

من مزرعة مارش إلى منجم الفحم: تطور الإحساس بالمكان في قوس قزح

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From Marsh Farm to the Colliery: The Evolving Sense of Place in the Rainbow

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المخلص

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية العلاقة المعقدة بين البيئة المادية والنفسية الداخلية في رواية "قوس قزح" (1915) للكاتب د. هـ. لورانس، من خلال منظور نظرية المكان النقدية والجغرافيا النفسية. وبعيداً عن القراءات التقليدية التي تعتبر المكان مجرد خلفية سلبية للصدمات المتوارثة عبر الأجيال، تستخدم هذه الدراسة جدلية المكان لهنري لوفيفر لتؤكد أن الانتقال من الإقطاع الزراعي إلى الرأسمالية الصناعية في نوتنغهامشير هو في جوهره تحول وجودي يتوسطه المكان. تُرسخ الفصول الأولى من الرواية ما يسميه لورانس "وعي الدم"، وهو ارتباط جسدي عميق وغير عقلاني بالأرض، يتجسد في رجال برانغوين الأوائل في مزرعة مارش. تمثل هذه الحالة نمطاً محلياً وعضوياً للانتماء، حيث تتعايش الذاتية الإنسانية مع المشهد الطبيعي في توازن تكافلي عميق. مع ذلك، وعلى مدى ثلاثة أجيال من عائلة برانغوين، يختل هذا التوازن بشدة بفعل زحف الحداثة الصناعية، التي ترمز إليها بلدة إيلكيستون المنجمية والهندسة المعمارية الجامدة للفصول الدراسية. من خلال تحليل التوتر الجدلي بين المساحات العضوية (المستنقع، السماء المفتوحة) والمساحات الآلية (المنجم، الامتداد العمراني)، تُبين هذه الورقة البحثية كيف يرسم لورانس خريطة الاغتراب النفسي الجغرافي. فمع ترشيد المشهد الطبيعي وتحويله إلى سلعة، يتلاشى

"الإحساس بالمكان" المتوارث في خضم انعدام المكان الحديث. في نهاية المطاف، توضح هذه الدراسة أن سعي أورسولا برانغوين نحو الاستقلال ليس مجرد نضال اجتماعي أو نسوي، بل هو تفاوض مكاني يأس - محاولة لتجاوز التضاريس الصناعية الخائفة للحدثاة لاستعادة شكل جديد كوني من التضامن تحت رمز قوس قزح.

Abstract

This paper examines the intricate relationship between physical environment and psychological interiority in D.H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* (1915) through the lens of critical spatial theory and psychogeography. Moving beyond traditional readings of setting as a passive backdrop to generational trauma, this study utilizes Henri Lefebvre's spatial dialectics to argue that the transition from agrarian feudalism to industrial capitalism in Nottinghamshire is fundamentally an ontological transformation mediated by space. The early chapters of the novel establish what Lawrence terms "blood-consciousness"—a deep, non-rational, somatic connection to the earth embodied by the early Brangwen men at Marsh Farm. This state represents a localized, organic mode of belonging where human subjectivity and the physical landscape exist in a symbiotic, chthonic equilibrium. However, across three generations of the Brangwen family, this equilibrium is violently disrupted by the encroachment of industrial modernism, symbolized by the colliery town of Ilkeston and the rigid architecture of the schoolroom. By analyzing the dialectical tension between organic spaces (the marsh, the open sky) and mechanized spaces (the mine, the urban sprawl), this paper demonstrates how Lawrence maps psychogeographical estrangement. As the landscape becomes rationalized and commodified, the ancestral "sense of place" dissolves into modern placelessness. Ultimately, this study illustrates that Ursula Brangwen's quest for independence is not merely a social or feminist struggle, but a desperate spatial negotiation—an attempt to transcend the suffocating, industrialized topographies of modernity to reclaim a new, cosmic form of *communitas* under the symbol of the rainbow.

1. INTRODUCTION

D.H. Lawrence's 1915 novel, *The Rainbow*, stands as a monumental work of the British modernist era, capturing the disruptive and brutalizing effects of industrial modernity and mechanization on the human psyche. The narrative traces three generations of the Brangwen family in Nottinghamshire, chiefly concentrating on the individual's struggle for personal growth and fulfillment within the restricting strictures of English social life. The novel opens with an idyllic description of the rural



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Brangwen dynasty before narrowing focus onto Tom Brangwen, who falls in love with Lydia, a Polish refugee and widow. The second movement of the book shifts to Lydia's daughter, Anna, and her volatile, fragmented relationship with her husband, Will. The final, most comprehensive, and famously celebrated part of the novel follows Will and Anna's daughter, Ursula. Ursula struggles to satisfy her passionate, spiritual, and sensual nature against the limitations of a progressively materialist and traditionalist society. Through a same-sex relationship with a schoolteacher and a passionate, ultimately doomed love affair with Anton Skrebensky—a British soldier of Polish ancestry—Ursula confronts the rigid boundaries of her world. Left disillusioned by Skrebensky, the novel concludes with her transcendent vision of a rainbow towering over the Earth, promising a new dawn for humanity.

While *The Rainbow* has been widely analyzed, critical scholarship has historically prioritized its psychological and sexual dimensions. For instance, Stella Queenie, in *Sexuality, Suffering and the Self* in D.H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* (1981), stresses the role of sexuality as a motivating force in the transformation of the individual self. Queenie argues that suffering serves as a catalyst for growing spiritual consciousness and self-transcendence, emphasizing Lawrence's focus on balancing the conscious and unconscious selves to achieve psychological wholeness. Similarly, Morrison's *The Female Quest in the Novels of D. H. Lawrence* (1973) interrogates the feminist pursuit for a reconciliation of desire, focusing specifically on Ursula's journey.

Other critics have viewed the novel through the lenses of gender identity and psycho-mythography. Darrel Richard Elmore, in *Homoeroticism in D.H. Lawrence's Women in Love and The Rainbow* and Ken Russell's *Film Adaptations* (1991), scrutinizes alternate sexual lifestyles and the presence of bisexuality in Lawrence's work, framing it as a direct response to oppressive Victorian attitudes. Meanwhile, Nanette Nina Norris, in *Myth, Symbol and Selfhood* (1984), maps the development of the psyche across three stages that parallel the three Brangwen generations: the "Preconscious" stage (informed by the myth of Pluto and Persephone), an intermediate stage of self-perception (informed by Eros and Psyche), and a transformational stage leading to full consciousness (symbolized by alchemical processes).

Further broadening the mythological scope, I. de F. de O. Brando's *Female Archetypes in D.H. Lawrence's The Rainbow and Women in Love* (2016) utilizes Feminist Jungian archetypal psychology and Bachelardian phenomenology to examine how images of earth and water delineate Lawrence's "rhythmical imagination," particularly regarding the

individuation of Anna and Ursula through the archetype of the White Goddess. This aligns with Helen Joyce Bock's D. H. Lawrence: Modern Narrative and Ancient Myth, which tackles Lawrence's concept of "blood-consciousness" and his unique four-fold narrative style. Bock positions Ursula as a modern personification of the Goddess Diana, whose quest for a holy marriage is attained through a blood-conscious recognition of her partner. Finally, Sarah Catherine Urang, in *Kindled in the Flame: The Apocalyptic Scene in D.H. Lawrence* (1980), reads *The Rainbow* as an apocalyptic narrative where structural breakthroughs occur like a deluge, forcing individuals into emotional conflicts from which they emerge with heightened spiritual understanding.

Despite this rich tapestry of critical reception, *The Rainbow* has rarely been thoroughly investigated through the geographical and cultural lens of the Sense of Place. A "sense of place" encompasses the profound emotional, psychological, and experiential bonds that an individual develops toward their geographic environment.

This study seeks to fill this critical void by analyzing the novel's environments under the umbrella of Postcolonial Criticism. By examining how regional transitions—from organic pastoral landscapes to mechanized industrial spaces—reflect changing power dynamics, displacement, and cultural alienation, this essay investigates how human character, history, and social structures actively influence Lawrence's portrayal of place and community. Through textual evidence, this study will demonstrate that in *The Rainbow*, place is not merely a static backdrop, but an active, colonizing force that shapes the tragic trajectories and spiritual awakenings of the Brangwen family.

2. Post colonialism, Psychology, and the Framework of Psychogeology:

As a distinct literary and cultural framework emerging prominently in the late twentieth century, postcolonial criticism interrogates the ideological, political, and cultural forces that undergird colonial domination and its lingering global aftermath. Crucially, postcolonialism is not merely a chronological marker denoting the era after the formal collapse of an empire. As Lois Tyson (2006) elucidates, postcolonial criticism analyzes "literature produced by cultures that developed in response to colonial domination from the first point of colonial contact to the present" (p. 417). It investigates the treacherous ideological mechanisms through which the colonizer forces the colonized to internalize Eurocentric values, while simultaneously mapping and promoting modes of native resistance against the oppressor (p. 418).

This rejection of a purely temporal definition of the prefix "post-" is echoed widely across postcolonial historiography. John McLeod (2000)





asserts that "post-colonialism is not the same as 'after colonialism', as if colonial values are no longer to be reckoned with" (p. 33). Instead, it demands an ongoing confrontation with the systemic legacies of imperial rule. Similarly, Ania Loomba (2005) suggests it is far "more helpful to think of postcolonialism not just as coming literally after colonialism, but more flexibly as the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism" (p. 12). The "post," therefore, is a conceptual site of contestation. Pal Ahluwalia (2002) reinforces this by stating that the framework seeks to "problematize the cultural exchanges between the colonized and the colonizer" from their initial point of contact (p. 196). Historically, this contact was achieved not only through physical warfare but through ideological state apparatuses—most notably, religion. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu famously remarked, "When the missionaries came, they had the Bible and we had the land. They said, 'Let us pray!' They taught us to close our eyes to pray, and when we opened them again, we had the Bible and they had the land" (as cited in Ahluwalia, p. 34). This dynamic highlights how the colonizer utilizes cultural and spiritual re-education as a mechanism of physical dispossession, manufacturing a discourse of compositionality that Bill Ashcroft et al. (1995) defines as "the efforts to unshackle oneself or a nation from the effects and influences of colonialism... it begins from the very first moment of colonial contact" (p. 117).

3. The Ontology of the Sense of Place: Phenomenological and Sociological Perspectives

To interrogate how human consciousness interfaces with geographic environments, contemporary spatial theory relies heavily on the nuanced evolution of the concept of the Sense of Place. Far from being a uniform or static term, the sense of place serves as a crucial locus of interdisciplinary debate. To some theorists, it implies an intrinsic, objective essence possessed by certain distinct geographic topographies; to others, it is strictly an interiorized emotion, cognitive mapping, or subjective perception held by human actors rather than the land itself. Generally, the concept is deployed to analyze the distinctive physical, cultural, and aesthetic features that render a location unique, as well as the relational dynamics that foster genuine human connection, intersubjective intimacy, and collective belonging.

In his foundational work, *Community Attachment: Local Sentiment and Sense of Place* (1992), sociologist David Hummon deconstructs this phenomenon by focusing on the dualities of local sentiment. Hummon conceptualizes the sense of place as "people's subjective perceptions of

their environments, and their more or less conscious feelings about those environments" (p. 6).

For Hummon, this structure requires a total cognitive and emotional synthesis, a process wherein "one's understanding of place and one's feelings about place become fused in the context of environmental meaning" (p. 6). Crucially, Hummon emphasizes that this phenomenon is "inevitably dual in nature, involving both an interpretive perspective on the environment and an emotional reaction to the environment" (p. 6). Under this paradigm, place is never merely an objective canvas of coordinates, but an ongoing, dialectical process where cultural comprehension and raw affect collide to produce lived reality.

Expanding upon this affective framework from a relational sociological perspective, Jennifer Cross, in *What is Sense of Place?* (2001), characterizes the concept as:

"The affective bond between people and place or setting. Such ties vary in intensity, subtlety, and mode of expression. Responses to the environment may be aesthetic, tactile, or emotional" (p. 2).

Cross establishes that these bonds are highly stratified, introducing a taxonomy of relationships to place—ranging from biographical and spiritual to ideological and dependent. This implies that an individual's connection to their setting is dictated by the socio-historical conditions of their existence. When an environment is stable, these tactile and aesthetic responses reinforce personal and historical continuity. However, if those settings are subjected to sudden systemic shocks, the affective bonds are severely strained, often resulting in deep psychological fragmentation.

This fluidity of environmental perception finds its most profound articulation in the humanist geography of Yi-Fu Tuan. In his seminal text *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (1974), Tuan introduces the concept of topophilia—the affective bond between people and place, or the literal "love of place." Tuan asserts that human reactions and responses to the landscape are explicitly non-static: "The way a person looks at places continues to evolve as their life cycle develops and as the landscapes and places around them are transformed" (p. 7).

Through these lifelong processes of interaction, individuals develop "varying levels of sophistication and their own landscapes of memory and previous experiences," which ultimately culminate in deep psychological bonding with their material surroundings (p. 7).

4. The Spatial Dialectics of Sense of Place in The Rainbow



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The first chapter consist of two parts explain the intertwining of two types of the narratives. By setting, the first part starts with the vigorous Brangwen and their activities in their Farm as it described in the following quotation: They felt the rush of sap in spring, they knew the wave which cannot halt, but every year throw forward the seed to begetting and falling back leaves the young born on the earth” (Lawrence,1989: 4). Against the historical changes of the second part which starts with the construction of the Canal in 1840: A canal was constructed across the meadow of Marsh Farm connecting the newly-opened collieries of the Erewash Valley” (ibid: 11). From the beginning, Lawrence tries to alert the readers to the psychological and historical tracks that the book will follow. He employs sense of historical realism in the novel due to the fact that the novel tracks the lives of the three generation which echoes the English life between about 1840 and 1905. Ursula with her degree is a creation of the social movement and her educational exercise substitution to an industrial society. In Ursula and Skrebensky we perceive that the demise of religious is isolated from the individual and the deracinated way of life due to the industrialism. The notion of deracination due to the industrialism can be seen also in Ursula when she was free from her family restraints.

The changes of the place due to the industrialism comprises the changes of the people such as Anna (the eldest daughter of Lydia and Tom Brangwen) changes from being a gawky youth into a fashion- plate for the first boyfriend (William Brangwen): “She would see such ladies in pictures: Alexandra, princess of Wales, was one of her models. This lady was proud and royal, and stepped her heart. And the girl did up her hair high under a little slanting hat, her skirts where fashionably bunched up, she wore an elegant, skin- fitting coat” (ibid.:182).

Lawrence portrays the sense of connectedness and appreciation of Land in Tom’s character when he tells Lydia “ We’ve been here above two hundred years” (ibid:37) is dissimilar from the same sense of the same ground being trampled is depicted when Ursula strides out with Skrebensky :”Hesitating , they continued to walk on, quivering like shadows under the ash- trees of the hill , where her grandfather had walked with his daffodils to make his proposal , and where the mother had gone with her young husband , walking close upon him as Ursula was now walking upon Skrebensky”. (ibid: 378).

Lawrence is greater interested in the progression of individuation. And can be is grasped in the way in which his novels re- works similar scenes. In The Rainbow he employs this theme to show the changes that happens to the Family: birth is portrayed as a moment of individual crisis for Tom:

“the big shell of his body remembered the sounds of owls that used to fly round the farmstead when he was a boy... Elsewhere, fundamental, he was with his wife in labor , the child was being brought forth out of their one flesh. He and she, one flesh, out of which life brought froth out of their one flesh. The rent was not in his body but it was of his body. On her the blows fell, but the quiver ran through him, to his last fibre” (ibid: 71)

Lawrence is more concerning with the inner self when the relationship between a character and the external world is presented as liquid. To enter to the realistic world and remove the social constraints, Lawrence tries to get his characters out of the structured world. Place becomes a pin on which to hang the changeover from realism to symbolism. Either, the perception of the place is affected by emotion or vice versa, their perception of the natural world promotes characters to action. To explain the former: Brangwen finds his daughter’s wedding so emotional that when her leaves the church and the world seem like vision for him: “like a vision” (ibid.212). To clarify the latter: Anna enters the cowshed with her father; the cattle and the rattle of chains soothe her crying: “A new being was created in her for the new condition” (ibid.75).

The Rainbow is an interface of the self and society which is worked out into something of a contest and people inner feelings are endlessly pitched against social conventions and if the final goal of the every living creature is full attainment of the itself then the society is shown to harshly prevent this: Anna is unable to tolerate religious , Ursula has problems with the educational system.

The novel starts with the description and appreciation of the Marsh Farm, the river of Erewash which is ‘Twisting sluggishly through alder trees’ (ibid:9) is contrast from the black colliers who belong to the dim smoking hill of the town. In other words, Lawrence polarizes a firm kind of world on either side of it. Crosse hay’s church set against the Ilkeston’s factory chimneys intimates the differences among the life of older values and one concerned with commercial accomplishment. The blonde Brangwens in their environment of pale plants, alder trees , corn , and daffodils- dissimilarity with the ‘blackened colliers’ who belong to ‘ blurred smoking hill of the town’ (ibid:14). The dualistic concern with light and dark elucidates that the world of the Marsh is healthy and good and the world of Ilkeston is disappointing. This duality enhances our feeling that this world is exist as contrasts to the other and this can be seen when the Brangwens smell the pit-refuse burning and hear the sound of the trains, they feel that here is a place is different from that of the old farming life: “Winding engines starting at first, but afterwards a narcotic



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to the brain . Then the shrill whistle of the trains re-echoed through the heart “As they gathered the harvest, the west wind brought a faint, sulphurous smell of pit-refuse burning” (ibid.:13).

Lawrence was interested technical changes such as the upcoming of the railway and colliery, can made agape between commercial and spiritual growth. The technical advancement had changed the lives of the Brangwens from being self-sufficient to almost tradesmen.

The tragedy is that they (Brangwens) feel strangers in their own place and the infiltration of the money ideal into their lives, in fact the town need their produce means that they are no longer work because of the life that was in them: “At first the Brangwen were astonished by all this commotion around them. The building of the canal made them strangers in their own place, this raw bank of earth shutting them off disconcerted them” (ibid:12)

Though The Rainbow cast a shadow on eclipse that happens between the Marsh Farm and the new industrial life in Ilkeston and its historical accuracy expresses the common dissolution of rural life taking place in Britain at the turn of the century, the urge to the myth comprises in the language and imagery of the novel which destabilizes its historical nature. Biblical language and the alignment of the Marsh Farm with the Flood story elevations it to a level of myth like the Aztec myth of creation cause the description of the Marsh Farm is a creation piece.

In The Rainbow, Lawrence articulated the notion that the feel of place deeply affects the human character. The Brangwens eyes has been altered from laughter to anger when the weather was altered and the Erewash twists sluggishly through alder trees corresponds to the blood intimacy that the men enjoy: “They were fresh, blond, slow speaking people, revealing themselves plainly, but slowly, so that one could watch the change in their eyes from laughter to anger. Through all the resolute stages of the sky when the weather is changing” (ibid: 4) corresponds to the ‘blood intimacy’ that the Brangwens enjoy towards their Land (The Marsh Farm), Tom Brangwen is described as ‘fresh like a plant’ (ibid: 25) and his slow innate outlook and his rootedness mark him out as amen of old Brangwens stock. He is more in touch with the place and community of the Marsh: “It was a strong root which held him to the Marsh, to his own house and land” (ibid: 27). The notion of rootedness is also describing in his proposal to Lydia, when he anticipates the universe and one windy night puts on clean clothes and picks flowers in willingness of respect and a wavering between determination and doubtfulness attaches him to aline which spreads beyond that of his own family. The idea also depicted in Tom’s marriage , in which Lawrence

uses symbolic language to dramatize that Tom is part of the furniture and Lawrence's very conscious account of insides works to dramatize this: "The furniture was old and familiar, the whole place seemed t so kin to him, as if it partook of his being, that she was uneasy" (ibid:37) In addition to Tom, Lawrence introduced characters who hooks between the values of their villages and the sophistication of their town such as Ursula Brangwen.

Wiggiston, the colliery town where Ursula visited Uncle Tom Brangwen described as unreal. Seen in the terms of corruption, repression and confusion to which the image of disease is employed contrast directly with the Marsh Farm. The pattern of the red houses on black road which "repeated itself endlessly" (ibid: 320) and it looks like leprosy contrasts directly with the environment of the marsh Farm. Tom's black coat blends with the surrounding black landscape just as the eyes of the Brangwen farmers reflected the sky around them Tom's eyes are "dark eyes liquid and formless" (ibid).

In other words, Lawrence wants to show that the heartbeat of place has changed. If the Marsh folk used to work for love and life and its heart beat to the rhythm of nature and certain humanity while money drives Wiggiston so the Wiggiston had to change: "They believe they must alter themselves to fit the pits and the place, rather than alter the pits and the place to fit themselves. It is easier" (ibid: 433)

5. Conclusion

This study has systematically interrogated the evolution of the Sense of Place in D.H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* (1915), demonstrating how the violent onset of industrialization fractured the psychological, somatic, and spiritual bonds connecting humanity to the landscape. By synthesizing postcolonial criticism, psychogeology, and spatial ontology, this analysis has traced the tragic erosion of Nottinghamshire's organic community. Over the course of three generations of the Brangwen line, Lawrence maps an ontological shift: the unmediated, topophilic rootedness of an agrarian lifestyle is steadily abolished by the cold, hyper-rationalized, and dehumanizing mechanisms of modern mechanization.

Crucially, Lawrence's acute environmental sensitivity stems from his own early psychogeographic inheritance in Eastwood. The socio-ecological tensions of his youth left an indelible mark on his creative consciousness, driving him to obsessively chronicle the borderlands of late Victorian and Edwardian England. Throughout *The Rainbow*, Lawrence displays a profound affinity for liminal landscapes—spaces that hover anxiously between the pastoral and the industrial, the ancestral and the modern.

By juxtaposing these worlds, the novel illustrates how a traditional sense of place, historic memory, and ancestral blood-consciousness are forced



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into a destructive collision with the modern industrial scene. While the colliery and the railway enforce an artificial sense of time and a state of systemic rootlessness, the novel's final, apocalyptic vision of the rainbow offers a radical counter-narrative. It suggests that even within an internally colonized and topographically violated wasteland, the human psyche retains the power to visually and spiritually reclaim its sense of place, projecting a transcendent dawn for a fractured humanity.

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