiography" (*K* xxiii). More specifically, as Neil Roberts points out in his essay for this volume, the well-known 'The Nightmare' chapter of *Kangaroo*, which details Somers's experiences in Cornwall, does not conform to "Lawrence's conception of the novel as a 'thought-adventure' … in which he is genuinely uncertain how the narrative will develop" but is an example of his writing "in which he is revisiting the phase of his life when history pressed him most severely, and he knew all too well what the end would be".[2] The close proximity of Lawrence's own life to the account in *Kangaroo* of Somers's response to his

expulsion is also revealed by exploring Lawrence's letters and other writings, for example, *Sea and Sardinia* (1921).

Biographies of Lawrence invariably mention his forcible exile from Cornwall, but none accord it enduring significance. For example, Mark Kinkead-Weekes notes that by the end of October 1917 – just two weeks after his expulsion – Lawrence's "old psychic resource had begun to operate again. Letters and excited conversation turned to Rananim once more".[3] Andrew Harrison's recent biography notes the strong bonds that Lawrence had formed with Cornwall and hints that this turn to "fantasies of community and escape" was Lawrence's way of coping with his feelings about the expulsion.[4] Neither account suggests that Lawrence's expulsion from Cornwall had any lasting effect on his subsequent life and work.

However, Lawrence's writings reveal a different story. A month after his expulsion the War Office told Lawrence he would not be allowed to return to Cornwall, although no reason was given. Lawrence's reaction in a letter to Lady Cynthia Asquith reveals both his anger and his determination to return: "I am very mad, but not shaken. I *will* go back, voilà" (*3L* 182). Asquith's diaries note Lawrence's nostalgia for Cornwall. He, believing her to be sympathetic to his plight, thought her a useful ally because her father-in-law was the ex-Prime Minister; thus Lawrence repeatedly asked her for help to change the War Office's decision. But her sympathies were more mixed than he realised, as her entry for 16 October 1917 shows:

> It is hard for him. In Cornwall he lived so cheaply and healthily, and he will have to go on paying for the house there. His health doesn't allow of his living in London and all the money he has in the world is the *prospect* of eighteen pounds ... People should either be left in peace *or* interned at the country's expense. I promised to do what I could in the matter, but I doubt whether it will be much—after all, the woman *is* a German and it doesn't seem unreasonable.[5]

Asquith's comments also draw attention to the financial implications of Lawrence's exile, something that interests John Worthen in his account. Having previously set out the economic advantages for Lawrence of going to Cornwall, Worthen rightly points out the financial disaster the expulsion caused:

> The cottage was cheap and its rent had been paid until March 1918; because they lived next to a farm and grew their own vegetables, they also had cheap food. In London, they had no money to pay for accommodation; for the first time in their life together, they were homeless.[6]

Worthen's observations here also serve to highlight the significance of Lawrence's actions in April 1918. By then Lawrence's finances had improved a little, but were still perilous.[7] Nevertheless he sent Captain Short, his landlord at Higher Tregerthen, £6 to cover his rent arrears and the rent for the forthcoming year stating:

> I should like, if I may, to keep the little one, my first cottage, for £5. a year, and give up the others. Then if I come back, and the big house hasn't let, I can take it again. I should like to keep the little cottage furnished just as it is, and let it to friends in the summer, and have it for myself, ready, when this accursed business is over. (*3L* 235)

This letter clarifies Lawrence's plan to return to Cornwall once the War was over.[8] However, it was five months after the War ended before the banning order was lifted and, by then, Lawrence was planning to move abroad.

Perhaps surprisingly, Worthen's account also draws attention to what he sees as the positive aspects of Lawrence's expulsion:

> Yet the expulsion did have a certain enlivening effect. Life at Zennor had increasingly become a killing experiment in isolation; being 'wound up in a dreadful state of resistant

> tension' there was exhausting. Lawrence had been growing strange, describing in May 1917 that odd moment when suddenly he felt he was going 'straight out of my mind', while in September he had exclaimed: 'God, I *don't want* to be sane, as men are counted sane.'[9]

Worthen's observation here may allude to Paul Delany's argument in his account of Lawrence's war years, leadingly titled *D. H. Lawrence's Nightmare*. Like many critics Delany rightly notes the devastating effect that the War had on Lawrence, but in this book he explains his startling view that being confined in Cornwall contributed to a significant decline in Lawrence's physical and mental health.[10] This assertion could have originated in John Middleton Murry's memoir which alleges that during the autumn of 1916 Lawrence "was on the verge of a sort of insanity".[11] However, it is important to remember that Murry could not have had first-hand knowledge of Lawrence's state of mind at that time, as he left Zennor in mid-June 1916. Murry only lived next door to Lawrence for around two months in the spring of 1916; an unsuccessful experiment in communal living that prompted a split in their friendship, as reflected in Lawrence's comment to Catherine Carswell on 19 June 1916 that "Murry and I are not really associates" (*2L* 617). Furthermore, Murry was prone to making disingenuous claims.[12] Nevertheless, Murry's assertion – that living in Zennor was horrific for Lawrence and contributed to a breakdown in his mental health – has been repeated so often it has become an accepted version of events, which may have been compounded by critics conflating the pain of Lawrence's experiences of war in Cornwall with his experience of Cornwall. But that does not necessarily make it true. Furthermore, reading Lawrence's comments in context can offer a very different interpretation to the one Worthen indicates.

The first quotation, from a letter to Gertler, suggests that life is so difficult during the War that they all needed some respite:

> we need to go away, as soon as we can, right to a new scene, and at least for a bit, live a new life – you and Campbell and Kot and Shearman and Frieda and me …We live now in such a state of tension against everything – *you* are always wound up in a dreadful state of resistant tension. (*3L* 215)

Notably, Lawrence emphasises it is Gertler who is "wound up in a dreadful state of resistant tension". Lawrence's solution, an escape to some kind of utopian society, is an example of the coping strategy Harrison describes as Lawrence's "fantasies of community and escape".[13]

Worthen's statement that Lawrence acknowledged he was "going straight out of my mind" is taken from a letter to Catherine Carswell. It is sandwiched between two lyrical passages: a long one about the beauty of the weather and flora in Cornwall and a shorter one about his wonderful gardens in Cornwall, which he describes as "a triumph of life" (*3L* 125). Two short sentences describe how he felt when he had to leave the natural world and go indoors and type: "Yesterday I began to type out the 'Peace' articles – I want another copy – and I was recasting the second one. But suddenly I felt as if I was going dotty, straight out of my mind, so I left off". Lawrence's well-known love of nature and extreme dislike of typing casts doubt on this as a declaration of mental instability.

Similarly, when put into context, the last quotation Worthen gives – "God, I *don't want* to be sane, as men are counted sane" – also seems far from an admission of insanity. Lawrence' words are taken from an argumentative letter to Waldo Frank,[14] which starts politely, but then, as Lawrence works through Frank's points, becomes far more belligerent. We do not know what Frank said, but it prompted a characteristically vitriolic outburst, this one against the mechanisation of America:

> Do you think I imagine your Yankee-land Paradisal? – The last word of obscene rottenness contained within an entity of mechanical egoistic *will* – that is what Uncle Sam is to me …

> We shall disagree too much. – I believe in Paradise and Paradisal beings: but humanity, mankind – *crotte*! We shall disagree too much, from the root. Better let it be an Ave atque Vale – jamque Vale. – God, I *don't want* to be sane, as men are counted sane. It all stinks. (*3L* 160–1)

Lawrence's farewell in this letter marks the end of his correspondence with Frank; there are no further extant letters. Read in context, Lawrence's comment about saneness here would seem to be a riposte to the alleged "sanity" of America rather than voicing concerns about his own mental state.

Nevertheless, it is true that Lawrence and Frieda were placed under considerable duress during their time in Zennor. But if Worthen, Delany and others are correct in their assumptions, that living in Zennor had such a detrimental effect on Lawrence's physical and mental health, why then was he was trying so hard and for so long to be allowed to return there? For it was not until the end of December 1918, over a month after the war had ended and some fourteen and a half months after his expulsion, that, still banned from Cornwall, Lawrence finally conceded defeat and gave up the tenancy of his cottage at Higher Tregerthen. Furthermore, Lawrence's strong affection for Cornwall persisted throughout his life, as a letter to Koteliansky in August 1928 shows: "did Cornwall seem very spoiled? I've been thinking so much about it lately – I loved Cornwall" (*6L* 517).

Lawrence's sustained attempts to be allowed to return identifies Zennor as a place of particular importance to him, where, as he described in his letters, he felt rooted and envisioned himself living as "a nice old man of seventy" (*2L* 632). Undoubtedly, there is a large degree of romantic vision in this view. If Lawrence had not been expelled, or if he had been allowed to return, it would have been uncharacteristic for him to have lived in Zennor for the rest of his life.[15] In all probability he would have chosen to leave. But that is the crucial point; he was denied the right to choose. Lawrence's expulsion was a bruising encounter with compulsion; the mob

mentality and increasing power of the authorities, encouraged by the war, which assumed control over every aspect of a person's life and death. Such compulsion was something Lawrence abhorred.[16]

His letters to a variety of correspondents following his eviction are littered with protestations of his innocence, for example: "I cannot even conceive how I have incurred suspicion …We are as innocent even of pacifist activities, let alone spying in any sort, as the rabbits of the field outside" (*3L* 168). However, a letter to Catherine Carswell perhaps most clearly reveals his feelings: "On us too the skies have suddenly fallen" (*3L* 169). This indicates a calamity of immense proportions, foreshadowing Lawrence's description of the tragedy of war at the start of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). There he tempers the phrase with a more hopeful context: "We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen" (*LCL* 5). But in this earlier letter Lawrence uses the same phrase to vocalise the unexpectedness and the catastrophic nature of the event; his tone one of incomprehension and despair:

> On us too the skies have suddenly fallen. – Last Friday, police raid and search the house, and we are ordered to leave Cornwall ... It is all a nasty blow, and I have no idea what it can be about, or how it has come to pass. It comes from the *military*, but they refuse to say one word as to why this extraordinary thing has taken place.
>
> It is very foul – I hate London – God knows how it will all work out. But I am going to try hard to get back to Cornwall. (*3L* 169)

Shocked by this unimaginable event, Lawrence cannot see any clear path into the future; the only certainty is his determination to be allowed to return to Cornwall. But Lawrence's innocence was no defence. No evidence was needed. As Carswell put it, "Simply the Lawrences were undesirables".[17] It was this forcible exile from a place Lawrence regarded as a homeland that inflicted such a great hurt on him; the compulsion. Much later, Stanley Hocking accused

the vicar of Zennor of instigating Lawrence's expulsion, suggesting that if only Lawrence had gone to church everything would have been all right. But for Lawrence that would just have been accepting another form of compulsion.

Notably, echoing his own comments about Cornwall in his letters, in *Kangaroo* Lawrence suggests Somers has become rooted in Cornwall, which makes his exile even more painful; indicating that for Somers, as for Lawrence, Cornwall had become a homeland:

> Somers was determined to come back. Until he had made up his mind to this, he felt paralysed. He loved the place so much … he had begun to feel secure, as if he had sunk some of himself into the earth there, and were rooted for ever. His very soul seemed to have sunk into that Cornwall … And now he must tear himself out. He was quite paralysed, could scarcely move … And then, like a revelation, he decided he would come back. (*K* 245)

Nevertheless, on the journey back to London Somers is shown to be extremely distressed, is withdrawn and there is a clear inference that he is heart-broken:

> Somers sat there feeling he had been killed: perfectly still, and pale, in a kind of afterdeath, feeling he had been killed. … This was one of his serious deaths in belief. So he sat with his immobile face of a crucified Christ who makes no complaint, only broods silently and alone, remote. This face distressed Harriett horribly. It made her feel lost and shipwrecked, as if her heart was destined to break also. (*K* 247)

This description appears to be consistent with Lawrence's response to his expulsion; Carswell noting that whilst Frieda was "Voluble, argumentative and defiant to rudeness" Lawrence was "horror-stricken, but composed".[18]

Whilst Lawrence made "no complaint", others have recognised the immediate impact the expulsion had on him; Delany noting that "far worse" than the financial blow was "the moral shock of being expelled from the place that they had thought was a refuge from militarism and social disintegration. Lawrence simply could not accept the idea that his whole way of life … had been summarily destroyed by a power against which there was no recourse".[19] But only Frieda recognises the long-term damage this did to Lawrence in her later observation that echoes the suggestion of Somers's heartbreak: "When we were turned out of Cornwall something changed in Lawrence forever".[20]

Lawrence's hurt over his expulsion, and his enduring nostalgia for Cornwall, shape much of his subsequent work and offers an explanation for the significant change in his responses to familiar places and for the restlessness that pervades his life and work from 1919 until 1922. Leaving England in 1919, Lawrence travelled to Italy and stayed in places where he had been happy on earlier trips, but this time his responses were markedly different. This post-war visit was characterised by restlessness and disappointment, and even his longer stay in Sicily was punctuated by a trip to Sardinia to find a home. Previously Lawrence had been particularly happy in Lerici, but this time he stayed just two nights. Declaring he had "seen all the people" (*3L* 416), Lawrence travelled to Florence on the pretext of meeting Frieda. But as it was over two weeks before she arrived, he could have stayed longer in Lerici; it would seem he simply wanted to leave because he did not feel at home. Lawrence moved on to Picinisco, but swiftly left finding it "*so* primitive, and *so* cold, that I thought we should die" (*3L* 442). However Kinkead-Weekes perceptively observes "what was to become a difficult and permanent truth": "It was not merely the cold that made him want to move again".[21]

Nevertheless, during his two weeks in Picinisco, Lawrence did reveal his inherent restlessness in a letter to Irene Whittley, the daughter of Captain Short, his ex-landlord at Higher Tregerthen:

> I suppose we shall stay here for a time – don't know how long – don't know whither or whence. I am turned into a wandering Jew, my feet itch, and a seat burns my posterior if I sit too long. What ails me I don't know – but it's on and on ... (*3L* 435)

Lawrence reminisced about his time in Cornwall, asked Irene to send him news of Cornwall and concluded: "Ah well, but I was mostly happy at Tregerthen, and shall always remember gratefully" (*3L* 436). Their friendship and the holidays they shared together in Italy provided Lawrence with an important link to Zennor. But without any apparent cause, this friendship petered out in 1922, the year Lawrence wrote *Kangaroo,* perhaps indicating he no longer needed this link to Cornwall.

From Picinisco Lawrence travelled to Capri where his friend Compton Mackenzie lived.[22] Again, Lawrence could not settle and within days expressed a strong desire to move on:

> I get a strange nostalgia for I know not what. I stand on my roof and evoke so many gods, and look at the four corners of the winds, and begin to feel even a bit frightened, as if I'd got to the middle and did not quite know how to get out … I feel like bursting into tears, and begging Parthenope and Leucothea please to let me go. Aber wohin? (*3L* 446)

I suggest this nostalgia is Lawrence's unacknowledged yearning for Cornwall, to which he makes, perhaps unconscious, allusions. His question, translated as "But where?", suggests that he has no stability, no sense of a place of belonging, foreshadowing the images of instability and vulnerability that he offers in *Kangaroo*. For example, following the expulsion, Harriett describes Somers's anguish as making her feel "shipwrecked" and the final words of the novel emphasise the " broken attachments, broken" (*K* 247, 358).

From Capri Lawrence went to Sicily where he found resonances of Zennor, recognising it as "the Celtic land of Italy" with the

Celtic gods "Tuatha De Danaan" (*3L* 480) that he later portrayed Somers calling down from the hillside in Zennor (*K* 226).[23] This seems to have prompted a, perhaps unconscious, sense of loss. In a letter from Sicily, Lawrence uses the German word "Heimweh" to convey his intense sense of heartache (*3L* 480–1).[24] Lawrence's highly emotional state of mind is further suggested by the letter's disjointedness and by references to a painful feeling of loss:

> I feel I've reached my limit for the moment – like a spent bird struggling down the Straits. We saw a great V of wild fowl wavering north up the straits – Heimweh, or nostalgia then for the north: yet I am wavering south … I get a sort of Wehmut [a deep sense of melancholy] … perhaps I shall write here – If only I could care again. (*3L* 480–1)

Lawrence then temporarily moved to Sardinia in his search for a home and expressed this sense of being adrift, with no stable home, in *Sea and Sardinia*: "Why come to anchor? There is nothing to anchor for. Land has no answer to the soul anymore" (*SS* 48). For Lawrence, always so sensitive to place, the land had temporarily lost the meaning it once had.

As other critics have noted, in *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence clearly expresses his restlessness; Charisse Gendon observing that Lawrence refers to his trip to Sardinia as "the voyage of disillusion".[25] Antonio Traficante judges that "One could argue that *Sea and Sardinia* remains Lawrence's most powerful statement on the subject of homelessness",[26] whilst Harriett Cooper recognises how Lawrence's sense of displacement must have a more profound cause than his mere desire to find a spiritual home: "In *Sea and Sardinia* the narrator's desire for a homeland is relived time and time again. Critics continue to regard such disappointments to be much in tune with Lawrence's search for Rananim (utopia) but this fails to explain the sense of despair and hopelessness that pervades *Sea and Sardinia*".[27] Nevertheless, these critics are unable to offer a possible cause for Lawrence's feelings because they have not

appreciated the enduring effects of his expulsion. Therefore, they have overlooked the links between that event and the sense of homelessness and despondency which characterises *Sea and Sardinia*. When considering this, Mikhail Bakhtin's observations about travel writing seem especially pertinent: "First and foremost we have at the centre of the travel novel's world the *author's own real home-land,* which serves as organizing centre for the point of view, the scales of comparison, the approaches and evaluations determining how alien countries are seen and understood".[28] In other words, in travel writing, an author uses his/her homeland as a point of reference for experiences in other places. Therefore Lawrence's exile from his homeland of Cornwall is relevant to the restlessness that pervades *Sea and Sardinia.* Lawrence's lack of a homeland prompts his restlessness and despondency; although in search of a home, he is blinded to the attractions of the places he visits. For him, the land has lost its meaning. He is able to write detached observations of the places and the people he briefly encounters, but his restlessness belies any emotional attachment to them. Therefore, the sense of homelessness that critics have noticed in this text has less to do with the perfect home Lawrence was seeking, and more to do with the homeland he had just lost.

In *Sea and Sardinia*, Lawrence's enduring nostalgia for Cornwall is most obvious in his account of his visit to Mandas. Lawrence initially recognises a similarity to Cornwall, differentiating this place from the many others in Italy he had visited; Lawrence's tone conveys a palpable sense of excitement:

> It is like Cornwall, like the Land's End region … This is very different from Italian landscape. Italy is almost always dramatic, and perhaps invariably romantic … Perhaps it is the natural floridity of limestone formations … Sardinia is another thing …
> So we ran on through the gold of the afternoon, across a wide, almost Celtic landscape of hills ... Only the heath and scrub, breast-high, man-high, is too big and brigand-like for a Celtic land. (*SS* 71–2)

Having arrived in Mandas, Lawrence identifies the significance of granite to his construction of place. Mandas is like Cornwall because of the granite evident in both places; something he recognises as crucial to his psychic contentment:

> I could hardly believe my eyes it was so like England, like Cornwall in the bleak parts … There were several forlorn-looking out-buildings, very like Cornwall. And then the wide, forlorn country road stretched away between borders of grass and low, drystone walls, towards a grey stone farm with a tuft of trees, and a naked stone village in the distance … it was all so like Cornwall … that the old nostalgia for the Celtic regions began to spring up in me. Ah, those old drystone walls dividing the fields—pale and granite-bleached! … Strange is a Celtic landscape, far more moving, disturbing than the lovely glamour of Italy and Greece ... it is all so familiar to my *feet*, my very feet in contact, that I am wild as if I had made a discovery. And I realise that I hate limestone, to live on limestone or marble or any of those limey rocks. I hate them. They are dead rocks, they have no life—thrills for the feet. Even sandstone is much better. But granite! Granite is my favourite. It is so live under the feet, it has a deep sparkle of its own. (*SS* 81–2)

Perhaps inevitably, Lawrence's elation did not last. Already within the effusive description, "the gold of the afternoon", is the first hint of an unsettling truth; the landscape is only "almost" Celtic and the heathland differs from that in a Celtic land. The realities of Mandas quickly soured Lawrence's expectations of the place and he only stayed one day. Walking around the village Lawrence experienced a feeling of disillusionment he could not suppress; his tone is self-critical and the phrase "of course" hints that Lawrence is chiding himself for thinking Mandas could be a replacement for Cornwall: "It might almost be Cornwall: not quite. Something, I don't know what, suggests the stark burning glare of summer. And then, of course, there is none of the cosiness which climbing roses and lilac

trees and cottage shops and haystacks would give to an English scene" (*SS* 82). This hasty reversal of opinions seems to represent a more profound disappointment with the place than Lawrence is willing to explain. He concludes "the *depths* were barren" and that "There is nothing to do in Mandas", immediately planning to move on to Sorgono, which "we feel will be lovely" (*SS* 83). But this was not to be. The rest of the book details his recurring optimistic anticipation of new locations in Sardinia and his, perhaps inevitable, disappointment when he actually arrives. Having gone to Sardinia looking for a new place to call home, Lawrence swiftly decided that it was the wrong place. But in that period between 1919 and 1922 nowhere felt like home, nowhere could compete with his nostalgia for Zennor. Lawrence's inherent restlessness suggests that the problem was not so much with the places, but with his state of mind.

The unsettled nature of Lawrence's thoughts was something that needed to be addressed before he could move on. Yet, surprisingly for such a strikingly honest author who was usually unsparing in revealing his sensations, it does seem that Lawrence tried to suppress his emotions about his expulsion; indicating that his forcible exile from Cornwall was so painful that he avoided revisiting his feelings. We can see the results of this repression in the deep sense of restless dispossession in *Sea and Sardinia*, but Traficante draws attention to how other works in Lawrence's "middle period", for example *Aaron's Rod* (1922), "display a remarkable sense of the same kind of homelessness that is, on the whole, conspicuously missing from his early or later works".[29]

Whilst this reading illuminates the impact that Lawrence's expulsion, and his suppression of his emotions about this event, had on him, it would appear that, eventually, he could not supress his feelings any longer. Recalling his experience of Cornwall in *Kangaroo* seems to have prompted Lawrence to recognise the futility of repression; eliciting Somers's candid admission:

> He cared for nothing now, but to let loose the hell-rage that was in him. Get rid of it by letting it out. For there was no digesting it. He had been trying that for three years, and roaming the face of the earth trying to soothe himself with sops of travel and new experience and scenery. He knew now the worth of all sops.—Once that disruption has taken place in a man's soul, and in a stress of humiliation, under the pressure of *compulsion,* something has broken in his tissue and the liquid fire has run out loose into his blood, then no sops will be of any avail. (*K* 262)

This passage from the chapter '"Revenge!" Timotheus Cries' attracts less attention than the preceding 'The Nightmare' chapter, which is a pity, because this recollection offers a vivid insight into Lawrence's consciousness between 1919 and 1922.

It is generally accepted that the eruption of the 'The Nightmare' chapter in *Kangaroo* represents Lawrence's eventual expression of his repressed anger and humiliation over his medical examinations.[30] In this light, the "hell-rage" mentioned in the 'Revenge!' chapter (*K* 262) could be seen as part of that outburst. This passage follows a reference to Somers's third medical examination in Derby and is immediately preceded by 'The Nightmare' chapter which gives an account of Somers's two medical examinations in Cornwall. Yet a different interpretation is possible. Lawrence hints at this alternative explanation when Somers speculates that the "white hot lava" of his anger may have erupted because of "this contact with Kangaroo and Willie Struthers, contact with the accumulating forces of social violence" (*K* 260).

Whilst the medical examinations did bring Lawrence into contact with one form of compulsion, it seems to be Lawrence's portrayal of Somers's contact with "social violence" that stirs his memories of the *compulsion* he encountered when he was forced to leave Cornwall. It is this confrontation that haunts him. Understanding the trauma Lawrence's expulsion caused him then helps to explain his acknowledged and demonstrable sense of

homelessness between 1919 and 1922, his evident and powerful nostalgia for Cornwall and his repeated references to the pain of exile. All these powerful emotions can be seen as a result of Lawrence's forcible exile from his homeland of Cornwall, which, as Frieda later recognised (quoted above), caused a permanent change in Lawrence.[31] Notably, Frieda does not recognise the medical examinations as the basis of Lawrence's hurt.[32]

Therefore, I suggest the passage quoted above from '"Revenge!" Timotheus Cries' and also 'The Nightmare' chapter in *Kangaroo* were prompted by circumstances in Australia that finally forced Lawrence to confront his hurt about his expulsion. This is most likely to have been his encounter with some kind of compulsion – of mob rule – the very thing that Lawrence so reviled and that had driven him from his homeland of Cornwall. Whilst Robert Darroch has speculated at length on Lawrence's possible contacts with political parties during his time in Australia, [33] what seems to me of greater relevance is Lawrence's discussion of how the acceptance of seemingly benign compulsion can damage society; surely a warning about Fascism?

In *Kangaroo* we see a challenge to such benign compulsion in the chapter 'Willie Struthers and Kangaroo' which immediately precedes 'The Nightmare' chapter. Lawrence describes Somers's separate meetings with the leaders of the two opposing political parties who both, in different ways, try to compel Somers to accept their views. Struthers is very sensitive to Somers's ideals, even suggesting that Somers's thinking could form the basis of a new kind of religious revolution, a concept Lawrence also often expresses in his letters. Struthers also talks about other ideas close to Lawrence's heart: the love of male comrades as a new form of society and a high regard for working people. Having attempted to soften up Somers with this intellectual flattery, Struthers then offers him a job helping to run a twice-weekly newspaper he describes as "a sincere, *constructive* Socialist paper" (*K* 200). But Lawrence clarifies the intent behind this flattery; Struthers wants Somers to produce political propaganda to try and compel people to follow his

ideas. In short, Struthers wants Somers to join the mob. Somers reflects that “It all seemed so far from the dark God he wished to serve” and he declines Struthers’s offer (*K* 202). But this refusal makes Struthers more forceful – and Somers more resistant: “Mr Struthers watched him as if he would read his soul. But Richard wasn’t going to have his soul read by force”.

Lawrence then contrasts the attempted compulsion shown in this encounter with Somers’s voluntary shift in consciousness during his subsequent meeting with the Cornishman Jaz Trewhella. Somers, feeling that he has “escaped out of a trap” (*K* 203) of the compulsion associated with Socialism, but with no idea of a way forward, instigates the trip to the botanical gardens with Trewhella. The narrator distances himself from Somers, allowing Lawrence to emphasise Somers’s nascent and unformed consciousness: “Richard was like a child escaped from school, escaped from his necessity to *be* something and to *do* something”. There is then a shift to a different reality indicated by the men’s discussion of metaphysical ideas such as the fear that comes from recognising the emptiness of the Australian soul (*K* 203–4). This leads to a significant incident that could be construed as having homoerotic overtones. However, at the same time, close reading reveals that this is an important encounter between different forms of consciousness and shows the primary attraction that Trewhella – representative of Cornwall – has for Somers, a different consciousness:

> The eyes of the two men met. In the pale grey eyes of Jaz something lurking, like an old, experienced consciousness looking across at the childish consciousness of Somers, almost compassionately: and half in mockery…
> “Are you wise, Jaz? And am I childish?” Richard’s look suddenly changed also to mockery. (*K* 204)

The reference to eyes alerts us to the significance of this episode because of the emphasis Lawrence places throughout his work on eyes and looking as indicators of consciousness and the soul; here,

meeting Trewhella's gaze shows Somers the different form of consciousness that he desires. Although Somers is not yet ready to embrace such a conversion and the episode ends in mockery – itself a possible form of displacement of dangerous emotions – the significance of this episode is further accentuated by Lawrence's description of the day being "memorable" and of Somers's "alive, beautiful face ... his whole person seemed magnetic" (*K* 205). Somers's consciousness has been transformed, instigating his desire for the different, and older, form of consciousness that Trewhella represents. Somers has shifted towards a different world view.

In the meeting between Kangaroo and Somers that follows, Kangaroo is angered by the change in Somers that he realises has been wrought by Trewhella, and Somers encounters another form of compulsion that Kangaroo calls love. The two men heatedly discuss politics but, this time, when Somers refuses to comply with the other man's wishes, Kangaroo physically restrains Somers:

> Kangaroo caught the other man to his breast … Somers, squeezed so that he could hardly breathe … In those few moments when he was clasped to the warm, passionate body of Kangaroo, Somers' mind flew with swift thought. "He doesn't love *me*," he thought to himself. "He just turns a great general emotion on me, like a tap. I feel as cold as steel, in his clasp—and as separate … Damn his love. He wants to *force* me." (*K* 208)

Whilst it is possible to point again to the homoerotic nature of this encounter, what is also relevant is that Somers is reminded of the "*compulsion*" he – and Lawrence – experienced when expelled from Cornwall. Although Somers escapes from this physical constriction, Kangaroo then re-enacts the horror that Somers – and Lawrence – faced in Cornwall. Kangaroo first threatens to have Somers killed, then – echoing Lawrence's expulsion from Cornwall – orders Somers to leave Australia. Kangaroo has become the horrible, faceless mob that forced Somers – and Lawrence – from

their homeland of Cornwall, and Somers hates him: "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, close-eyed, horrible thing that was now Kangaroo. Yes, a thing, not a whole man. A great Thing, a horror" (*K* 211).

Somers escapes from Kangaroo, but Lawrence's description of Somers's fear at the end of that chapter, then develops at the start of the subsequent 'The Nightmare' chapter, into the fear that Somers – and Lawrence – encountered in the John Bullism of England and experiences in Cornwall. Lawrence's fictional portrayal of Somers's encounters with coercion would seem to have prompted Lawrence's recall of his painful memories of compulsion and expulsion. Thus, in this light, the "sops of travel" passage (*K* 262) seems to refer, not to the medical examinations, but to the far deeper pain of forcible exile and vocalises Lawrence's eventual realisation that he needed to address his hurt over his expulsion before he could move forward. That is the "hell-rage" that Lawrence needed to let loose, something that he did in the writing of *Kangaroo* (*K* 262).

This all shows that Lawrence's expulsion from Cornwall was a deeply traumatic event that had a profound and enduring effect on his subsequent life and work, a disruption that is an important, but often overlooked, legacy of his time there.

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[1] Writing to Arthur McLeod in October 1913 about *Sons and Lovers,* Lawrence explained one effect on him of writing: "one sheds ones sickness in books – repeats and presents again ones emotions, to be master of them" (*2L* 90).

[2] Neil Roberts, 'Time, Place and History in Lawrence's Travel Writing', in *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, vol. 4.3 (2017), 15–32, 24.

[3] Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile, 1912–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011), 412.

[4] Andrew Harrison, *The Life of D. H. Lawrence* (Chichester: John Wiley &Sons Ltd., 2016), 168.

[5] Lady Cynthia Asquith, *Diaries 1915 – 1918* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), 356 (emphases in source text).
[6] John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider* (New York: Counterpoint, 2005), 193.
[7] Lawrence's sister, Ada, had given him £20 and paid £65 for the rent of Mountain Cottage for a year (*3L* 240; Kinkead-Weekes, *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile,* 436). There had been gifts of money and Cyril Beaumont had agreed to pay £10 for the rights for six months to Lawrence's book of poems *Bay.*
[8] In May 1918 Lawrence wrote to Captain Short's daughter, Lucy, about his plans to return to Cornwall later that year (*3L* 244).
[9] Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider,* 193–4.
[10] Paul Delany, *D. H. Lawrence's Nightmare: The Writer and his Circle in the Years of the Great War* (Sussex: The Harvester Press Limited, 1979). The front flap suggests that in Cornwall Lawrence was "trapped against his will … in this tormented period which brought his physical and emotional health to the verge of breakdown".
[11] John Middleton Murry, *Reminiscences of D.H. Lawrence* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1933), 82.
[12] For a further discussion of this see Sydney Janet Kaplan, *Circulating Genius: John Middleton Murry, Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2010), 38–55.
[13] Harrison, *The Life of D. H. Lawrence,* 168.
[14] Waldo Frank was an American novelist and journalist who lived in New York. He was also the "editor of the American magazine *Seven Arts*, which in 1917 printed two stories by Lawrence 'The Mortal Coil' and 'The Thimble'": Delany, *D. H. Lawrence's Nightmare,* 302.
[15] Lawrence's recognised need for travel as part of his creative and personal development, together with his increasing necessity to live in places with a climate that was helpful to his illness, would seem to preclude him staying in the damp of Cornwall for any prolonged period.
[16] In *Kangaroo* Lawrence repeatedly draws attention to the evils of forcing people to do things against their better instincts, be it the rise of "John Bullism" or the growing powers of the Defence of the Realm Act; which made conscription compulsory and was, ironically, invoked to exile Lawrence.
[17] Catherine Carswell, *The Savage Pilgrimage: A Narrative of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Martin Secker, 1932), 98.

[18] Ibid., 98.
[19] Delany, *D. H. Lawrence's Nightmare,* 320.
[20] Frieda Lawrence, *Not I, But the Wind...* (New York: Harper Collins, 1983), 84.
[21] Kinkead-Weekes, *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile, 1912–1922,* 546.
[22] Mackenzie had strong connections with Cornwall, having moved to West Cornwall in 1905, not far from where Lawrence later came to live. Cornwall had a strong influence on Mackenzie's work and several of his books are set in, or refer to, Cornwall including *Sinister Street,* a novel Lawrence read in 1914.
[23] In Irish-Celtic mythology Tuatha De Danaan are an Irish race of gods who perfected the use of magic. They were driven to the underworld where they still live as invisible beings but will return to fight alongside mortals in a just fight. Cornwall was the only Celtic country Lawrence visited, but he seems to have conflated sources, possibly from Yeats and the Celtic Twilight, or from Cornish folklore that is entwined with Irish mythology; for example, in the Zennor area, many Cornish saints and notable mythological figures such as Jack the Tinner are believed to have originated from Ireland.
[24] Lawrence's use of German words should alert us to the intensity of his emotions: "Heimweh" should convey more pain and longing than "home-sickness", connoting a deep ache in one's heart akin to woe and grief.
[25] Charisse Gendron, '*Sea and Sardinia*: Voyage of the Post-Romantic Imagination', *D. H. Lawrence Review,* 16:2–3 (1985/6), 219–33, 221.
[26] Antonio Traficante, *D. H. Lawrence's Italian Travel Literature and Translations of Giovanni Verga: A Bakhtinian Reading* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 55.
[27] Ibid., 56.
[28] Ibid., 130. From Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination,* trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: U of Texas P, 1990), 103 (original emphasis).
[29] Ibid., 55.
[30] Lawrence underwent three medical examinations to see if he was fit for military service, two in Cornwall in 1916 and 1917 and one in Derby in 1918.
[31] Lawrence, *Not I, But the Wind...* (New York: Harper Collins, 1983), 84.

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[32] Strikingly, in his lengthy accounts of Lawrence in Cornwall, Murry does not mention that Lawrence had any lasting problems arising from the medical examinations.

[33] Robert Darroch, *D. H. Lawrence's 99 Days in Australia: Vol. I The Quest for Cooley and Vol. II The Silvery Freedom & The Horrible Paws* (Royal Exchange, NSW: ETT imprint, 2016).