

## D. H. LAWRENCE IN CONTEXT

This collection of original, concise essays by leading international scholars draws closely on the Cambridge Edition of the Letters and Works of D. H. Lawrence to provide up-to-date insights into the key contexts to the author's life, career, and legacy. It opens with an overview of Lawrence's life as it is explored in biographies and revealed in his letters and writing, before reassessing his relationship to the contemporary literary marketplace, and his response to – and intervention in – a range of literary/cultural and social/historical contexts. It ends with sections on Lawrence's changing critical reception and his powerful legacy in the work of later authors and filmmakers. The chapters present a detailed and nuanced picture of Lawrence as an enterprising professional author with a truly cosmopolitan outlook who engaged deeply and strongly with his contemporary culture, and with currents of thought across a range of disciplines.

Andrew Harrison is Associate Professor of English Literature and Director of the D. H. Lawrence Research Centre at the University of Nottingham. He has published widely on Lawrence and is co-editor (with John Worthen) of *D. H. Lawrence's 'Sons and Lovers': A Casebook* (2005), and the author of *D. H. Lawrence and Italian Futurism: A Study of Influence* (2003) and *The Life of D. H. Lawrence: A Critical Biography* (2016).



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CONTEXT

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## *Preface*

D. H. Lawrence is an author who polarizes critical opinion, and his changing critical fortunes reflect the strong feelings of antagonism and partisanship he has aroused in his critics and the wider culture. Early in his career he gained an unwanted reputation for eroticism; in later years he was accused of being sex-obsessed and his work was viewed as deliberately lewd. An outpouring of memoirs after his death in 1930 celebrated him as a prophetic – even messianic – figure who reacted against the prurience of his contemporaries and was actually rather puritanical in his attitudes to the sanctity and purity of the body. Literary criticism has variously seen him as a normative moralist in the ‘Great Tradition’ of the English novel; an intuitive, sometimes undisciplined latter-day Romantic half in love with death and decay; a chauvinistic figure who used romance plots to advance an essentially masculinist creed; and a constant reviser of his work whose formal experiments, linguistic inventiveness and commitment to his craft invite comparison to his high modernist contemporaries, such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

Lawrence today is a far more complex, eclectic and contradictory figure than he has seemed in the past. The Cambridge Edition of his Letters (8 volumes, 1979–2000) and Works (40 volumes, 1980–) is nearing completion; it offers unprecedented access to the full range of his ideas and to the many contexts in which he wrote. The Letters provide a rich, panoramic insight into the extent of Lawrence’s influences. They also contain very full evidence of the ways in which he contested these influences, taking issue (for instance) with views on aesthetics, religion, the Great War, psychology, science and censorship. The editorial introductions to the Works provide accounts of Lawrence’s sources and habits of revision; the appendixes and textual apparatus – hitherto underused by critics – give access to early and variant states of texts, allowing one to discern changes in his approach to ideas, as well as to the form of his writing and his readership. The Cambridge Edition has greatly extended and added detail to our

understanding of Lawrence's life, thought and writing practice; *D. H. Lawrence in Context* draws closely on it to present a new, clearer, more nuanced image of the author.

Lawrence engaged deeply and strongly with his contemporary culture, and with currents of thought across a range of different disciplines. In addition to his distinctive and influential work as a novelist, short story writer, poet, dramatist and reviewer, he was a prolific travel writer and painter, and he produced a number of philosophical works, two psychology books, many journalistic articles, and works of biblical and cultural criticism and anthropology. The aim of this volume is to offer the fullest and most detailed contextualization to date of his engagement with, and contribution to, these various areas of activity.

The volume offers a broad, but also detailed, coverage of the contexts of Lawrence's writing. Part I ('Life Writing / Writing the Life') reviews his life and career, focusing on important and contentious areas in the biographical record and in recent biographies. It then provides revisionary accounts of how his life was drawn upon and transformed in his letters and writing. Part II ('The Literary Marketplace') shows how Lawrence's work was shaped by his contemporary literary culture, highlighting those areas in which Lawrence sought to challenge publishing practices through his aesthetic choices and outspokenness, and through the various publishing schemes he conceived in order to sell his writing and sustain his career as a professional writer. Part III ('Literary and Cultural Contexts') discusses Lawrence's relation to his contemporaries and contextualizes his innovative (and often subversive) engagement with literary influences, and with a range of different literary and non-literary forms (including philosophy and the visual arts). Part IV ('Social and Historical Contexts') addresses Lawrence's intervention in debates on a range of important contemporary issues, from class and religion to suffragism, psychoanalysis, race and cultural difference, ecology and censorship. Part V ('Critical Fortunes') reviews important trends in the critical reception of Lawrence's works. Beginning with the responses of female authors and memoirists during his lifetime and immediately after his death, it goes on to consider F. R. Leavis's championing of his writing in the 1940s and 1950s, the feminist approaches to his work in the 1960s and 1970s, the impact of the Cambridge Edition from the late 1970s to the present day, and Lawrence's prescient engagement with ideas familiar to us in current critical theory. Part VI ('Creative Legacies') offers an account of his influence on later writers and his ongoing cultural presence in film adaptations.



*Preface*

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Quotations from the letters and works of D. H. Lawrence are reproduced by permission of Paper Lion Ltd, acting on behalf of the Estate of Frieda Lawrence Ravagli.

I would like to thank the contributors for their hard work and co-operation; my mother for her guidance; Annalise Grice for her invaluable help; John Worthen for his continued support of my work on Lawrence; Ray Ryan of Cambridge University Press for his encouragement and advice throughout the editing and production processes; and Catherine Rae for her exemplary copy-editing. I must also acknowledge the School of English at the University of Nottingham, which awarded me a period of research leave to complete my work on the book. Special thanks to Josephine Guy, Lynda Pratt, Dominic Head and Adam Rounce.

## *Abbreviations*

Wherever possible, quotations from the letters and works of D. H. Lawrence in the main text and endnotes refer readers to the Cambridge Edition, using the short forms listed below.

### ***Letters of D. H. Lawrence***

- 1L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume I, September 1901–May 1913*, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
- 2L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume II, June 1913–October 1916*, eds. George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- 3L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume III, October 1916–June 1921*, eds. James T. Boulton and Andrew Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
- 4L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume IV, June 1921–March 1924*, eds. Warren Roberts, James T. Boulton and Elizabeth Mansfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- 5L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume V, March 1924–March 1927*, eds. James T. Boulton and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- 6L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume VI, March 1927–November 1928*, eds. James T. Boulton and Margaret H. Boulton with Gerald M. Lacy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- 7L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume VII, November 1928–February 1930*, eds. Keith Sagar and James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- 8L *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume VIII, Previously Uncollected Letters and General Index*, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

*List of Abbreviations*

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**Works of D. H. Lawrence**

- A* *Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
- AR* *Aaron's Rod*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- BB* *The Boy in the Bush*, with M. L. Skinner, ed. Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- EmyE* *England, My England and Other Stories*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- FLC* *The First and Second Lady Chatterley Novels*, eds. Dieter Mehl and Christa Jansohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- Fox* *The Fox, The Captain's Doll, The Ladybird*, ed. Dieter Mehl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- FWL* *The First 'Women in Love'*, eds. John Worthen and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- IR* *Introductions and Reviews*, eds. N. H. Reeve and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- K* *Kangaroo*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- LAH* *Love Among the Haystacks and Other Stories*, ed. John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- LCL* *Lady Chatterley's Lover and A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'*, ed. Michael Squires (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- LEA* *Late Essays and Articles*, ed. James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- LG* *The Lost Girl*, ed. John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- MEH* *Movements in European History*, ed. Philip Crumpton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- MM* *Mornings in Mexico and Other Essays*, ed. Virginia Crosswhite Hyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- MN* *Mr Noon*, ed. Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
- Plays* *The Plays*, eds. Hans-Wilhelm Schwarze and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

- PM* *Paul Morel*, ed. Helen Baron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- PO* *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*, ed. John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- Poems* *The Poems*. 2 vols., ed. Christopher Pollnitz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- PS* *The Plumed Serpent*, ed. L. D. Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- PFU* *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- Q* *Quetzalcoatl*, ed. N. H. Reeve (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- Paintings* *The Paintings of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Mandrake Press, 1929).
- R* *The Rainbow*, ed. Mark Kinkead-Weekes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- RDP* *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Herbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- SCAL* *Studies in Classic American Literature*, eds. Ezra Greenspan, Lindeth Vasey and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- SEP* *Sketches of Etruscan Places and Other Italian Essays*, ed. Simonetta de Filippis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- SL* *Sons and Lovers*, eds. Helen Baron and Carl Baron (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- SM* *St. Mawr and Other Stories*, ed. Brian Finney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- SS* *Sea and Sardinia*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- STH* *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
- T* *The Trespasser*, ed. Elizabeth Mansfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- TI* *Twilight in Italy and Other Essays*, ed. Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- VicG* *The Vicar's Garden and Other Stories*, ed. N. H. Reeve (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

*List of Abbreviations*

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- VG        *The Virgin and the Gipsy and Other Stories*, eds. Michael Herbert, Bethan Jones and Lindeth Vasey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- WL        *Women in Love*, eds. David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- WP        *The White Peacock*, eds. Andrew Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- WWRA    *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*, eds. Dieter Mehl and Christa Jansohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

