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Postmodern Salvation through Mythopoeia in *The Man Who Died*

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1

In *Literature, Modernism and Myth* Michael Bell defines “mythopoeia” as a means to “see the world in mythic terms” (2). He characterizes it as one of modernist writers’ tactics, in which they employ a means of mythopoeia in order to demonstrate their own world view. D. H. Lawrence is among the writers who do exactly this. In his last novella *The Man Who Died* (conceived under the original title: *The Escaped Cock*), Lawrence tries to invert the Christian theology by replacing the Resurrection with the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris.

However, we should note that there are fundamental but inevitable contradictions in mythopoeia. Bell states that “it [myth] means both a supremely significant foundational story and a falsehood” (1). This doubleness leads us to the problem of fictionality and reality in literature, which is the composition of the world through language. In addition, there exists another doubleness that modern writers are compelled to be keenly aware, that is, the arbitrariness and relativity of their beliefs, even though they believe in the absoluteness of their convictions. This occurs because they live “in the cultural fragmentation of modernity [where] any belief inevitably [becomes] more arbitrary, relative and self-conscious” (3). To put it another way, they are forced to face the contradictory problem of living with absolute conviction in times of arbitrariness and the relativity. These two kinds of doubleness concerning modernism and myth pose the same questions to us, because we, too, live in an age of postmodernism which is characterized in terms of fictionality and relativity. The short story *The Man Who Died* provides a suitable example for discussing this matter. By critically reading this novella in terms of mythmaking, we will be able to examine Law-

rence's response to this issue as a clue to understanding our own predicament.

In this novella Lawrence contrasts Christian idealism, which promises immortal life of the spirit in the hereafter, with the materialism, which affirms mortal life of the body in this world. In revealing the deceit of the former through comparison with the latter, his criterion is based on "the body". It has already been covered with the ideas of corrupt nature under the Christian value system. The protagonist takes away the chimeras from the body and rediscovers the body as material, including its intrinsic power to make contact with the universe. The act of uncovering, however, is not expressed as a return to the archetype image of the body or nostalgia for the forever -lost body, rather it is presented as Lawrence's version of salvation, through which he hopes we can establish "true relationship", based on a "new faith".

Leslie Thompson and Larry LeDoux consider how Lawrence's mythopoeia serves as an act of redefining Christianity. As Bell describes, however, myth is "a way of approaching vital problems that constantly present themselves reductively", that is, a way of understanding the radical relation between nature and men. It stands as meta-history against history. If so, the motive of Lawrence's mythopoeia should go farther than the mere redefinition of Christianity in order to see history differently. Moreover, from the new concept of salvation Lawrence presents in this novella, we can identify postmodern concepts such as "event", "flight" or "nudity". Indeed Noëlle Cuny regards Lawrence as a precursor of postmodern culture (36). My purpose is to show the possibility that Lawrence's mythopoeia and his version of salvation go beyond what can be considered as a modernist return to myth and instead take on postmodern characteristics whose implications we share with him.

2

The Man Who Died is a story about the Resurrection of Christ, but it is quite different from what the Bible says. In Lawrence's tale Christ is resurrected through physical union with the pagan woman who serves the Eastern goddess Isis. This kind of resurrection of the body is Lawrence's ultimate theme throughout all his works. He writes in a letter to Gordon Campbell in 1914 that "Christianity should teach us now, that after our Crucifixion and the darkness of the tomb, we shall rise again in the flesh [...] resurrected in the bodies" ("To

Gordon Campbell" 249). Needless to say, he emphasizes this form of resurrection because he criticizes the mind-centric nature of Western civilization, which is based on Christianity. In addition, the resurrection of the body reveals Lawrence's positive perspective toward life. In his essay, "Resurrection", he also writes that "since the War, the world has been without a Lord and it is time for the Lord in us to arise, Rise as the Lord. No longer the Man of Sorrows." (737). Lawrence clearly discriminates between Crucifixion, Lamentation and Resurrection and he chooses not Crucifixion, which emphasizes the pain of the predicament, nor Lamentation, which emphasizes grieving for the predicament, but Resurrection as a positive response to society at the time. Phillip Marcus notes this point in contrast with Yeats who insists on the sad plight of modern man (213). He wants to restore vitality in the nihilistic atmosphere after the First World War.

In addition, Lawrence's version of the Resurrection should be considered in terms of its spontaneity. He never places importance on the human will, because it holds no meaning in the process of nature. Lawrence became increasingly convinced of such a view of life during his visit to Etruria in 1927 with his friend Earl Brewster. The Etruscans affirm mortal life on earth. They accept death because it is only a part of the process. The affirmation of the process of life and death, in other words, of continuity and discontinuity, is what Lawrence ultimately seeks. Lawrence depicts in *Etruscan Places* their dance as being filled with the pleasure of life: "The curves of their limbs show pure pleasure in life, as if they drew their vitality from different depths that we are denied" (48). They will not seek for the eternal life in Heaven like the Christians, but enjoy life on earth. Moreover, as Simonetta De Filippis describes, Lawrence sees in their dance "the phallic-cosmic mysticism" based on the sense of 'touch' through which one perceives a connection with the universe (116). This view of life offers us a different answer from that of Christianity to the question of the nature of salvation. Lawrence's version of Christ finds the answer to this problem in this novella.

"The man who died" awakes from a long sleep in his tomb without any desire to live. He no longer believes in his mission to promise people everlasting life in the hereafter and begins to realize that this is only an "interference" (13). Interfering in the soul (or desire) of a man constitutes a deed against nature and "striving to sway others" (13), even though it comes from a good will to save

people. What is implied here is that the benevolence in Christianity is in fact a form of “greed” for power over people as well as a deed which goes against nature. The implication of the deceit of Christianity is supported by the fact that the protagonist’s reflections are placed in parallel with detailed depictions of nature in spring when he comes out of the tomb.

The man who had died looked nakedly on life, and saw a vast resoluteness everywhere flinging itself up in stormy or subtle wave-crests, foam-tips emerging out of the blue invisible, a black and orange cock or the green flame-tongues out of the extremes of the fig tree. They came forth, these things and creatures of spring, glowing with desire and with assertion. They came like crests of foam, out of the blue flood of the invisible desire, out of the vast invisible sea of strength, and they came coloured and tangible, evanescent, yet deathless in their coming.
(10)

In Lawrence’s works, the descriptions of nature are not a mere background for the story, but the theme itself. The dynamism of natural things is placed in opposition to the static quality of abstract ideals that the man believed (in this case an allusion to the ‘living dead’ nature of Christian life).

Larry LeDoux points out the importance of the spring in the death-rebirth myth, citing the passages from *The Golden Bough* by Sir James George Frazer:

Under the names of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis, and Attis, the peoples of Egypt and Western Asia represented the yearly decay and revival of life, especially of vegetable life, which they personified as a god who annually died and rose again from the dead. (qtd. in LeDoux 134)

On the basis of the death-rebirth myth there lies the farming life of ancient times, in which spring is a season when seeds are planted that will eventually come to bear fruit. This process of nature is mingled in the myth with the situation where a man sows “a crop” in a woman’s womb and she conceives. Lawrence himself employs an example of the seasonal cycle of vegetable life when he refers to the relation between man and nature:

Man fights for a new conception of life and God, as he fights to plant seeds in the spring: because he knows that is the only way to harvest. If after harvest there is winter again, what does it matter? It is just seasonable” (“On Human Destiny” 629).

Winter denotes man's death. For the moment, however, this only prefigures the theme of Part Two of the story. The first part continues on along the lines of the Bible.

In the famous scene of the reunion with Madeleine (Mary Magdalene), the protagonist says to her the same words as were written in the Bible: "Don't touch me, Madeleine, Not yet!" (12). These words, however, turn out to have a different meaning from the original context. The Bible represents God as the sacred entity who gives us our *raison d'être*, but should not be touched by human flesh. It is God as a transcendental value, whose substance is not within but without us, that establishes our own value. Lawrence's version of Christ repudiates this transcendence which demands that we ignore our own bodies. The transcendence appears in Madeleine's love as self-sacrifice. She feels "the need for excessive giving" (14), but this excessiveness goes against nature.

The cloud of necessity was on her, to be saved from the old, willful Eve, who had embraced many men and taken more than she gave. Now the other doom was on her. She wanted give without taking. And that, too, is hard, and cruel to the warm body. (14)

Love of God does nothing but give without taking, but it is against nature, for nature takes as well as gives, and without greed. Madeleine's giving without taking, or self-sacrifice, is treachery against nature, and against her own body in the first place. On the contrary, to be faithful to one's own body means to be in accordance with nature and for the body to fulfill itself in the process of nature. One should follow the inclinations of the materiality of the body. Madeleine's love, however, is a value based on ideality. Whatever value love may manifest, as long as it is against nature, it is only a kind of arrogance of human beings. So "the man who died" denies Mary's love as such. We can see here, therefore, the transformation of the words "Don't touch me", which ought to represent the untouchable sacredness of God, into the rhetoric of the denial of love and self-sacrifice.

3

After leaving Madeleine, the man meets the woman who serves Isis—a goddess who is "looking for the fragments of the dead Osiris, dead and scattered asunder over the world" (25). She wants to "gather him together and fold her

arms round the reassembled body till it became warm again, and roused to life, and could embrace her, and could fecundate her womb" (25). She had found the fragments of his body except his phallus, "the last reality, the final clue to him, that alone could bring him really back to her" (26). This is the mystery of Isis, as well as that of the woman who serves her. Compared with the characterization of Madeleine with her abstract ideals, this pagan woman is described using sensual imagery. As Robert MacDonald points out, Lawrence's symbolism has the function of expressing "emotions and aspirations which cannot be reduced to a formula, and whose extent and subtlety can only be suggested by an imagery based on the multiple allusions of a symbolic complex" (35). Symbols are used in Lawrence's mythopoeic imagination as a means of expressing cosmic relations between humans and nature, which cannot be reduced to a formula. In the following example, the woman of Isis is described as an element of nature:

"For she was Isis of the subtle lotus, the womb which waits submerged and in bud, waits for the touch of that other inward sun that streams its rays from the loins of the male Osiris"(26).

When she is young, she meets men who are gallant and imposing, such as Anthony and Caesar. They have virile beauty and passion, but also a greed for power, hubris and self-complacency, which "congeal her womb" (27). The lotus "will not answer to all the blight heat of the sun" (27), but to the invisible sun in the night:

[T]he lotus stirs as to a caress, and rises upwards through the flood, and lifts up her bent head, and opens with an expansion such as no other flower knows, and spreads her sharp rays of bliss, and offers her soft, gold depths such as no other flower possesses, to the penetration of the flooding, violet-dark sun that has died and risen and makes no show. (27)

Like this, all the metaphors concerning her can be connected with natural things. This kind of imagery comes from sensuality found in nature. Moreover, we comprehend that the woman stays away from the greed, which is definitely opposed to nature. In the first place, such a woman was anticipated as knowing "the greater life of the body, not greedy to give, not greedy to take" (16). This phrase represents exactly the "nature" of nature, and in all these instances the woman who serves Isis is designated as a synecdoche of nature. Lawrence's

version of Christ is resurrected into the world through physical union with this pagan woman, which means that he is resurrected by nature. This shows that Lawrence tries to bring the foundation of faith back within nature, as opposed to Christianity, which establishes its belief system on an idealistic basis outside nature.

From this viewpoint, we are able to grasp the motive for Lawrence's mythopoeia within the context of a philosophy of nature, and to regard this "supremely significant foundational story" for Lawrence as a story of nature. In this regard, Lawrence bears in mind the notion of nature of the pagan world where it is hard to draw clear lines of demarcation between science and magic. For, as Frazer notes in *The Golden Bough*, Isis is a deity who has the special ability of magic. The woman who serves Isis is characterized as the embodiment of nature as such.

This characterization also reflects the arguments of the early Greek philosophy of nature which Lawrence had been reading at that time. For example, Empedocles argued that the human body is constituted of four elements, water, earth, light and air. This means "we" are produced through the interaction between the body, the mind and the material elements outside it. This claim is always obvious in Lawrence. In "The Two Principles" he says:

There certainly does exist a subtle and complex sympathy, correspondence, between the plasm of the human body, which is identical with the primary human psyche, and the material elements outside. The primary human psyche is a complex plasm, which quivers, sense-conscious, in contact with the circumambient cosmos. Our plasmic psyche is radio-active, connecting with all things, and having first-knowledge of all things. (227)

Eventually the man spontaneously yields to the healing and sensual touch of Isis. A restoration to a man of his whole life is realized through the intermediary of a woman's body, or nature.

"I am going to be warm again, and I am going to be whole! I shall be warm like the morning. I shall be a man. It doesn't need understanding. It needs newness. She brings me newness—". (42)

"Father!" he said, "why did you hide this from me?" And he touched her with the poignancy of wonder, and the marvelous piercing tran-

scendence of desire. "Lo!" he said, "this is beyond prayer." It was the deep, interfolded warmth, warmth living and penetrable, the woman, the heart of the rose! My mansion is the intricate warm rose, my joy is this blossom! (43)

Here we can see the theme of "denuding", which means that nature removes clothing of the ideas from the body and reveals the presupposition that is hidden behind it. The man no longer tries to understand, intervene or control nature, but instead dedicates himself to the "naked revelation" of nature. In addition, this act of uncovering also includes the restoration of the faculty of the body to interact with the circumambient cosmos. He restores his ability to enjoy life on the earth, which gives him inexhaustible joys. The denuded body, or the exposed body, is no longer the body which has been given meanings in advance, instead it is one which is called just "thisness", but the place where a new meaning and a new joy is produced.

The words "denude" or "thisness" are used here as they were defined by Giorgio Agamben. His book *Nudity* is written for the purpose of reconsidering the weighty theological legacy marked in western culture. Commenting on the story of Genesis at the point after Adam and Eve realized for the first time that they were naked, Agamben calls attention to the fact that in Christianity there is no theology of nudity.

[N]udity exists only negatively, so to speak: as a privation of the clothing of grace and as a presaging of the resplendent garment of glory that the blessed will receive in heaven. Full nudity exists, perhaps, only in the bodies of the damned in hell, as they unremittingly suffer the eternal torment of divine justice. (58)

In this novella, however, Lawrence depicts full nudity as earthly bliss by converting Christian faith into a naturalistic or materialistic one. The discovery through this transformation is exactly the one which is explained in *Nudity* as follows.

In the inexplicable envelopment, there is no secret; denuded, it manifests itself as pure appearance. [...] The matheme of nudity is, in this sense, simply this: haecce! There is nothing other than this. (90)

The experience of nudity in this novella can "defuse the theological apparatus and allow us to see, beyond the prestige of grace and the chimeras of corrupt nature, a simple, inapparent human body" (Agamben 90). The unveiled body

proves to be nothing other than “this”, without any secret in it. The man finds the “thisness” of the body, which bears no secrets but at the same time brings him “newness”. Where on earth does this “newness” come from?

The “thisness” of the body for Lawrence is neither one of “bare life” (Agamben) which produces no meaning other than mere existence, nor one of a victim which permits intervention by others. Rather Lawrence emphasizes a warm body with blood, which lures others to physical relationship. This is already suggested in Part One, when he says “[a]nd perhaps one evening I shall meet a woman who can lure my risen body, yet leave me my aloneness” (20). “The body which lures” other bodies implies something that engenders a “relationship”. The body is a potentiality to generate new meanings by connecting with other bodies. If viewed on the basis of materiality, the body is relation itself. Lawrence strips the transcendence from the body, but it does not result in repudiating the signification itself. Instead he sends the signification back to the materialistic basis. In the above mentioned passages, it is clear that the protagonist finds the new meaning of life. The importance of the body in the myth of Lawrence is, therefore, the importance of the material or its potentiality which generates newness. The deactivation of the theological apparatus is brought to realization by the affirmation of the materiality of the body.

As I mentioned, some studies connect the resurrection of Christ with the eastern death-rebirth myth, or its theme with the Christian revisionism. However, even though Lawrence employs religious vocabulary such as “resurrection” or “salvation”, those terms should be reinterpreted in the context of the philosophy of nature. They are the “resurrection” and the “salvation” as the process of nature. We can say, therefore, that Lawrence’s belief in life goes beyond the criticism of the individual religion to a call for a radically different view of the world.

4

In the context described above we can reinterpret the new resurrection of Christ as the transformation of faith, and then we have to put the question of what Lawrence substitutes for the Christian idea of salvation.

When the woman of Isis becomes pregnant in due course, the man realizes the time has come again for him to depart. Judged from Christian morals, leaving behind a pregnant woman will be interpreted as “unmanly” and irrespon-

sible, but the man no longer exists on a plane where Christian morals are valid. He already lives on the plane of an ethics of nature where everything follows a process of its fulfillment. He knows "[the] spring was fulfilled, a contact was established, the man and the woman were fulfilled of one another, and departure was in the air" (44). By the word "fulfill" Lawrence means a relation between a man and a woman should be fulfilled but the perpetuation of that relation should not be desired, because "desire is a living stream. If we gave free rein, or a free course, to our living flow of desire, we shouldn't go far wrong" (Lawrence, "...Love Was" 455). It is the subject, the self or the ego that "plays a false part in it. [...] This subtle streaming of desire is beyond the control of the ego" (452).

Therefore the word "responsibility" should be reconsidered. It has usually meant the responsibilities of the subject. For example, a responsibility to one's family has been judged in the historical context of humanism, where the subject and his will are concerned. When the word "responsibility" is considered, however, in the context of the process of nature beyond human history, we should take it as a "response-ability" on etymological grounds as Jacques Derrida has done. This is because human will becomes irrelevant in the context of the process of nature which goes beyond humanity. The responsibility of the subject, therefore, cannot be formed where there are not any subjects. Instead what life in nature responds to should be questioned. Responses have an originally spontaneous nature, but at the same time they are the place where we can be most active. The response which Lawrence's version of Christ exerts here is "to flee". The flight is already suggested in the original title, *The Escaped Cock*. Judging from the fact that the word "cock" is slang for penis, we can detect Lawrence's confrontational attitude in this title.

Among philosophers who affirm "flight" is Gilles Deleuze, who gives the term a positive meaning. He states the following in *Dialogue II*: "The great and only error lies in thinking that a line of flight consists in fleeing from life; the flight into the imaginary, or into art. On the contrary, to flee is to produce the real, to create life, to find a weapon" (49). To flee means to escape from the force that binds us, to let go of what was once connected in order to connect with something new. It can be said that behind the humorous title of *The Escaped Cock* Lawrence repudiates being fixed and hopes for the continuation of the flow. Just like a cock which escapes from its bindings, the man goes off in a boat, flatly

rejecting the formation of the family triangle, remaining single. Even early on in the story he already sought his own aloneness as well as the touch of a woman; “perhaps one evening I shall meet a woman who can lure my risen body, yet leave me my aloneness” (20). Flight is the only way for us to be an individual, freed from the attachment of family—detaching the relations between individuals from a fixed configuration and putting them back into the process of nature for them to enter into new interactions. This is equivalent to discovering “a new world”, as Deleuze mentions that “fleeing means not making an exit from the world, but discovering worlds” (*Dialogue II* 36). In short, nothing is more active than to flee.

Fleeing is based on believing in the great power of materials to connect with each other and engender new possibilities. This allows for a retrieval of a belief in this world within this world. This is the salvation which Lawrence kept in mind. The descriptions of life in a universal way like this no longer concern personal affairs, and are appropriate to the title of myth. Lawrence, however, never depreciates personal affairs, human history or collective values. He only puts their conditions in the foreground in order to revise them. As Keith Sagar points out, the quest of radical life should take a mythic form (673). Lawrence’s concept of salvation goes beyond the modernist recourse to mythmaking, whose intention is to give order to the chaotic world. Rather Lawrence reaches for a far plane where our existence should be considered in terms of impersonality or post-humanism. In this sense, we can regard Lawrence’s mythopoeia as apprehending a portion of the postmodern thought of contemporary philosophers, such as Derrida, Deleuze and Agamben.

5

As mythopoeia is understood as the act of recreating the world in the forms of myth, Lawrence does this exactly by replacing Christian myth with the Egyptian one of Isis-Osiris. He never destroys the concept of salvation, instead he shows the path to salvation through the transformation from belief in the abstract values into belief in materiality of the world and the body. To put it another way, Lawrence’s salvation means “believing in this world as it is”. This claim agrees with the following passage from Deleuze’s *Cinema 2* about the characteristics of the modern films:

What is certain is that believing is no longer believing in another world, or in a transformed world. It is only, it is simply believing in the body. It is discourse to the body, and, for this purpose, reaching the body before discourses, before words, before things are named. (*Cinema 2*, 167)

This transformation of belief which seeks for the healing of the split between man and the world, thought and the body, can be seen as a practice, or a performative action which is entirely philosophical. As Kathrin Thiele mentions, “thinking the world differently [...] turns the world from something given into something to be explored, always to be constructed and created”, and it “implies a different practice of thinking itself” (Thiele 33). It was Lawrence’s wish, moreover, when he endeavored to found “Rananim” that as a sociopolitical practice, this would enunciate a viable community of the future which does not yet exist.

Reading this novella along this line, we come to an answer through a Lawrentian approach the problem of the double “doubleness” in mythopoeia, which is described in Section 1. As for the first doubleness that myth means both a supremely significant foundational story and a falsehood, Lawrence’s mythopoeia is not presented as representing the given world or searching for the truth in it. Instead we can see it as the act of offering a new belief in the world through a belief in materiality. As Sagar explains, Lawrence “never lost his faith that the world in which the war was taking place was not as real as the world of his own imagination” (676). Creating the world of his own imagination is a practice which can claim constituting “reality”, making “fiction” or fabulation. It demands faith in “the powers of the false” (Deleuze, *Cinema 2* 142), the powers of language as material for the creation of the new. This corresponds to the part of this story that emphasizes the belief in materiality of the body, and therefore life on the earth. Consequently, from the constitutional perspective which Lawrence bears, though a fable means a falsehood, as long as it constitutes another reality, “a falsehood” agrees with “a supremely significant foundational story”.

Next, as for the second problem of the absoluteness and the relativity of the modernist convictions, we should first remember where Lawrence’s absolute conviction comes from: the “thisness” of the body. Creating characters without proper names, as well as not clearly specifying the place where they act, endows them with a broadly mythic and impersonal nature. Moreover, by use of sym-

bolic expressions Lawrence dehumanizes the characters by representing them with natural things. The words such as lotus, bud or sun in the descriptions of the pagan woman are examples of dehumanized metaphors. It is opposite to the anthropomorphism, or the personification of natural things. From the characterization, the setting and literary techniques, we find the characteristics of Lawrence's belief beyond humanism. This is because he sees life from the perspective of nature which goes beyond human history. He places human life back on a material basis and reconsiders it as potentiality which produces new values.

From this viewpoint, the absoluteness for Lawrence comes not from the humanistic transcendent values, but the "thisness" of the being as material and its potentiality to produce something new. It is absolute because it does not represent anything other than itself, but the new reality which it produces has an arbitrary nature because it results not from its will, but the contingency of its encounter with other beings. It also has a relative nature, because the outcome of a constituting process is never fully determinable in that it never exists as the preconstituted whole which assigns meanings to its constituents. This is why the absoluteness of "thisness" of being and its potentiality as material to produce do not disagree with the arbitrariness and the relativity of its effects or products.

As we have observed above, the resurrection of the body which Lawrence suggests in this novella has common ground with contemporary thought. We can call the body he depicts "the denuded body", "the exposed body", "the becoming body", "the body which escapes from being fixed". The body can also be said to be the place where the event of "being denuded" occurs. He never intends to exalt the body to the transcendent status. On the contrary, like Agamben's project in *Nudity*, which presents the denuded body as nothing other than "this" without any secrets, Lawrence tries to deactivate the theological apparatuses which have long been producing the separation between nature and man, the body and the mind. This assertion may appear dismissive, but the denuded body as thisness allows the dynamic power of life to emerge and opens a way to create a new mode of social interaction, or to use Lawrence's term, "the true relationship".

In this way, Lawrence presents a new form of salvation to us through the belief in the body or the materiality of the world, which allows for the invention of a new world. This intention to invent something new is also true of the

act of fabulation itself, because it is also based on a belief in the materiality of language. This act has risks, of course, as Ronald Bogue explains, because one cannot know ahead of time what one's invention will lead to; rather it is the only means of developing new possibilities for art and the social collectivity (19). In this sense, Lawrence's suggestion is effective for us, too, who live in the day of disbelief in any possibility for alternatives. By means of mythopoeia or fabulation, Lawrence transmits to us another idea of belief and an alternative picture of salvation, and inevitably forces us to consider new possibilities of life.

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SUMMARY

Postmodern Salvation through Mythopoeia
in *The Man Who Died*

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This paper argues that it is possible to detect in Lawrence's mythopoeia in his last novella, *The Man Who Died*, an alternative concept of salvation which is based on the transformation of belief: from belief in the abstract values of Christianity into belief in the materiality of the body and the world. It also explores the possibility of the postmodern characteristic in the alternative salvation, by employing the word "fleeing" in the context of the process of nature.

In this novella Lawrence replaces the Christian resurrection with the Isis-Osiris myth and presents the resurrection of the protagonist through physical union with a pagan woman. After she becomes pregnant, he decides to leave her and "flees". This new plot can be regarded as Lawrence's challenge of writing against the mind-centric moral. He substitutes humanistic morals for an ethics of nature.

To demonstrate how the term "fleeing" could be applied to Lawrence's form of salvation, it should be understood through the conceptual apparatus of Deleuze/Guattari and Giorgio Agamben. Materials have the power to transform themselves into something new, something different from themselves, so the postmodern notion of flight can be implied in this belief in materiality: fleeing from being fixed and fleeing toward new possibilities for life.