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**NEW LONDON POET:
D. H. LAWRENCE'S "TOWN" POEMS AND THEIR
WARTIME VERSIONS**

HOLLY A. LAIRD

To use a phrase of literary slang I have tried to “get the atmosphere” of modern London – of the town in which I have passed so many days; of the immense place that has been the background for so many momentous happenings to so many of my fellows. A really ideal book of the kind would not contain “writing about” a town: it would throw a personal image of the place on to the paper. It would not contain such a sentence as: “There are in the city of — 720 firms of hat manufacturers employing 19,000 operatives.” Instead there would be a picture of one, or two, or three hat factories, peopled with human beings, where slow and clinging veils of steam waver over vats and over the warm felt on cutters’ slabs. And there would be conveyed the idea that all these human beings melt, as it were, into the tide of humanity as all these vapours melt into the overcast skies.

(Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Soul of London*)¹

Ford Madox Hueffer heralded D. H. Lawrence’s arrival on the publishing scene as that of a fresh working-class and regional voice, going so far as to dub him representative of “the other ninety-nine hundredths”.² Yet it would have been nearly as accurate to characterise him as a new London poet. A city composed as much of “provincial immigrants” as of “the born Londoner”, as Hueffer says in *The Soul of London* (1905), this “assimilative” city gradually turned a young man, “raw and ready to quiver at every sensation, super-sensitised to every sensation”, temporarily, into a Londoner.³ In Volume III of the Cambridge Edition of *The Poems*,

Christopher Pollnitz confirms earlier chronological listings of the poems (such as John Worthen's)⁴ that date fewer than twenty-five manuscript poems prior to Lawrence's arrival in Croydon in the autumn of 1908 (*3Poems* xxx–xxxiv), and that the great majority of early manuscript poems were drafted between 1909 and 1911. These include at least forty pieces specifically in or about life in Croydon and London.

In search of a job that would pay more than his father's as a miner, Lawrence landed a teaching position in October 1908 at the new Davidson Road School, Croydon. Here Lawrence found himself, as Worthen notes, "only a short bus or train journey away" from the heart of London,⁵ where the literary world excited his interest as a writer.⁶ In the following year, Jessie Chambers advised Lawrence to submit poems to Hueffer's new little magazine, the *English Review*, and a positive response arrived by August 1909.⁷ In September, Lawrence met Hueffer, and in November 1909 the twenty-four-year old Lawrence found himself a published poet. This marked the beginning of Lawrence's professional career in London, where he lived from 1908 to 1911.

During the same period, numerous poems were also written while back in Eastwood or in holiday locations, and, as the manuscript versions show, not only the city, but the comparison of London with regional England, stirred his imagination. The comparison between "northern" life and the life of "the town" (as both Hueffer and Lawrence referred to London) becomes a dynamic, constitutive structure of this verse. In the poetry, Lawrence reflects the advice of Hueffer's *The Soul of London*, not to "writ[e] about" the town as an autonomous sociological entity but instead to "throw a personal image of the place onto paper", capturing the "melt" of human beings "into the tide of humanity" in the London "atmosphere" (see the epigraph above). Not that his poetry meets Hueffer's "ideal" for writing about London. Lawrence brings the eye, not only of the impressionist painter that Hueffer's verbal portrait evoked, but also of a narrator. Unlike Hueffer's, Lawrence's focus is usually not indoors: it is outside in the

“lemoncoloured” lamp-lit streets amid the “laugh[ing]” or “hastening” cars, abutting the great beast-like “dreadful panther” of the Thames (*3Poems* 1451, 1665, 1694; Ferrier No. 115).⁸ In his earliest drafts, Lawrence is seeing London not only through analogies to nature: he finds nature in and of the city.

The manuscript evidence shows how central a preoccupation London was for him as an emerging poet. The earliest extant drafts for the poems set in Croydon and London are found in the two college notebooks that date from these years (MS 1/E317 and MS 6/E320.1).⁹ Here he began to develop the various diptychs (under varying titles) that he later republished in his 1928 *Collected Poems* under the following titles: ‘Letter from Town: On a Grey Morning in March’ and ‘Letter from Town: The Autumn Tree’, ‘Hyde Park at Night’ and ‘Piccadilly Circus’, ‘Embankment at Night, Before the War: Outcasts’ and ‘Embankment at Night, Before the War: Charity’.¹⁰ As late as the spring of 1911, he was writing more London poems, including a nine-poem sequence ‘Transformations’ set primarily in London:

- ‘1. Evening’ (later, ‘Parliament Hill in the Evening’)
- ‘2. Morning’ (‘Flat Suburbs, S.W., in the Morning’)
- ‘3. Men in the Morning’ (‘Morning Work’)
- ‘4. The Inanimate that Changes not in Shape’:
 - [a] ‘O stiffly shapen houses that change not’ (‘Suburbs on a Hazy Day’)
 - [b] ‘The Town’ (‘Transformations: I. The Town’)
 - [c] ‘The Earth’ (‘Transformations: II. The Earth’)
- ‘5. The Changeful Animate, Men: Whose Shape is Animate’ (‘Transformations: III. Men’)
- ‘6. Corot’ (‘Corot’)
- ‘7. Raphael’ (‘Michael-Angelo’)¹¹

Multiple drafts appear in and across the notebooks for most of these poems as well as among documents mailed to his editor Edward Garnett.

During the First World War, when Lawrence returned to his juvenilia to revise them for publication in *New Poems* (1918), rather than editing out the city, he sharpened the focus on it. After publishing his elegies for his mother in *Amores* (1916) – of which only two refer explicitly to the city, although in others a city setting might be inferred¹² – and the poems about Frieda in *Look! We have Come Through!* (1917), he set about gathering two smaller books, the first tentatively titled *In London*, the second *Choir of Women* (3L 254–5). Ultimately, he combined the two potential groups to produce a single book, initially called *Coming Awake*, but subsequently changed by his editor to *New Poems* – a title that struck Lawrence as misleading since some of the poems had first been drafted nearly a decade earlier and few were recent (3L 254, 277, 291). He revised these poems for publication in *New Poems* in autumn 1918 and left them nearly untouched when he revised his verse again for his *Collected Poems* in 1928.¹³

These fresh 1918 versions retained Lawrence's "personal image" of the "atmosphere" of London found in the earliest drafts (to invoke Hueffer once again). Together with the famous preface, 'Poetry of the Present' – written in August 1919 (before he left England) – they represented a poetry about "the present" both through their emphasis on the momentaneousness of modern London and through their written enactments in the present tense. Taking advantage of the republication of *New Poems* in a second, American edition in 1920, Lawrence accented the "new" by opening this edition with a Preface that proclaimed,

There must be the rapid momentaneous association of things which meet and pass on the forever-incalculable journey of creation: everything left in its own rapid, fluid relationship with the rest of things.

This is the unrestful, ungraspable poetry of the sheer present, poetry whose very permanency lies in its wind-like transit. Whitman's is the best poetry of this kind. Without beginning and without end, without any base and pediment, it sweeps past

forever, like a wind that is forever in passage, and unchainable.
(*IPoems* 647)¹⁴

This is not to say that the “town” poems embody the Whitmanesque aesthetic endorsed in that preface; nor do they do more than hint at Lawrence’s subsequent development of a fresh poetic idiom distinctly his own in *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (1923). But his eye in the city poems, even in their earliest drafts, is either on the present or on what the present bodes for the future, and glimmers of the fluidity of free verse appear in many of them. Although he also sends backward glances aplenty toward the north country and occasionally literally returns home, he abjures these as lodestones around his neck, rejecting his northern home for his current, London life.

Thus, while my emphasis falls here on the earliest extant versions more than on their revisions, I also attend to the ways Lawrence’s wartime rewriting highlighted the town poems. The argument of this essay supplements my earlier analyses of Lawrence’s revisionary sequencing of his juvenilia for the books of 1916–19 by excavating the history of Lawrence’s published London poems, beginning with ‘Dreams Old and Nascent’ (1909), then considering the earliest manuscript drafts of 1909–11.¹⁵ I focus here on the explicitly located early verse – drawing these both from the three-volume Cambridge Edition of *The Poems* and from Carole Ferrier’s unpublished variorum edition of the *Collected Poems* (see note 8). The afterlives of the early versions of town poems, revised during the war years when Lawrence was unable to leave England and when he occasionally returned to London, are reconsidered in the last section of this essay. These poems re-emerged in two books, *New Poems* and *Bay* (1920), in which he envisaged the city as a molten mix of organic, natural things with the inorganic and man-made, becoming explosive in some poems, and reflecting a more apocalyptic view in his war verse.

In the earliest versions of Lawrence’s London verse, the city is transformative, and urbanisation is rarely set in opposition to

nature; on the contrary, they mingle, whether as positive or negative sites for the poet's meditation. The dual imageries in this verse combine to speak of excitement and change, misery and relief, angst and uncertainty – or of the situation of a modern man in between. In later years, Lawrence developed a reputation as a powerful voice against machine-age systems and thought, but as late as the War years, he was immersed in and amplifying this figuration of the city, locating in his London poems moments of transformation, both destructive and re-creational, registering alternating episodes of agony and antidote – or momentarily apocalyptic “coming awake” (as in the title of one of his *New Poems* that at one point also suggested the title of the collection).

The 1909–1911 versions of the London poems

Although Lawrence's then-unknown name was omitted from the cover of the November 1909 *English Review*, listing its contents, his verse opens the issue under this heading: ‘Modern Poetry // A Still Afternoon / By D. H. Lawrence / Dreams Old and Nascent’.¹⁶ Setting the scene in this first publication, Lawrence writes of himself as a city schoolteacher, pausing to lean on the window sill and absorb the city world outside:

The clink of the shunting engines is sharp and fine
Like savage music striking far off; and away
On the uplifted blue Palace, light pools stir and shine
Where the glass is domed up the blue, soft day. (*3Poems* 1419)

The “engines” sound “fine” and “savage” – the latter term hinting at the modernist revaluation of primitivism for which Lawrence would also become known. He sees, as if in an earthly vision, the “light pool[ing]” in the dome of the famed Crystal Palace and in the 1928 revision locates this sight still more explicitly in “Sydenham” (*1Poems* 22).

Critics have frequently noted the critical shift in ‘Dreams Old and Nascent’ marked by the dyadic division of ‘I. OLD’ and ‘II. NASCENT’, suggesting that the whole of ‘Old’ amounts to no more than a pleasant, nostalgic dream. Upon becoming stifling, constricting and imprisoning, that old dream breaks into unrhyming Whitmanesque verse in Part II as befits a more modern poet of the “nascent”. As Christopher Pollnitz explains, Lawrence’s actual development as a poet was far less abrupt than this divide suggests since he continued to experiment with a wide range of verse forms after 1909, including the Whitmanesque (*3Poems* lxxxix). A closer look at ‘Dreams Old’ also yields a more nuanced view, especially of its location in the city. Technological industrial development has made this vision possible, and nothing necessarily negative taints the imagery even in the above-quoted line, where the glass itself “domed up the blue, soft day”. (Nor is the Crystal Palace, designed in 1850, “older” than, for example, the railroad trains that energise the young Lawrence in the town poems.) In the next section (still in ‘Dreams Old’), he springs instantly from this sight to the mix of “wonder[ful]” feelings it evokes:

There lies the world, my Darling, full of wonder, and
wistfulness, and strange
Recognitions and greetings of half-acquaint things, as I greet the
cloud
Of blue Palace aloft there ... (*3Poems* 1419)

“Old dreams” do emerge, however, precisely where “I greet the cloud / Of blue Palace”, dragging the poet to the “back “of his “life’s horizon” (*3Poems* 1419). As in the better-known ‘Piano’, where a woman’s song “Betrays” the poet “back ... / To the old Sunday evenings at home” (*1Poems* 108), here “among the misty indefinite dreams” of the cityscape “dreams from the past lives crowd” (*3Poems* 1419). In the next two sections, as he “Drifts ... wistfully lapsing after / The mists of receding tears, and the echo of laughter”, the “world” becomes a “painted fresco” of “old

ineffectual lives" and "An endless tapestry the past has woven" to "compel" his "soul to conform" (*3Poems* 1420).

With Part II of this narrative, 'Dreams Old and Nascent: II. Nascent', Lawrence announces a paradigm shift, as it were, in his "dreams", as if embracing this new phase in his vocation as a poet and, along with it, a step forward in his poetics in developing a free-verse style. As in Yeats's later poem 'A Coat' (1912), Lawrence depicts the mental space in which Part I's vision of the world as a Dickensian childhood romance – knit, as Yeats puts it, with "embroidered" myths – has grown "old" and fallen into the hands of "fools".¹⁷ For Lawrence, the old world is akin to Yeats's "fools" of "conform[ity]" – "as though", in Yeats's phrasing, others "had wrought it"; his own crowded memories also are such "fools". Much as Yeats would declare his intention in 'A Coat' to "walk naked", Lawrence turns from his "old dreams" to a vision of mankind as it is, in the city. Shifting to the sight, more specifically, of masses of men and boys (Lawrence taught as many as sixty at a time [*IL* 93]), Lawrence re-envisions them in his freer verse, moving and changing before his eyes, breaking him out of the past to issue into a living present, both in and outside of a city classroom.¹⁸

When Lawrence republished these two poems in *Amores* (1916), the imagery of the second became an important conceit of that volume: drawing on the figure of the smelter, he represents life as a process of shaping and being shaped, as steel is molten and reshaped. He would already have been aware of this process as a young boy in mining country, but he has left that past behind in this poem, and (still citing the *English Review* version of 1909) city life "stir[s]" him, passing before his eyes: "Fluent active figures of men pass along the railway. / ... mov[ing] / Out of the distance, nearer" (*3Poems* 1420). "Here", not in "old dreams", "Beats the active ecstasy". "[I]n the rounded flesh", not mere memory, "new dreams" are generated with "The power of the melting, fusing force" (*3Poems* 1420–1). In this imagery, Hueffer's impressionistic, gentle "vapours melt[ing]" (see my epigraph) are themselves transformed

into something fiercer through the physical energy of “fus[ion]”. The trope of molten metal is nonetheless simultaneously transmuted into one of nature: “shaping a bud into blossom, / The whole teeming flesh of mankind” (3*Poems* 1421).

Like Yeats (whom Lawrence met in London in 1909) breaking in his 1912 poem from an ornate, late-Victorian style to adopt a more modern sparseness and more colloquial rhetoric, Lawrence was already turning in 1909 from a more metrically regular and rhyming verse to a more fluid, Whitmanesque rhythm and language. As Pollnitz explains in an essay on Lawrence’s verse forms, “Discussing his poems with Hueffer in September probably led Lawrence to restore the early balance of stanzaic and free verse in ‘Dreams Old and Nascent [2]’, the version that opened the November 1909 number of the *English Review*”.¹⁹ The rising rhetoric of this “ecsta[tic]” poem culminates with the imagery of metal, flower and mankind interfused.

Lawrence was inspired again by a mass of men when he recorded the changing of the guard in another 1909 poem.²⁰ ‘The Review of the Scots Guards’ (3*Poems* 1417; ‘Guards! / A Review in Hyde Park, 1910’ in 2*Poems* 842) forms the finale to five ‘Movements’ in the first college notebook (and follows Jessie Chambers’s handwritten copy of ‘A Still Life’).²¹ A review of that centuries-old branch of the British army could (and can) only be witnessed in the streets of London. Lawrence sets this scene amid “trees [that] rise like cliffs, proud and blue tinted in the distance” and paints the guard as a thing of nature (3*Poems* 1417; Ferrier No. 34). Though at first this “great host of soldiers” stands utterly “still” – a “still line of red / With the black line of busbies above, and the grey sharp slant of steel / Etched over the busbies” – that “etch[ing]” of soldiers “stir[s]” (as in ‘Dreams Nascent’), “and the mass breaks ... / Softly swaying, moving, breaking the still red line / Changing and flowing apart and coming together like waters”. Much as the “I” in ‘Dreams Old’ was entranced by the domed blue sky and distant horizon, these soldiers have fallen “Under the spell of a scarlet sunset”, and, as the “I” is “stir[red]” by the navvies in

'Dreams Nascent', the prompting of a "gaily" "canter[ing]" general "breaks" his men into movement: "Suddenly, as the blood stirs awake at the sight of a woman".

Preceding Chambers's copy of 'A Still Life' in Lawrence's college notebook are drafts of 'Letter from Town: The City' ('Letter from Town: On a Grey Morning in March') and 'Letter from Town: The Almond Tree'.²² The last three stanzas of the former analogises these two male masses (of soldiers and navvies) and sets them in favourable comparison with his correspondent's farm-life. "You have the white lambs lying among the daisies in the grass / And the warm calves in the shed—and the peewits swerve after the plough", he writes, while "I have a hundred navvies working in the road", and he "Linger[s] to search out the wonder of life on every brow" (Ferrier No. 26). Presumably quoting a prior letter (from his addressee) to him in the last stanza's first line, "'There are hosts of king-cups along the bottom brook'", he replies, "Ah, but there's a regiment of soldiers marching in music by / With communicative ecstatic bodies and startling eyes that look / Under the busbies". Like 'Dreams Nascent' and 'The Review of the Scots Guards', this version of the poem offers unreserved tribute to a potent, masculine life in London.

'Letter from Town: The Almond Tree' claims for the city a spot of nature that again exceeds its like in the north country: "There's an almond tree in full bloom, such as you have never seen, / I go every day to look up at the glistening blossom" (Ferrier No. 27). Under this city tree, amid "passing feet", his imagination travels not only to "country girls" but to a global vision of "the wistful lands / Provence, Japan, and Italy". As Gail Mandell points out, among Lawrence's earliest, though infrequent, references in verse to classical mythology, an allusion in lines 3–4 – subsequently elided in the published versions – anticipates the vivid references of *Birds, Beasts and Flowers*.²³ In the first college notebook, Lawrence is already revising these lines, but to add Persephone rather than delete her. In the manuscript version, Lawrence writes, "You said" that the violets "you" meant to send "would give me my first breath

of spring—they would not / There’s the glow of the Spring—mother’s gladness in every window and garden plot”. In revision, this became a more dramatically contrastive statement: “You said you would be my Persephone of spring—you would not / Persephone has passed through the town, fastening her girdle knot”.²⁴ Persephone returns in a subsequent city poem in this first college notebook, again dramatically, to “spread / Her arms upon the night” (Ferrier No. 40). Lawrence’s earliest imagery of Persephone wittily pictures a goddess of the town, newly risen from Hades’s bed.

Probably written later than ‘Movements’ as well as ‘Dreams Old and Nascent’, since it appears after these in the contents of both the manuscripts and the published books, ‘After the Theatre’ (‘Embankment at Night, Before the War: Outcasts’) captures both the sensual beauty and the ugly plight of the urban poor and London during a “night rain” (Ferrier No. 115).²⁵ This ambitious ninety-nine-line poem begins with two lines describing the rain: “dripping unseen ... endlessly kissing my face and my hands”. “Slipping unawares”, the Thames is “striped with a hundred golden rays / Half way down the dark grey water / Like yellow stripes on a dreadful panther”. But “the outcasts” who “sleep in a rank” under Waterloo Bridge are neither fearsome nor fearful: “Swaying” like “birds that sleep on the scattered water” and “like anchored leaves”, their “naked” faces are nearly hidden in “A long, low heap of ruffled blackness”. Though a “heavy, sullen woman, unsweetened by sleep, ... hurts” him “to look at”, a “little bearded man, pale and peaked” reminds him of “a chickweed flower”. Over these “two faces” passes “the song of a car” whose “light” is “curious”, “laughing”, and “inquisitive”.

The imagery of this poem captures Lawrence’s early reverence for the physical body: “All the eloquent sleeping limbs” and, in particular, “The smooth, suave limbs of a youth / The round sweet thighs drawn up for warmth”. This is also already a realistic writer, detecting “two thin ankles that are bare / And disturb the restless sleeper” as he “rubs the one against the other”, exposing “the balls

of five red, dirty toes". The toes are themselves natural things, reminiscent of "five young birds forsaken ... / In a nest the flood has broken and filled with mud". Two men are "wrapped round with newspaper sheets / Like worthless parcels". Avoiding sentimentality and a merely pastel impressionism, Lawrence brusquely touches into his picture the mud, dirt and waste of toes, newspapers and "worthless parcels" – swamping the nest of "young birds", circumscribing the "sweet thighs" and "suave limbs". He is already acknowledging, in this early verse, the mix of dark and light and the juxtaposition of polar opposites – the flower and the flood. But his emphasis here ultimately returns to the lovely and the light as the "lanterns of the cars" are "blown ruddily down the night / Singing the song of haste" and "The factories on the Surrey side / Are beautifully laid in black against a gold grey sky". The poem ends with one last urban image, of an automobile, as a thing of mystery: "The low-fallen glimmer from a crossing car threads mysteriously through".

The images of the "laughing" or "hastening" car (for instance, in 'Weeknight Service' and 'Turned Down'), the "golden rays" or "splendid" light of the street-lamps (in 'Drunk' and 'Embankment at Night, Before the War: Charity'), and even the "mysterious" things and places "unseen" of the city (as in 'Restlessness' and 'Sickness') are repeated in the early drafts. Those motifs survive the early drafts, re-emerging intact in the wartime books, including *Look! We Have Come Through!* (1917); and in the 1928 *Collected Poems*. Lawrence returned, for example, to a draft titled 'The Street-Lamps' (in the second college notebook) for two poems in *Look! We Have Come Through!*: 'People' and 'Street Lamps'. Though the earliest extant draft was radically revised both in the notebooks and for the book, Lawrence grounds the opening of the 1917 version ('People') in the same lines 1–2 of the first draft: "The great gold apples of night / Hang from the streets' long bough" (3*Poems* 1430; Ferrier No. 203). In the 1917 'Street Lamps', the first stanza's images –

Gold, with an innermost speck
 Of silver, singing afloat
 Beneath the night,
 Like balls of thistle-down
 Wandering up and down
 Over the whispering town ... (*IPoems* 207; Ferrier No. 204)

– sharpen an initial conceit of the golden apples as “Dripping” and “drift[ing]” like “dandelion-angels” or “plumèd seeds” and “balls of down” (*3Poems* 1430) by simplifying and clarifying all this in the single figure of “balls of thistledown”, while retaining their vitality, sending them “singing afloat” before releasing their seeds to go “Wandering” (*IPoems* 207; Ferrier No. 204).

Another dyad in the first college notebook, ‘The Songless’, follows a second draft of ‘Brotherhood’ (‘Embankment at Night, Before the War: Charity’) and, though not overtly about the city in the earliest version, is placed in London in revision: first, as ‘Songs of Work-People at Night’ (in documents mailed to Edward Garnett in April 1910, MS20c/E320.4), then as ‘Night Songs: Workday Evenings’ (in their published versions in the April 1910 *English Review*), then as ‘London Nights, Year 1910: Clerks in the Parks and Piccadilly Circus’ (in the wartime Porthcothan notebook, MS45/E320.2), finally as ‘Hyde Park at Night, Before the War: Clerks’ and ‘Piccadilly Circus at Night’ (in the 1928 *Collected Poems*, *IPoems* 38–9; Ferrier Nos. 40, 41).

The earliest version of the first of these, bearing the sub-title ‘Tonight’ (with the alternative ‘Today’ crossed out), is not yet about “clerks” but, more vaguely, “us”. Setting this night-time scene, he sees the “flowers of night ... sprinkling their pollen dust of golden light” on “our faces” (Ferrier No. 40). In line 4, that “pollen dust” becomes moths in a more intricate conceit where “our faces come aflower / To the hush’d, grey-wingèd ministrants the bats of night devour”. Despite that fierce closing verb, “devour”, the language remains benign throughout; thus, he extends this conceit to generate “the closèd calyx open[ing] from our tired eyes”,

releasing from “out of the chambered weariness” a “perfume abroad”. He elides what in ‘Letter from Town: The Almond Tree’ were called the “wistful lands” of the countryside, and the night-time Persephone resurfaces in lines strikingly prescient of the much later poem, ‘Bavarian Gentians’. First, he wonders, in ‘The Songless’, the earliest version of ‘Hyde Park at Night, Before the War’,

If out of the dreary halls of Dis Persephone had risen
To find the golden grainèd night aflower across the sky

Would she have caught the last trail of her garment away from
her prison
And run and tossed and swung in ecstasy
Over the meadows?

Mid-line, he breaks, to oppose this traditional view of the Persephone myth with another one:

—She would have stood on the threshold
With her face to the stars, and spread
Her arms upon the night, the fresh, cold
Night, and at last have utterèd
Her long low passion of escape
And muffled her face at last in the nights [sic] black
woolen [sic] crape [sic].

In this 1909 paean to the night sky, one can already hear the compelling rhetoric of Lawrence’s mature voice.

The second poem of ‘The Songless’, ‘2. Tomorrow’, is considerably less cheerful than the first but again draws its imagery from London. There is no hint of “street-walkers” in any version prior to 1928; though Lawrence retitled the two poems ‘Songs of Work-People at Night’ in the second version, the “songless” “we” of its first editions expresses a weary “I”. Yet lines 1–4, which are

nearly identical to their 1928 version, evince some hope: “When into the night the yellow light is roused like dust above the towns / Or like a mist the moon has kissed above a pool in the midst of the downs” (Ferrier No. 41). For a moment, he adds, “Our faces flower for a little hour pale and uncertain along the street”, but, like daisies, they have misinterpreted the “luminous mist”. Lit from behind by starlight, they “mistaken[ly]” think dawn has arrived and they have opened prematurely. The birds of song go “mad”, and the bats, mentioned briefly in ‘The Songless 1. To-night’, are “ga[y]”: “now they are free”, the “song-birds”, either “moping or dead or mad, and their gibbering music defies / Our entreaties: while the bats, depraved, drop gaily from off the tree”. On a first reading, this scene of an insane world seems horrific, but when Lawrence published this poem in the *English Review* in April 1910, he added one more stanza, which elaborated on the word “gaily” to produce a nearly Bacchic vision of the devouring bats in language that merges them with the black birds of night:

But the night is full of the flutter of invisible revelry,
And drunk with the death of the soothing, grey-wingèd creatures
of night ...
The bats, depraved, are dropping gaily from off the tree,
Black birds whose songs are unutterable, spinning fantastic
flight.

Lawrence records the bad along with the good in his London verse, but this stanza suggests a speaker energised by “the flutter of invisible revelry” in a night “drunk with the death of the soothing grey-wingèd creatures” and keen about the “unutterable” songs of the “bats”, no matter how “depraved”, as they “spin fantastic flight”.

As Keith Cushman notes in a discussion of the sequence ‘The Schoolmaster’, published serially in the *Saturday Westminster Gazette* of 11 May 1912, the backdrop for several Croydon school poems is a “waste land”: “the ‘threadbare grass ... is pressed / Into

mud””, and “Birds no longer nest in the ‘broken thorn-tree’”, while “the ‘threadbare grass ... is pressed / Into mud’”.²⁶ But in one of the earliest school poems in the first college notebook, ‘After School’ (not published during Lawrence’s lifetime), the scene is “bright” with new “villas”: “In a little, half-built street, where red and white villas / Look brightly on a confusion of mud, and sand, and mortar”, and at twilight, “A light like mellow moonlight gleamed on the water / In the deep cart-ruts, gleamed through the blue of the darkening dusk” (*3Poems* 1410–11; Ferrier No. 286). In another manuscript poem, ‘A Snowy Day at School’, snow turns the schoolyard into a joyful impressionist mirage:

How different, in the middle of snows, the great school rises red
Like a picture by Thaulow—dark clusters of shouting lads
Scatter over the whiteness. (*3Poems* 1411; Ferrier No. 287).

In a subsequent cluster, titled ‘School’, in the second college notebook, the sunlight turns blood-red. The first of these, ‘Morning’, would eventually be revised as a London-based wartime poem, ‘Ruination’, and the first section of its earliest draft is sub-titled ‘The Waste Lands’: “The sun is bleeding its fire upon the mist / That is huddled like a grey crowd silently fleeing the attack / Of the red soldiers of the sun” (*3Poems* 1432; Ferrier No. 132). This urban horizon is made nonetheless of nature and humankind rather than machine. Visualising the “street-ends” as “abutting” the “grey space of the sea”, Lawrence perceives them “Like cliffs ... the street-ends thrust forward their stack / On the misty waste land”. After the first section of ‘Morning’,²⁷ a three-line section, sub-titled ‘The Street’, describes the “desultory” and “dawdling” children who “disturb” his morning:

The desultory pageant of children dawdling to school
White of the girls, lingering clusters of boys,
Callings of children disturbing the morning’s still pool
(*3Poems* 1432; Ferrier No. 310)

The setting of the third section, ironically called ‘Scripture’, is the classroom, where the children’s whisper while reciting psalms: their whispering seems “like a little wind / In a wood”, while also “Furtively muttering ... / Forbidden things” (*3Poems* 1432; Ferrier No. 224). He lets himself daydream, in subsequent stanzas, as he contrasts the classroom “strife” with the bright day outside. While eventually returning to the “extravagant turmoil of living, and the blindness of strife” inside the classroom in the last lines, “Com[ing] over the softness and sweetness of the morning” (*3Poems* 1433), the preceding lines 11–22 take a break from the classroom to envision the sun “pouring like yellow wine” and the mist as “a cup of wine”. Even the “wood-stacks” beside the rail tracks “glisten and glow / Like ivory and golden marble”. These lines’ detailed descriptions of crows, smoking trains, and windows “flash[ing]” culminate with yet another vision of men: “uplifted on the new / White woodstack”, their arms “Dark waving ... against the sky, ere they bend anew / To the hoisting of the next white plank”.

The ambitious sequence ‘Transformations’, which appears more than twenty-five drafts later in the second college notebook, is more explicitly moral about the city and, initially, condemning. The earliest draft of ‘1. Evening’ (‘Parliament Hill in the Evening’) analogises the “thick soiled air” of twilight to “an unclean Sodom that shall resist / God’s cleansing care” (*3Poems* 1449; Ferrier No. 113). Interestingly, this appears to be the first of only two references to Sodom in the college notebooks. Though religious as a youth, as Worthen explains, Lawrence had abandoned the Christian faith by 1908, long before composing this sequence.²⁸ It may have been his recent agonised re-immersion in his mother’s life during her final days that evoked this resurgent moralism. This Sodom-like London “corrodes in despair / As the soul corrodes”. In a stanza deleted from subsequent versions, the speaker prays to God not, however, to be preserved from this general corrosion, but rather for “our” crucifixion: ““God, give our sunsets a stain of red, / Let us pass through the twilight blazed / With a crimson of anguish, we pray Thee”” so that we may be “sped / To the wonder of death

amazed". Although an image of corrosion – "verdigris" – recurs in the lines immediately preceding and succeeding that stanza, he nonetheless reinvokes the street lamps in the final stanza as a figure for religious hope: "Lemon lit evening street-lamps shed / Small stars of faith in the air".²⁹ Then again, on the morning after, in '2. Morning' ('Flat Suburbs, S.W., in the Morning'), the "little houses" look like "plants" / Close clustering undergrowth / Of townly foliage" (*3Poems* 1449; Ferrier No. 20). Their "leaves" "sip the sun", while on the shaded side ("cunning with shade"), "delight / Mysterious creatures" (*3Poems* 1775; Ferrier No. 20). Regardless, in both states of nature, "today in the shade and the sunlight bland / Of the houses, ripen our figs" (*3Poems* 1449; Ferrier No. 20).

While possibly allegorical, '2. Morning' does not seem particularly moralistic, and in '3. Men in the Morning' ('Morning Work'), aloft on the "piled wet timber / That shines blood-red to the sun by the railway siding", another "gang of labourers" is "making out of the stuff of the morning / Something faery and fine" (*3Poems* 1450; Ferrier No. 43). Lawrence envisions the "red-gold globes of their hands and faces shuttling" along the "crystalline frame / Of blue, as if trolls in ringing cerulean caves / Were working for sport, winning their wage in a game". Step by step, in the three sections of '4. The Inanimate that Changes Not in Shape' – that is, 'Oh stiffly shapen houses that change not' ('Suburbs on a Hazy Day'), 'The Town' ('Transformations: I. The Town'), and 'The Earth' ('Transformations: II. The Earth') – Lawrence traces a fantastical series of transformations: even the "inanimate" is susceptible to change. In the first, he asks in a Blakean rhetoric,

How is it Someone can conjure thus with you,
Whose are the fingers that touched you,
Whose the mouth that breathed thus into you?
(*3Poems* 3 1450; Ferrier No. 23)

In the second, the thought of the city as "a Sodom" is subsumed in the past: "last night you were / A Sodom smouldering in a slow

despair, / Today o'er a thicket of sunshine your fair smoke wreathes" (*3Poems* 1450; Ferrier No. 44). Tomorrow will be still better, "swimming in a vague dim vapour / As fabulous weeded cities sway in the sea", and tomorrow evening no worse, as a "group of toadstools awaiting the moon's white taper" (*3Poems* 1450; Ferrier No. 44). In the third section, earth is re-visioned as an Edenic apple moving through a full resurrectional cycle: born as "you spinning clod of earth", to become "then, you lamp, you lemoncoloured beauty", "you rotten apple rolling downwards", finally, reborn and seen from above, "Then brilliant earth, from the burr of the night in beauty / As a jewel-brown horse-chestnut newly issued" (*3Poems* 1451; Ferrier No. 44). He ends with radical acceptance: "Is not this all true, and is it not my duty / To accept you thus, sordid or radiant tissued" (*3Poems* 1451; Ferrier No. 44). The imagery of '5. The Changeful Animate. Men, whose Shape is Multiform' reinvokes the dynamic imagery of "laborers" as "shuttles across the blue frame of morning" (*3Poems* 1451; Ferrier No. 44). The published versions remain close to the earliest in concluding with the exultant new question, "what are you, oh multiform" (*1Poems* 41; *3Poems* 1451; Ferrier No. 44). Lawrence retained the gist of these five parts in the three-poem 'Transformations' published in his first book, *Love Poems and Others* (1913), as well as his *Collected Poems*.³⁰

As one external reader for this essay astutely argues, by reading Ernst Haeckel's "materialist-philosophical" book, *The Riddle of the Universe*, in autumn 1909, Lawrence acquired a metaphysical basis for his "fascination" with London's "electrically powered ... urban technology", and Haeckel's electro-physiology conceivably explains "the preternatural metamorphoses" of 'Transformations', from material decay through to the transcendent forms of '7 Raphael ["Michael-Angelo"]'. As I have shown, Lawrence is clearly less tantalised by any static "things in the city" than by the volatile "energy pulsing through the things". Still struggling with his bereavement, Lawrence may, as my expert reader urged, have "come to terms with mortality" in the process of developing this

seven-part sequence, to trace “a natural cycle”, not just of “cultural decline” down and up again, but of one that “mounts to a new vision of humanity and the artist”. Yet it is also in figures drawn both from older metallic, mining and crafts work, on the one hand, and from Impressionist (‘6. Corot’) and Renaissance (‘7. Raphael’) renderings of nature and mankind, on the other hand, that Lawrence envisages London and its suburbs “melt[ing]” and metamorphosising, resurrectionally, to make a new, heavenly earth.

Wartime versions

Lawrence’s harsher view of London becomes more marked in poems selected for his wartime books; some of these were also inspired, originally, by grief for his mother, who died in December 1910. Of the forty-three poems published in *New Poems*, fifteen refer in their titles or contents to Croydon or London. A manuscript notebook from the war years reflects this shift in attention through a series of titles that locate the London verse explicitly in suburb and city as well as in different places within the city. In their published forms, those references became still more explicit. Thus the 1918 notebook titles were altered in *New Poems* as follows:

- ‘Suburb in the Morning’ became ‘Flat Suburbs, S.W., in the Morning’;
- ‘Suburb in the Evening’ became ‘Parliament Hill in the Evening’;
- ‘Sentimental Correspondence: I. The Almond Tree’ became ‘Letter from Town: The Almond Tree’;
- ‘Letter to the North’ became ‘Letter from Town: On a Grey Evening in March’;
- ‘The School on the Waste Lands’ became ‘School on the Outskirts’;
- ‘London Night / Year 1910: Charing Cross Railway Bridge’ became ‘Embankment at Night: Outcasts’;

‘London Nights / Year 1910 / Clerks in the Parks’ became
 ‘Hyde Park at Night: Clerks’;
 ‘London Nights / Embankment 1910’ became ‘Embankment at
 Night: Charity’;
 and ‘London Nights / Piccadilly Circus’ became ‘Piccadilly
 Circus at Night: Street-Walkers’.

Other poems located by title or internal reference include ‘Apprehension’, ‘Coming Awake’, ‘Flapper’, ‘Thief in the Night’, ‘Suburbs on a Hazy Day’, ‘Piccadilly Circus at Night: Street Walkers’, ‘Phantasmagoria’, ‘Next Morning’, ‘Palimpsest of Twilight’, and ‘Winter in the Boulevard’. Four or five more are linked by association with prior city poems, including ‘Thief in the Night’ (with ‘Next Morning’), ‘Tarantella’ (with ‘Piccadilly Circus at Night: Street-Walkers’), ‘Next Morning’ (with ‘Phantasmagoria’), and ‘Palimpsest of Twilight’ (with ‘Phantasmagoria’ and ‘Next Morning’). In no other volume, including the 1928 *Collected Poems*, are these references more emphatic.

The earliest draft of the opening piece in *New Poems*, ‘Apprehension’ (‘Noise of Battle’, *2Poems* 897; Ferrier No. 126), had been titled ‘The Inheritance’ in his second college notebook and is dated to the year following his mother’s death. Initially composed as an elegy, its first title is sadly ironic, for it records sheer agony, not merely “apprehension” or anxiety. When Lawrence revised this for *New Poems*, he deleted the “I” voice of the elegies to focus entirely on “the town”. Its first stanza required little change:

And all hours long, the town
 Roars like a beast in a cave
 That is wounded there
 And like to drown;
 While days rush, wave after wave
 On its lair. (*1Poems* 118)³¹

But he inserted a new middle stanza that, while potentially elegiac – “An invisible woe unseals / The flood” – graphically depicts the city “roar[ing]”: “the great old city / Recumbent roars”. In the third, elegiac stanza,

And all I can do, my love
 Since they put us asunder
 Is to hark and to see the days
 Crash through the night like thunder. (Ferrier No. 126)

Lawrence deleted both the “I” and the “you”, to write:

But all that it can do
 Now, as the tide rises,
 Is to listen and hear the grim
 Waves crash like thunder through
 The splintered streets ... (*IPoems* 118)

Retitled ‘Apprehension’, this became a moment poised between past and future in a terrifying present, with total destruction imminent.

In his discussion of “Lawrence’s Urban Poetry”, Fabio Macherelli argues that

Although commonly held by criticism as a minor episode in the bulk of his poetic production, D. H. Lawrence’s city poems ... may deserve a place in the English literary scene of the decade of the First World War, particularly in their relation to modernist issues and to late nineteenth century urban poetry.³²

They also “deserve a place” in our reckonings of Lawrence’s career as a poet. But the city was not for him at first, Macherelli argues, a thing of artifice, merely a manmade or “false city”: “particularly when sketched out at night, through the artificial light of the street lamps” that veiled the city in a “dirty and obsessive yellow mist

which had been a feature of English urban poetry since the days of James Thomson”.³³ The “yellow mist” predates Thomson’s *The City of Dreadful Night* (1874), appearing still more famously in the “yellow vapours [that] choke / The great city” in Tennyson’s *Maud* of 1855.³⁴ As the citations above show, however, the street-lamps’ light struck the young Lawrence as a thing of nature, not an artificial emanation.

Lawrence’s evocative figure of the “sinister flower”, cited by Macherelli, derives from the poem ‘Bombardment’ and dates back to a draft in the second college notebook titled ‘Spring in the City’ (Ferrier No. 135). Like ‘The Waste Lands’ (‘Ruination’), this poem was revised for his book of war poetry, *Bay*, and despite the seeming optimism of its first title, that early draft represents the city similarly to the second ‘Songs of Work-People at Night’ as “mad” (Ferrier No. 41). In its earliest extant draft, ‘Spring in the City’ (‘Bombardment’) appears unfinished and ends tantalisingly with uncertainty, first, as to whether “she” is the city or the sun in the phrase “hating her power”, second, as to who the “hat[ers]” are (the sun, city, or “we”? [Ferrier No. 135]). In the figuration of this poem, the city is a flower that has opened “Like a flat red lily with a million petals” to the sun, and the “myriad rosy tips of the town” are “brush[ed]” by the “blue sky”, but as it develops from this propitious start, it becomes “sinister”:

The black bud of life is undone
A subtle aroma has begun
To stir in the gloom of the sinister flower.

“Stirring” takes form here, not in a mass of men moving in harmony as in ‘The Review of the Scots Guards’, but in the shape of “dark small insects”, the “flower’s small denizens”, which “run / Mad for the nectar keen and sour” and become “delirious” as they “seek where the magic is spun” at “the shadowy heart of the flower”. “Delirious” did not entirely satisfy Lawrence; rarely in these manuscripts does he search so hard for the right word –

“demented”, “frenzied”, “possessed”, “bewitched”, “crazed”, “doitered” (Ferrier No. 135) – the net effect suggesting an almost demonic possession. In poems composed in the wake of his mother’s death, “drunken” delirium had become a keynote of Lawrence’s verse.

If London represents a macrocosm of his own agony in ‘Apprehension’ and ‘Bombardment’, however, it becomes an antidote in poems like ‘Submergence’, which Lawrence included in *Amores* and left almost entirely unchanged in *Collected Poems* (the changes were merely editorial: Ferrier No. 84):

When along the pavement
 Palpitating flames of life
 People flicker round me,
 I forget my bereavement ... (*IPoems* 78–9)

He forgets “The gap in my life’s constellation” and realises that –

Nay, though the pole-star
 Is blown out like a candle
 And all the heavens are wandering in disarray,
 Yet when pleiads of people are
 Deployed around me ...

– he can see “The street’s long, outstretched milky-way!” and “forget my bereavement”. The poem that Lawrence placed immediately after ‘Apprehension’ in *New Poems*, ‘Coming Awake’, recalls his better-known paean to Frieda, ‘Bei Hennef’ where, with “The little river twittering in the twilight”, he thinks, “This is almost bliss” (*IPoems* 164). ‘Coming Awake’ narrates his awakening to “lake-lights quivering on the wall”, where “The sunshine swam in a shoal across and across”, and he thinks, “There was something I ought to remember” before realising, “Why should I? The running lights / And the airy primulas, oblivious / Of the impending bee—they were fair enough sights” (*IPoems* 198–9).

Lawrence made no revisions to these lines when he re-collected his verse in 1928; but he repositioned this delicately redemptive poem “of the present” – poised between “oblivion” and the “impending” – amidst kindred verse, re-situating it, at first, between ‘Birth Night’ and ‘Rabbit Snared in the Night’, then finally between ‘Paradise Re-Entered’ and ‘Spring Morning’ to register a pivotal moment in the process of “coming through” of *Look! We Have Come Through!* (2*Poems* 964).

In *Self and Sequence*, I note that “as a young writer, Lawrence had before him several models for a verse book of the city” and that “he read and was intrigued, for example, by *The City of the Soul* of Lord Alfred Douglas” (1*L* 107).³⁵ Similarly, Macherelli notes, not only James Thomson’s influence, but that of Baudelaire and the Symbolists as well as other *fin-de-siècle* writers like Symons and Le Gallienne. But what I described as “the French Symbolist method of placing a city in slow-dissolve”³⁶ proves considerably more accurate of Lawrence’s London than of the poetry of “Bosie” (as Oscar Wilde’s one-time lover, Lord Alfred Douglas, was nicknamed). Douglas’s book takes its title from a short opening set of four sonnets, in which an allegorised “city of the soul” is couched in the language of nature, but not a happy one, with “stormy sea”, “sad moons”, and “mean gardens found / Where drooped flowers are, and unsung melodies”.³⁷ Although Lawrence too worries at times about going “songless” in his manuscript verse and reverences the “unseen”, Douglas’s sonnets sound more like Oscar Wilde’s ‘Hélas’ in bemoaning, in Douglas’s words, the fact that “the King” has “condemned the honeyed utterance / Of silver flutes and mouths made round to sing” and that he can only yearn for “the hidden things that poets see / In amber eves or mornings crystalline”. The analogues in Lawrence’s verse are both more explicitly Christian and less jewelled (as shown above). In the third sonnet, Douglas cannot imagine how “to please the King, / We that are free, with ample wings untied”, but ultimately sees “ordered utterance” as precisely what is required for him to “Forge the gold

chain and twine the silken net” of beauty. While Lawrence may ask for crucifixion, he never fancies himself enchained.

Douglas’s sonnet sequence ends with a quintessential Pre-Raphaelite vision of “Each new hour’s passage ... the acolyte / Of inarticulate song and syllable” and the Decadents’ sado-masochistic urge to “ransom one lost moment with a rhyme”, “clutch[ing] Life’s hair, and thrust[ing] one naked phrase / Like a lean knife between the ribs of Time”. Even brief citations of these poems indicate the poetic vocabulary Lawrence shared with his immediate predecessors in his earliest London verse. As for the Pre-Raphaelites and the aesthetes, the desire to utter songs of the passing moment was an important theme for Lawrence from the start. During the war, he envisioned his book of elegies for his mother as a “story of the soul”, thus framing the revised juvenilia in that book in parallel, allegorised terms.³⁸ But Lawrence left Douglas behind when he also embraced the imagery of industrial modern London and of manly embodiment, and when he worked to develop a more colloquial, modern idiom “of the present”. Even when that present moment falls as a pause or “peace” amid the conflicts of modernity, as in ‘Reality of Peace, 1916’ (titled ‘The Interim’ in the wartime notebook) and as in his philosophy in the *Study of Hardy* (STH 89–90), he dwells precisely there. So too in ‘Apprehension’, both in *New Poems* and in its final version as ‘Noise of Battle’ in *Collected Poems*, “the great old city” can only “listen” as the “tide rises”, “hear[ing]” the “grim / Waves crash like thunder through / The splintered streets”, as in this poem’s final lines, the “noises / Roll hollow in the interim” (*IPoems* 118).

*

In 1909 to 1911, as his writing career was launched, D. H. Lawrence emerged as a London poet, who found nature in the city and did not binarise these entities as he was to do later in his career. During the First World War, he returned to his urban poetry as the source for a vision of apocalyptic, resurrectional transformation.

Lawrence's London poems mingle the urban with the natural in striking images, as when he interlaces metal with flower; this figuration shifts between positive and negative associations in relation to the speaker's mood rather than in diametric opposition to each other.

Though Ford Madox Hueffer saw Lawrence not only as a working-class writer but as a regional voice, Lawrence's imagination took fire from his first encounters with London. Much as Hueffer had imagined the ideal city writer five years earlier, in his 1905 *The Soul of the City*, as a verbal impressionist, Lawrence captures the "melt" of human beings "into the tide of humanity" in the London "atmosphere". Much of the elegiac story Lawrence subsequently told in his published wartime book, *Amores*, is located – as in two other wartime volumes, *New Poems* and *Bay* – specifically or implicitly in London (see note 12): there, the young poet struggled against his childhood past in the North country, redefining himself and his poetics in a Whitmanesque present amid the masses of humanity and multitudinousness of city life. But just as scholars have returned to *Bay* and the sequence 'All of Us' (the latter prominently re-positioned by Pollnitz in the Cambridge *Poems* between Parts I and II of Lawrence's *Collected Poems*), to re-evaluate Lawrence's significance as a war poet, we should return to *New Poems* and the earlier versions of his town poems for Lawrence's origins as a new London poet.

¹ Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Soul of London: A Survey of a Modern City* (London: Alston Rivers, 1905), xi–xii.

² Edward Nehls, *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography, vol. I* (Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1957), 109. Like Ernest Rhys, Hueffer probably saw Lawrence as a provincial writer of mining-country or, in Rhys's words, "a young country schoolmaster somewhere in the Black Country" (*ibid.*, 129).

³ Hueffer, *The Soul of London*, vii, 4.

⁴ John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years 1885–1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 479–90.

⁵ Ibid., 202.

⁶ Andrew Harrison, *The Life of D. H. Lawrence: A Critical Biography* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 34–5.

⁷ Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years*, 214–5.

⁸ In addition to the Cambridge UP edition, I also cite Carole Ferrier, especially for versions or variants not included in *The Poems*: see 'The Earlier Poetry of D. H. Lawrence', Dissertation, University of Auckland, 1971, Nos 44, 113, 115. The poems in this dissertation are numbered, not paginated. Subsequent citations appear parenthetically. (Note that I have doublechecked Ferrier's transcriptions of the poems cited above against a legible facsimile held in the Nottingham University Library to verify their accuracy; the slight discrepancies found are not indicated here.)

⁹ The first set of manuscript numbers refers to Pollnitz's new "Manuscript Listing" included in the front pages of *3Poems* (xxx–xxxi); following the slash "/", the second set of manuscript numbers refers to Warren Roberts and Paul Poplawski, 'Manuscripts', *A Bibliography of D. H. Lawrence*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), 649–51, 654–6.

¹⁰ The importance of London in the poetry has been obscured by Lawrence's re-sequencing of four of his first five books of poems in Part I of his 1928 *Collected Poems*, to produce that anthology's narrative structure.

¹¹ Pollnitz MS6/E320.1

¹² A city setting might be inferred from several of the poems in *Amores* (1916), especially 'Patience', 'Silence', 'Perfidy' and 'Elegy', but only two poems – 'Dreams Old and Nascent: Nascent' and 'Submergence' – refer explicitly to the city.

¹³ Roberts and Poplawski, 'Manuscripts', 122–6, 180–1, 190–2.

¹⁴ Previously published in two numbers of *Playboy* in 1919 under the title 'Poetry of the Present', the latter became the title that stuck, though the Cambridge *Poems* Volume I version reproduces its final version and title, 'Preface to *New Poems*' (*1Poems* 645).

¹⁵ For prior analysis of the manuscripts behind, and wartime resequencing of, *New Poems*, see especially Holly A. Laird, *Self and Sequence: The Poetry of D. H. Lawrence* (Charlottesville, VA: UP of Virginia), 122–6.

¹⁶ D. H. Lawrence, 'A Still Afternoon', *English Review* 12 (Nov. 1909), 561–5; *The Modernist Journals Project* <<https://library.brown.edu/pdfs/>

1183463096781250.pdf>; this version of ‘Dreams Old and Nascent’ also appears in *3Poems* 1419–21.

¹⁷ W. B. Yeats, *The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, vol. I (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 27.

¹⁸ For a detailed account of Lawrence’s development of this dyad’s metrics, see Christopher Pollnitz, ‘Verse Forms’, *D. H. Lawrence in Context*, ed. Andrew Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018), 122–3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁰ In 1916, Lawrence added the date “1913” to the title, then in 1928 changed it to “1910”.

²¹ Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years*, 481–3.

²² *Ibid.*, 481.

²³ Gail Porter Mandell, *The Phoenix Paradox: A Study of Renewal through Change in the ‘Collected Poems’ and ‘Last Poems’ of D. H. Lawrence* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1984), 13–14, 35, 238–9 n. 12.

²⁴ In a slightly later version, Ferrier MS6a, “town” became “city”, but “town” usually denotes the city of London in this verse, with “little” added in one case to indicate Eastwood, ‘The Little Town at Eastwood—Evening’ (Ferrier No. 17 ‘The Little Town at Evening’); thus in ‘Last Hours’, the “southward” direction is “townward” (Ferrier No. 19).

²⁵ Although the poem with which this one is paired, ‘Brotherhood’ (‘Embankment at Night, Before the War: Charity’), also mentions the “outcasts”, it focuses primarily on one woman, whose hand Lawrence touches, and does not sketch a more general portrait of the city setting.

²⁶ Keith Cushman, ‘Self and Sequence: Lawrence’s “The School master”’, *Études Lawrenciennes* no. 47 (2016), <<https://journals.openedition.org/lawrence/254>>. (Cushman acknowledges borrowing the title for his article from the book cited above in note 15.)

²⁷ ‘Morning’ is numbered 1, though no number 2 precedes the parallel poem ‘Afternoon’; ‘Afternoon’ takes place entirely within the classroom and so is not discussed here.

²⁸ Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years*, 66–8, 179.

²⁹ In a third notebook, dating to the war years, Lawrence termed the streetlamps “Slum-lights”, “shed[ding] / Their yellowish afterglow”, but Sodom and God have dropped out of this version, eliding the earlier moralism.

³⁰ The eighth and ninth 'Transformations' – 'Corot' and 'Raphael' ('Michael Angelo') – remained dyads, though separated from 'Transformations'. In all versions, 'Corot' presumably shifts the scene to the countryside when the poet hears "in the windless whisper of leaves" the sound "far-off" of "labour of men in the field / In the down-ward drooping flimsy sheaves / Of cloud" (*3Poems* 1452; Ferrier No. 38). But it is possible to consider even this poem as initially composed against the backdrop of the city: "In the flapping of red-roof smoke, and the small / Foot-stepping tap of men beneath / These trees so huge and tall" (*3Poems* 1453).

³¹ Changes were editorial, turning "all day" to "all hours" and "Lying" to "And like". (The *New Poems* and *Collected Poems* versions have identical first stanzas, hence my citation here of the CUP edition.)

³² Fabio Macherelli, "'Down the Labyrinth of the Sinister Flower': D. H. Lawrence's Urban Poetry", *Cahiers Victoriens et Edouardiens* 32 (1990), 29.

³³ *Ibid.*, 30. Although Macherelli cites Lawrence's 1929 essay 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside' as the source of this passage, it does not appear there, but rather in notes Lawrence made on the manuscript of a lecture Bertrand Russell had sent him: *D. H. Lawrence's Letters to Bertrand Russell*, ed. Harry T. Moore (New York: Gotham Book Mart, 1948), 80. But in both instances, Lawrence appears to be distinguishing between "the real *urbs*" or "real city", such as Siena, "with citizens intimately connected with the city", as opposed to a "false" or unintegrated place like Nottingham (*LEA* 293).

³⁴ Alfred Tennyson, *Tennyson: Poems* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2012), 56.

³⁵ Laird, *Self and Sequence*, 123.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Alfred Douglas, *The City of the Soul* (London: Grant Richards, 1899), 2. Subsequent citations appear parenthetically.

³⁸ Laird, *Self and Sequence*, 50–9.