
THE COMPLETE CRITICAL GUIDE TO
D. H. LAWRENCE

Fiona Becket



London and New York

THE COMPLETE CRITICAL GUIDE TO D. H. LAWRENCE

How did Lawrence become one of modernism's most dominant and highly controversial authors?

Why is criticism of his work still animated today?

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'*The Complete Critical Guide to D.H. Lawrence* is a lucid and remarkably comprehensive survey of Lawrence's life and work and of the extensive criticism devoted to his writings. Covering his poems, novels, short fiction, plays and ancillary prose writings, and outlining most of the major critical works and positions in respect of them, Fiona Becket's *Guide* will be an invaluable resource for all students of Lawrence, lay or professional.'

Peter Widdowson, *University of Gloucestershire*

Fiona Becket lectures in twentieth-century English literature at the University of Leeds. She is the author of *D.H. Lawrence: The Thinker as Poet* (1997).

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For J. S.

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SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

The Complete Critical Guide to English Literature is a ground-breaking collection of one-volume introductions to the work of the major writers in the English literary canon. Each volume in the series offers the reader a comprehensive account of the featured author's life, of his or her writing and of the ways in which his or her works have been interpreted by literary critics. The series is both explanatory and stimulating; it reflects the achievements of state-of-the-art literary-historical research and yet manages to be intellectually accessible for the reader who may be encountering a canonical author's work for the first time. It will be useful for students and teachers of literature at all levels, as well as for the general reader. Each book can be read through, or consulted in a companion-style fashion.

The aim of *The Complete Critical Guide to English Literature* is to adopt an approach that is as factual, objective and non-partisan as possible, in order to provide the 'full picture' for readers and allow them to form their own judgements. At the same time, however, the books engage the reader in a discussion of the most demanding questions involved in each author's life and work. Did Pope's physical condition affect his treatment of matters of gender and sexuality? Does a feminist reading of *Middlemarch* enlighten us regarding the book's presentation of nineteenth-century British society? Do we deconstruct Beckett's work, or does he do so himself? Contributors to this series address such crucial questions, offer potential solutions and recommend further reading for independent study. In doing so, they equip the reader for an informed and confident examination of the life and work of key canonical figures and of the critical controversies surrounding them.

The aims of the series are reflected in the structure of the books. Part I, 'Life and Contexts', offers a compact biography of the featured author against the background of his or her epoch. In Part II, 'Work', the focus is on the author's most important works, discussed from a non-partisan, literary-historical perspective; the section provides an account of the works, reflecting a consensus of critical opinion on them, and indicating, where appropriate, areas of controversy. These and other issues are taken up again in Part III, 'Criticism', which offers an account of the critical responses generated by the author's work. Contemporaneous reviews and debates are considered, along with opinions inspired by more recent theoretical approaches, such as New Criticism,

SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

feminism, Marxism, psychoanalytic criticism, deconstruction and New Historicism.

The volumes in this series will together constitute a comprehensive reference work, offering an up-to-date, user-friendly and reliable account of the heritage of English literature from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. We hope that *The Complete Critical Guide to English Literature* will become for its readers, academic and non-academic alike, an indispensable source of information and inspiration.

RICHARD BRADFORD

JAN JEDRZEJEWSKI

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ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCING

Unless otherwise stated, reference is to the Cambridge edition of the works of D.H. Lawrence. The Penguin Books edition (Penguin Twentieth-Century Classics) reproduces the Cambridge text, including pagination, and may be more generally available.

WORKS OF D.H. LAWRENCE

A	<i>Aaron's Rod</i>
Apocalypse	<i>Apocalypse and the Writings on Revelation</i>
BB	<i>The Boy in the Bush</i> (with M.L. Skinner)
CP	<i>The Complete Poems of D.H. Lawrence</i> (1977) ed. V. de Sola Pinto and W. Roberts, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
CSN	<i>The Complete Short Novels</i> (1988) ed. K. Sagar and M. Partridge, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
EME	<i>England My England and Other Stories</i>
F&P	<i>'Fantasia of the Unconscious' and 'Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious'</i> (1986) Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
F	<i>'The Fox' 'The Captain's Doll' 'The Ladybird'</i>
K	<i>Kangaroo</i>
LCL	<i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i>
LCL I	<i>The First Lady Chatterley</i> (1973) Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
LCL II	<i>John Thomas and Lady Jane</i> (1973) Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
LG	<i>The Lost Girl</i>
MN	<i>Mr Noon</i>
Phoenix	<i>Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D.H. Lawrence</i> (1936) ed. E.D. McDonald, New York: Viking Press
Phoenix II	<i>Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Works by D.H. Lawrence</i> (1968) ed. W. Roberts and H.T. Moore, London: Heinemann
Plays	<i>The Plays</i>
PS	<i>The Plumed Serpent</i>
R	<i>The Rainbow</i>
RDP	<i>Reflections of the Death of a Porcupine and Other Essays</i>

SCAL	<i>Studies in Classic American Literature</i> (1977) Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
SEP	<i>Sketches of Etruscan Places and Other Italian Essays</i>
SL	<i>Sons and Lovers</i>
SM	<i>The Symbolic Meaning: The Uncollected Versions of 'Studies in Classic American Literature'</i> (1962) ed. A. Arnold, Arundel: Centaur Press
SS	<i>Sea and Sardinia</i>
STH	<i>Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays</i>
STM	<i>St Mawr and Other Stories</i>
T	<i>The Trespasser</i>
TI	<i>Twilight in Italy and Other Essays</i>
W	<i>Women in Love</i>
WP	<i>The White Peacock</i>
WWRA	<i>The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories</i>

LETTERS OF D.H. LAWRENCE

Letters I	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume I (1979) ed. J.T. Boulton, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Letters II	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume II (1982) ed. G.J. Zytaruk and J.T. Boulton, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Letters III	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume III (1984) ed. J.T. Boulton and A. Robertson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Letters IV	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume IV (1987) ed. W. Roberts, J.T. Boulton and E. Mansfield, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Letters V	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume V (1989) ed. J.T. Boulton and L. Vasey, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Letters VI	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume VI (1991) ed. J.T. Boulton, M.H. Boulton and G.M. Lacy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
Letters VII	<i>The Letters of D.H. Lawrence</i> , Volume VII (1993) ed. K. Sagar and J.T. Boulton, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

For all other references the Harvard system is used. Full details of items cited in the text can be found in the Bibliography.

Cross-referencing is a feature of this series. Cross-references to relevant page numbers appear in bold type and square brackets **[28]**.

INTRODUCTION

This book examines the literary career of D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930), one of the most prolific of the English writers to dominate the high period of literary modernism even whilst he appeared to inhabit its margins, an intellectual who was deeply suspicious of the mental life, and an important critic of his culture. His legacy is a vast corpus of work in practically every major literary genre, he also painted. Lawrence was one of England's most controversial literary figures: censors balked at his representations of the sexual lives of men and women and, in the period of the Great War (1914–18), at what they perceived to be anti-patriotic sentiments in his work. Few readers remain indifferent to Lawrence's writing, and the seventy-two years since his death have produced a range of critical responses from admiration to vilification.

Part I of this book, *Life and Contexts*, provides a synopsis of the main events in Lawrence's life and the broad contexts which informed his thought and writing. In Part II, *Works*, details are given of the novels, novellas, short stories, plays, poetry and discursive, or non-fiction, writing. In Part III, *Criticism*, clear guidance is given on some main directions in Lawrence studies from the responses of his contemporaries to the present. Special attention is given to the influence of the Cambridge critic F.R. Leavis, and then to more recent reassessments of the work and its general significance. With this aim, the section identifies a number of clearly defined areas: Lawrence and psycho-analytic criticism; Lawrence and society; Lawrence and feminist criticism; Lawrence and questions of language.

The Complete Critical Guide to D.H. Lawrence thus provides a synopsis of Lawrence's life and contexts, a detailed introduction to his *oeuvre*, and an up-to-date account of the principal directions in Lawrence criticism. Read through, it is a comprehensive introduction to Lawrence's work and preoccupations; alternatively, cross-references between the sections make it possible to pursue a particular line of enquiry within the book, supported by an extensive bibliography.

PART I

LIFE AND CONTEXTS

Born on 11 September 1885 in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, into a working-class family, David Herbert Lawrence was the fourth child of Arthur and Lydia Lawrence (née Beardsall). He was educated at Nottingham High School and University College, Nottingham where he studied to become a school-teacher. On qualifying, he became a class teacher for several years but resigned due to illness. He supported himself thereafter by writing. In 1912 he met and fell in love with Frieda Weekley, a free-thinking German woman with a very different social background from Lawrence, for whom she left her husband and young family. They married following her divorce in 1914. Leaving England in 1919, the Lawrences spent much of their lives travelling, settling for varying periods in continental Europe, Australia and the Americas. From his earliest years to his last days Lawrence wrote, his literary importance confirmed well before his death, in Vence (France), on 2 March 1930.

△ In as much as Lawrence's *oeuvre* is the result of his continual examination of the relationships between the personal, the social, the political and the spiritual, it may be the case that his thought is brought into sharpest focus by some understanding of his background and experiences. He is a writer whose work has given rise to diverse critical views [117–158]. His writing life spawned several controversies and some of his books were suppressed by an Establishment that he frequently offended. Lawrence continually drew on his working-class, nonconformist background to shape his ideas, even when they developed – as they did – out of resistance to his social and spiritual conditioning. In seventy years of reading and re-reading his work, few critics have felt able to ignore the relation between his life and writing (a tendency which this *Guide* reproduces!). For contemporary readers, however, important areas continue to be Lawrence's relationship to a literary tradition as well as his relationship to modernist literary practice [14]; the ways in which his work explores issues of self and sexuality and, in particular, masculinity; his development of social and political themes; his awareness of the environment. Theorizing Lawrence, however, seldom occurs without some reference to the contexts which produced him.

Part I of this *Guide* provides an opportunity to assess the significance to an understanding of the novels, poems and plays of Lawrence's family and social background as well as his working and intellectual relationships. For example, it is often acknowledged that Lawrence drew upon details of his family and working-class culture for the novel *Sons and Lovers* (1913), for plays like *The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd* (1914) and for other highly praised pieces, notably the short story 'Odour of

Chrysanthemums' (1911), his first novel *The White Peacock* (1911) and 'Daughters of the Vicar' (1914). It is also the case that his marriage, and early experiences with women, were examined in a book of poems, *Look! We Have Come Through!* (1917), and in the unfinished novel *Mr Noon* (1934; 1984). Lawrence used novels, in particular, to work out his ideas. The development of a personal philosophy or 'metaphysic' (which was not fixed but altered subtly throughout his writing life) is consequently at the heart of the great challenge of the major novels, *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920), and gets continual examination, revision and restatement in *Aaron's Rod* (1922), *Kangaroo* (1923), *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928).

(a) EARLY INFLUENCES

Biographers writing about Lawrence's parents and their families emphasize the social backgrounds of both. The principal Victorian industries included steelmaking, mining and textiles. Textiles, mining and engineering accounted for a high percentage of employment in the East Midlands where the Lawrence family lived. Arthur Lawrence (1846–1924) worked all his life in the coal mines and Lawrence grew up in the mining community of Eastwood. Most young men who shared Lawrence's social and economic background were likely to find employment in, or relating to, their local industries which in Eastwood was dominated by coal. Some of Lawrence's forebears had worked in lace-making, for which Nottingham was an important centre in the nineteenth century, and his paternal grandfather was a tailor by trade who supplied the Brinsley mine with pit clothes (see 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside' (1929) in *Phoenix*, 1936: 133). At the turn of the century the majority of working-class children left school by the time they were fourteen but Lawrence stayed on to obtain the kind of education that could make possible a different lifestyle, and in eventually qualifying as a school teacher he obtained a profession. In 'Nottingham and the Mining Countryside' (which is a nostalgic look back at his origins) Lawrence alludes to Eastwood's industrial past as it developed from a rural settlement with its modern origins in small-scale mining into the small Victorian town which Lawrence knew, with church, chapel and market-place. The most palpable social changes occurred, as in comparable communities, with the arrival of the large privately owned mining companies. When Lawrence writes about his boyhood community and its social history in this essay he idealizes the modesty of working-class life, and rails against the obvious signs

of modernization such as the products of new building schemes (new housing for workers' families). Addressing details of working life, his attention is never seriously on economic hardship or social inequality, and while much of his fiction and poetry articulates anti-bourgeois sentiments, his representation of working-class values is not separable from his highly personal celebration of a 'native' identity which is more romantic than it is political.

All accounts reveal that Lawrence was closer to his mother, Lydia (1851–1910), than to his father, especially after the sudden death of one of his brothers, Ernest, in 1901. His mother's family, on the Beardsall side, are often represented by biographers as a family marked by its social aspirations, even pretensions, in severe economic decline, nostalgic for a lost status, contemptuous of their ultimate need for thrift yet proud of their prudent management in times of crisis. Lawrence is such an autobiographical writer in so many respects that these biographers have felt able to draw extensively on Walter and Gertrude Morel in *Sons and Lovers*, for example, for indications of Lawrence's parents' lives, and their uneasy marriage. Certainly, in her memoirs, Lawrence's sister Ada is quite clear that the Morels are the Lawrences (A. Lawrence 1931; Lawrence and Gelder 1932).

With such strong links established between life and art it is difficult to sidestep the myths that endure when commentators attend to the character of Lawrence's parents, either in detail or at the level of the thumbnail sketch. The importance of their perceived personalities is principally to explain Lawrence's domestic allegiances and sympathies, as well as his developing personality, and to highlight the autobiographical dimension of his work. Lawrence's father is more often than not the image of the semi-literate working man who enjoyed simple pleasures. At home in Eastwood, he apparently had few ambitions to travel beyond the masculine environments of the work-place and the public house. Biographies invariably point to his easy-going attitude to life, and his documented skills as a dancer to indicate a free nature, continually at odds with his wife's more restrained behaviour which, in its temperance and moderation, is frequently emphasized to signify her growing disappointment with her lot. She is serious-minded, the auto-didact, the reader, committed user of the local library. As a girl Lydia Lawrence had a very brief experience as a pupil-teacher, and had ambitions to start a school of her own although this plan did not come to anything. Later she worked from home with her sisters as a lace-drawer for the factories in Nottingham. As a wife and mother she ran a shop from her front room, but this was a short-lived scheme.

Critic and biographer John Worthen describes Lydia Lawrence's familiarity with her son's work-in-progress, and her interest in his reception (Worthen 1991a: 141–5). By all accounts, throughout her married life she remained aspirational, and took every opportunity to improve the family's domestic situation with strategic house-moves and necessary thrift. She is seen as passionately committed to her children and keen to raise them in opposition to their father's family culture as much as possible. Family histories and family myths are in operation here, inevitably. As Worthen notes:

[B]oth families were working class: one child had been educated to the age of 13, the other to the age of 7. But the most powerful class distinctions always operate in borderline areas; and what divided the Beardsalls from the Lawrences was ideology, myth and expectation: that made for a deep and lasting division.

(Worthen 1991a: 26)

It is a challenge to reconstruct accurately a child's feeling for its parents, siblings and extended family. With regard to Lawrence, Worthen (1991a: 51–60) provides the most detailed synopsis available, drawing attention to the facts as they are documented in memoirs and letters, both of Lawrence's loathing of his father and, after his mother's death, of the slow process of revising those familiar and frequently rehearsed feelings of contempt into tenderness (*Letters I*: 316). The first volume of Nehls's *D.H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography* (1957) also provides some invaluable accounts of Lawrence's boyhood allegiances. Towards the end of his life he produced more sympathetic accounts of his father than before, and became harsher in his judgements of his mother (and mothers in general). The tendency of most commentators is to follow the lead of the narrative apparently offered in *Sons and Lovers* and to suggest an oedipal psycho-drama playing itself out in the stifling space of the family home [43–7; 134–8].

It would be pointless to deny the strength of the emotional bonds that the young Lawrence forged with his mother (confirmed by the memoirs of Ada Lawrence, Jessie Chambers and others who saw him grow up), or the force of the anger that both of them directed at different times towards his father. Lydia Lawrence's sensibilities worked in her son, and perhaps made easier his move away from the pit. By the time of his mother's death Lawrence had begun to gain recognition as a writer. He had been to college and was working (not entirely happily) as a school-teacher. He had a measure of financial independence and he could earn a little extra money through publishing. Whatever

he was to become, he was not working his father's stall in Brinsley Colliery and was not likely to return to his boyhood scene in any permanent way. Arguably, any level of recognition from his father concerning his achievements and aspirations might have made it easier for Lawrence to express tenderness towards a parent from whom the break had, in fact, been made quite early in their relationship. The evidence is, however, that his father's incomprehension at Lawrence's choices persisted; an incomprehension which could only increase as his son's writing life took him further away, in every sense, from Eastwood.

Lawrence is hardly unique in his youthful rejection of one parent, but he also rejected for himself a specific masculine culture when he left home to work as a teacher. Even so, in writing, he drew on what he knew. Literary critic and cultural theorist, Raymond Williams, reserves his highest praise for Lawrence's ability to write about his first community [139–41]. Williams has in mind much of the early writing, which has its flowering particularly in the short story 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' and in *Sons and Lovers*: 'What really comes alive is community, and when I say community I mean something which is of course personal: a man feeling with others, speaking in and with them' (Williams 1970: 172). It is the refusal to separate the 'personal' and the 'social', argues Williams, which is part of Lawrence's triumph in the representation of the relationship between mother and sons in *Sons and Lovers*. The mother's particular hostility towards her husband, and his kind, is directed at her husband's means of wage-earning and his attitude to his work, his social habits and, ironically, his ease with his own community of working men. None of these are to be reproduced in her sons.

Lawrence's religious and moral education was at the hands of the large Congregationalist community of Eastwood which by all accounts reproduced and reinforced his mother's values of education, self-improvement and self-discipline (Worthen 1991a: 64–8). By means of the energies of a range of preachers and lay-preachers, Sunday school and chapel day school, temperance organisations like the Band of Hope, and the moral guidance offered by groups like Christian Endeavour, Lawrence acquired a set of moral codes and, more crucially, a language that informed the development of his personality and his personal philosophy. This tradition stimulated Lawrence's sense of community and Englishness (although he becomes increasingly sceptical about what 'England' comes to represent). The imagery which he learned in chapel persists in much of his writing, particularly where his emphasis is rebirth and resurrection and, in the later work, where regeneration is

linked in interesting and poetic ways with apocalypse. Although at the age of sixteen Lawrence was beginning, as might be expected, to question certain orthodoxies, he remained indebted to the religious teaching he received as a youth. In his essay 'Hymns in a Man's Life' (1928), he acknowledges the 'direct' knowledge of the Bible which this teaching gave him. He also discusses the values which distinguished Congregationalism from, in his words, the 'snobbish hierarchies of class' which characterized the Church of England and, presumably at the other end of the scale, the 'personal emotionalism' of the Methodists (*Phoenix II*, 600).

The boy Lawrence was by all accounts hungry for knowledge and his predilection for reading and nature study, combined with his formal schooling, gave him a sound foundation. His youth seems to have been characterized by bookishness, and an intense interest in the arts. His first school was a Board School but he continued his education by winning a scholarship to Nottingham High School at the age of twelve. He left in 1901 for a short spell as a clerk in a medical supplies business, a period of unhappiness which coincided with the death of Ernest Lawrence, and serious illness for Lawrence. The following year he went into education as a pupil-teacher in the British School in Eastwood, also training in near-by Ilkeston. Following common practice he completed his training at University College, Nottingham (1906-08). After that he could work as a certificated assistant teacher, and found a post at Davidson Road School, Croydon, Surrey. Lawrence draws on his experience as a teacher in the description of Ursula Brangwen's introduction to paid employment in *The Rainbow* [49-56].

(b) WOMEN, RELATIONSHIPS AND MARRIAGE

Prior to 1912, Lawrence had a series of relationships with women which had implications for his writing. His relationship with Jessie Chambers – his first love with whom he had his first extended discussions on literature and art – found expression, to her dismay, in *Sons and Lovers*, where she is the model for Miriam Leivers. He had been visiting the Chambers family at Haggs Farm (which Lawrence describes as a second home), since his High School days, being friendly in the first instance with Jessie's brother. Both their families expected the long-term friendship with Jessie to be resolved eventually as an engagement, but by all accounts it was an awkward 'betrothal'. The tensions were considerable: despite the fact that both Lawrence and Chambers were still

developing their adult personalities, Lawrence was clearly affected by the mutual dislike felt by his mother and Chambers – an antagonism which was quite evident to all who knew them. In addition, the young pair found that the qualities which contributed to a satisfying friendship did not necessarily produce a fulfilling romantic or sexual relationship. The criticisms levelled at Miriam in *Sons and Lovers* [57-65] may well also have been levelled at Jessie Chambers (on whom Emily in *The White Peacock* was also based). Lawrence ended their six-year engagement in 1910. In 1935, Chambers, using the pseudonym 'E.T.', published *D.H. Lawrence: A Personal Record*, in which she describes their friendship and the tensions which developed between them and, usefully, draws attention to Lawrence's early literary influences. Lawrence always acknowledged the value of Chambers' encouragement of him as a young writer. Quite apart from their shared love of literature and the arts, and their enthusiasm for debate, she began his public career. In 1909 she sent a selection of Lawrence's poems to Ford Madox Hueffer, editor of the *English Review*, a literary periodical which published established and new writers including Joseph Conrad, Henry James, Thomas Hardy and H.G. Wells. Hueffer (who published his own masterpiece *The Good Soldier* in 1915, the same year as *The Rainbow*), was always keen to identify and nourish new talent, and was central to the development of English modernism. A writer and critic as well as an influential editor (who, after 1919, was known as Ford Madox Ford) he met Lawrence and was extremely willing to support him, publishing his poetry and 'Goose Fair' in the *Review* in 1909 and 1910 and 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' and 'A Fragment of Stained Glass' in 1911 (the same year as *The White Peacock*). He also offered constructive criticism of other work. Lawrence published reviews in the *English Review* and, after 1911, regularly placed his poems in other literary magazines. As he acknowledged, it was Chambers' action which first stimulated Hueffer's interest, but at a personal level the relationship between Chambers and Lawrence failed.

The women who figure significantly in Lawrence's life up to and immediately after the break with Chambers are interesting not only because of their commitment to Lawrence but also because of their wider interests and personalities: the social as well as the personal contexts which helped to define them. With the expansion of secondary education in the second half of the nineteenth century it was possible for women to become teachers, and several of Lawrence's women friends trained and taught in schools achieving some financial independence (although women's salaries were lower than their male colleagues' pay, doing identical work). Although many women were

active (as volunteers) in the social sphere and often in support of political parties and movements, nationally women's rights were restricted and in particular they were denied the vote in parliamentary elections. Fighting against these conditions, the WSPU (Women's Social and Political Union, established in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst) existed alongside the less militant NUWSS (National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett), and both groups campaigned vigorously for increased women's rights including the vote. (This was gained in 1918 for most women over the age of 30 – a decade would pass before the voting age for women was reduced to 21). Lawrence was not especially supportive of political activity but several of his close women friends sought, like Ursula Brangwen, financial and personal independence and some worked for social change.

In 1909–10, as the relationship with Chambers came to an end, Lawrence developed his friendship with Alice Dax, also from Eastwood. A married woman, older than Lawrence, she was the principal model for Clara Dawes in *Sons and Lovers*. Dax, like her friend Blanche Jennings to whom Lawrence occasionally confided in letters, was committed, as her actions show, to social and political reform including campaigns to improve conditions for women (Worthen 1991a: 358–70; Feinstein 1993: 40–3). She was also 'literary' and commented on an early draft of *The White Peacock*, as did Helen Corke, a teacher he met in Croydon whom he tried unsuccessfully to involve in a sexual relationship. Corke, who had literary aspirations, was interested in Lawrence only as a writer and visionary but, crucially, her diaries (which described the suicide of her married lover) gave him the story for his second novel, *The Trespasser* (1912). Towards the end of 1910 in the traumatic days before his mother's death from cancer, he asked another close friend, Louisa ('Louie') Burrows, with whom he had studied at college, to become his wife. She accepted his proposal but they did not marry – Lawrence broke with her during a period of emotional upheaval in which he began to dread the idea of marriage (both to her and in principal, although this would change). Burrows, also a teacher, was an independently minded woman and, like Dax and Jennings, supported the suffrage movement. Like Chambers, she had aspirations to become a writer – she and Lawrence in fact co-wrote 'Goose Fair'. Their relationship had developed during the last illness of Lawrence's mother, and coincided with a period of great productivity for Lawrence even though he was teaching full time in Croydon, and ill. Worthen writes perceptively about the content of the stories at this time and in particular the kinds of marriages on which they concentrated,

commenting that: '1911 was a year in which [Lawrence] was trying to come to terms with divisions in his own nature and expectations; he had bound himself to a conventional engagement while simultaneously coming to believe that those in love naturally behaved unconventionally' (Worthen 1991a: 301). The engagement with Burrows foundered.

The days of these relationships and the emotional tensions to which they gave rise were to end abruptly, however, when in March 1912 Lawrence, who had resigned his teaching post due to ill health, fell in love with Frieda Weekley, a German woman some years his senior who was also the wife of his former college professor. Their meeting permanently changed the direction of his emotional and professional life. Content to take Lawrence as her lover, she eventually agreed to break with her husband – which included taking the tough and painful decision to leave her three young children with Weekley, who would, after much acrimony, divorce her. Her presence in his life enabled Lawrence finally to close down all the troubling relationships with other women which were at different times unfulfilled, and in many ways bound up with Eastwood and the loss of his mother. Chambers had encouraged Lawrence's aspirations, as had Burrows, Dax and Corke; Frieda Weekley knew him to all intents and purposes, however, as an accomplished writer. His youth had been oriented towards family and friends, with due attention paid to propriety and respectability. After his meeting with Frieda, the break with that Nottingham background was essentially made, with important new steps taken towards self-responsibility. In his Croydon years he had come to criticise the 'mid-Victorian' moral attitudes and sexual timidity, as he saw it, of several of his girlfriends, and he had railed against the conventions of feeling that dictated love relations between men and women. His attitudes towards sexuality and marriage were not formed by the meeting with Frieda Weekley, but perhaps they were focused by the situation which her presence created. In May 1912 he and Frieda left for Metz in Germany, where her family – the von Richthofens – lived, both of them with some difficult decisions to make. When her divorce was finalized in 1914 they married in Kensington after significant trips principally in Germany and Italy as Lawrence enjoyed the autonomy of a writing life. While he was away from England he completed *Love Poems and Others* and *Sons and Lovers* (1913).

(c) A LITERARY CAREER: LAWRENCE AND MODERNISM

The modernist period, or 'era' as it has been called, straddles in its 'high' phase at least two decades of radical change (1910–30) during which many of the social values and aesthetic practices of the 'long' nineteenth century are left behind. Historically it includes the years of the Great War (1914–18) and, in Britain, post-war changes in the laws relating to education, women and public life, employment and housing, as well as the effects of economic recession. A period of extensive social and political change, it is marked also by diverse attempts in art and literature to understand, analyse and re-present the modern; as poet and critic Ezra Pound said, the task of the artist was to 'make it new'.

Lawrence is central to our understanding of modernism although many view him in practice and temperament as a figure at a distinct remove from intellectuals and practitioners like T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Virginia Woolf, who themselves embodied radically different approaches to their historical moment. Hence the term 'modernism' is deceptive in its suggestion of a coherent, monolithic artistic movement. Literary modernism in fact describes, or contains, a range of dissimilar and contradictory approaches to new subjects, so that we can think of it as characterized by diversity and plurality rather than consensus. Many radical positions within modernism are derived from revolutionary thinkers, chief among them Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud, iconoclasts and innovators whose work encouraged a revaluation of social, political and personal 'certainties'. Other influences, however, helped along the development of modernist aesthetics. French *Symbolisme*, for example, with which the poet Mallarmé was associated, had a significant impact on the work of, among others, W.B. Yeats, Pound, Eliot and Lawrence. Wilhelm Worringer's *Abstraction and Empathy* (1908) appealed to Lawrence because of the claims it made for abstraction and new forms of consciousness expressed in 'primitive' art. There was also a great deal of interest in myth as a mode of consciousness which preceded historical understanding (which was then viewed by the 'modernist' intellectuals with scepticism), and a fascination with social anthropology, particularly the genealogy of belief systems described in Sir James Frazer's extensive study called *The Golden Bough* (1890–1915). T.S. Eliot drew on Frazer in *The Waste Land* (1922) in references to fertility rites, the dying god and spiritual mythologies. Lawrence too knew Frazer's work. Eliot was also impressed by T.E. Hulme's 'Romanticism and Classicism' (1911), a key document which was invoked to define

'modernist' aesthetics and which similarly influenced Pound in his 'imagist' phase. With Richard Aldington, Hilda Doolittle (who published under the initials H.D.) and F.S. Flint, Pound established imagism, an anti-Romantic discrete form of modernist poetry, and he edited an imagist anthology, *Des Imagistes* in 1914.

Diverse avant-garde movements at this time produced statements, pamphlets and periodicals proclaiming the radical vision of each group. These included Filippo Marinetti's manifestos, among them 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism' (1909) – Lawrence was familiar with Marinetti's work, and the free verse of another Italian futurist, Paolo Buzzi (*Letters* II: 180) – as well as statements on visual arts and culture from cubists, expressionists, constructivists, vorticists and the surrealists. Key statements about literature and culture were produced by T.S. Eliot ('Tradition and the Individual Talent' [1919]), Virginia Woolf ('Modern Fiction' [1919], *A Room of One's Own* [1929]), E.M. Forster, Ford Madox Ford (Hueffer), James Joyce, H.D., Richard Aldington and many others. At the heart of literary modernism is the reformation of poetry and the novel, in particular. This resulted in an increased interest in the writer's medium alongside a preoccupation with the modern human subject.

From the time he was first published, Lawrence enjoyed the support of a number of influential figures in the literary world. Writing after his death, his friend the critic and reviewer Catherine Carswell recalls his first novel, *The White Peacock*, as a *succes d'estime* and acknowledges Ford Madox Hueffer's influence with Heinemann in getting it into print (Carswell 1932: 6). Hueffer's support of Lawrence has already been described. The youthful Lawrence, in his letters, shows his pleasure at being published in Hueffer's *English Review*, and shows too that he is not reluctant to be aligned with 'the new young school of realism' and, with a sense of his contemporary moment, the 'new spirit' in literature (*Letters* I: 139). The mature Lawrence would become, in his discursive writing (such as the late essays on the novel) and in the formal treatment of complex subjects in his most achieved fiction, one of the ablest commentators on the successes and failures of modern literature (for a detailed discussion of Lawrence's modernist contexts and his critical contribution see Bell in Fernihough 2001: 179–96).

Lawrence's novel *The Trespasser*, in draft form, found a champion in Edward Garnett, an intellectual and critic who was a reader for the London publisher Duckworth, and who became, at a crucial time in Lawrence's life, his friend and mentor. Lawrence took Garnett's advice on where to revise the text, and *The Trespasser* was published by Duckworth in 1912. Garnett remained central to Lawrence's early