J·D·H·L·S

Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies

Citation details

Title: **Configurations of Trespass in the Works of D. H. Lawrence**

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Source: *Journal of the D. H. Lawrence Society*, vol. 4.3 (2017)

Pages: 71–90

A Publication of the
D. H. Lawrence Society of Great Britain

CONFIGURATIONS OF TRESPASS IN THE WORKS OF D. H. LAWRENCE

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This essay tracks various literal, figurative, and ironic forms acquired by the term "trespass" in D. H. Lawrence's works. Frank Kermode first noticed "trespass" in Lawrence's writings, singling it out as one of his favourite puns, yet never expanded upon that observation.[1] That claim becomes disputable when "trespass" is researched more closely. The word never appears in the novel where one would most expect it, *The Trespasser* (1912).[2] Despite the many countryside walks in *Sons and Lovers* (1913), the term appears once (that is, in the Cambridge University Press and Penguin editions, where its excision by Lawrence's first editor, Edward Garnett, is corrected [*SL* 314]); it appears just once also in *Women in Love* (1920). But "trespass" does recur frequently and resonantly enough to reward analysis. Following up on Kermode's observation, Garrett Stewart focused on a single passage in Lawrence's works, in *The Rainbow* (1915), where "trespass" enacts a punningly sexual process of resurrection.[3] Sexual relations, however, turn out not to be the only or even primary context in which this concept appears. The following essay explores linkages of "trespass" in Lawrence's works to various sociocultural contexts, including legal, class-marked, and ethical usages: together, these register a life-long preoccupation with movement through and across outer and inner, social and subjective space.

Lawrence's traumatic wartime experiences during World War I, especially while in Cornwall, proved pivotal in his consciousness of individual freedom as a human right. When Lawrence reflects on this in 'The Nightmare' chapter of *Kangaroo* (1923), he represents Somers's relief at "rejection" by the conscription board as a matter of basic "freedom": "He walked through the great gates. Ah God, he

was out, he was free. The road with trees went down-hill to the town. He hastened down, a free human being, on Saturday morning, the grey glaze gone from his eyes" (*K* 220). In his pre-war writings, Lawrence's characters assume they may walk almost anywhere they wish, and "trespass" is associated with figurative borders crossed in their relations to each other as well as the land. The writings that follow Lawrence's traumatic encounters with wartime conscription rules in England, medical examinations, and eventual eviction from Cornwall represent the external world's uninvited trammelling of the "soul" as unendurable "trespass".

As the restless working-class son of a miner in the Midlands – an "exile", as John Worthen has emphasised, both at home and abroad –[4] Lawrence did not go along readily, either as a storyteller or a poet, with nationalist neo-romanticisations of the English countryside or the English family, with their essentialising of nature and home as comfort, or with their constructions of an intrinsically peaceful, picturesque countryside and homestead. Englishness belonged, in Lawrence's view, to the proper, proprietary middle class with its Victorian morality, industry, and commerce. For Lawrence, the legal and religious meanings of "trespass" both belong wholly to that materialistic society – meanings that he also rewrites, as he rewrites the discourses of social law and Christianity more generally, moving from satiric to mythologising references and back again, transformatively. In 1908, worried about boring his correspondent, Blanche Jennings, with a manuscript of 'Laetitia' (a draft of *The White Peacock*), he wrote: "I know I am trespassing – it is a word invented in Hell – or before socialism, eh? – on your time, your patience, and your goodness" (*1L* 45). In the post-Cornwall fiction and non-fiction, "trespass" recurs as a malignant bit of social etiquette, but before and after Cornwall, Lawrence also reinvents it as a vector of sensual transport. Lawrence represents characters' relationships to each other and to nature as problematic: brief elusions of the mechanical, in evanescent flight to the raw materials of human conflict with each other and with nature. They often find discomfort in nature, not comfort, from "man-traps" (*WP* 125) to

stoning a lake (*WL* 247). Thus in *The Rainbow* (1915), Ursula loves to go "trespassing to find the snowdrops that grew wild", and though "It was evening and the winter-darkened meadows were full of mystery", the woods reward her search with "the grey-green blades of snowdrop leaves [that] pricked unheeding" (*R* 389). "Trespass" and "prick[ly]" snowdrops bring "ecstasy" to Ursula rather than punishment. In what follows, I turn to closer consideration of Lawrence's language of trespass.

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As early as his first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911), Lawrence rings changes on the notions of "trespass" as both a legal act and a border-breaking temptation; the term acquires associations chiefly with property and class, though also with the sexual. "Trespass" becomes a minor leitmotif in this novel, beginning with a reference to the "man-traps" set in the woods of an upper-class estate for anyone inclined to disregard the "notices that trespassers on the drive or in the grounds would be liable to punishment" (*WP* 125). These notices are condoned by the Squire and maintained by the gamekeeper, Annable. Although this gamekeeper is an oft-noted precursor to the manly Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928), it is the injured Sir Clifford who "want[s] this wood perfect—untouched. I want *nobody* to trespass in it" (*LCL* 42) and who later complains to Mellors of the "trespass" of Mellors's estranged wife on the property. Mellors says he has "no power to arrest her" (*LCL* 268). In contrast, the gamekeeper of *The White Peacock* takes pains to "trap" men who poach the rabbits as blithely as he traps the weasels, moles, and rabbits that ruin the farm (several men have found themselves incarcerated thanks to the keeper's diligence). Through this gamekeeper, the world into which four young characters venture is not only legally off limits, but violent and sexual.

Undaunted by these notices, when Leslie proposes a walk "right into the wood out of the quarry" that he enjoyed as a boy, and Emily

worries, "'It is trespassing'", Leslie "grandiloquently" denies this: "'We don't trespass'" (*WP* 128). The description of Leslie as "grandiloquent" hints at his complacent reliance on upper-class status to shield them against legalities. When the keeper catches them there, "dally[ing]" (*WP* 131), Leslie self-righteously defends their trespass by invoking class privilege and denying any promiscuity perceived by the keeper: "'Can't you use your eyes, you fool? ... there are ladies here'". But Lawrence further indicates that the group has met more than their match in this gamekeeper, whose "fine, powerful form" and demeanour resemble "some malicious Pan" (*WP* 130). His "magnificent physique, his great vigour and vitality, and his swarthy, gloomy face drew" the narrator, Cyril (*WP* 146). The scene is further sexualised as the gamekeeper's views unfold: "'One's more a man here in th' wood … than in my lady's parlour'" (*WP* 131). When asked if he has ever been a groom, he puns suggestively on the word, saying that he would "'rather groom a horse than a lady, for I got well bit'", then adds, "'I was once a lady's man. But I'd rather watch th' rabbits an' th' birds; an' it's easier breeding brats in th' Kennels than in th' town'". Proud of his virility, having bred approximately one waif every two years for a litter of eight and a ninth on the way, he pontificates: "'Be a good animal, says I, whether it's man or woman'" (*WP* 132).

The term "trespass" reappears in another cross-class encounter, this time between two men: as Cyril relates, the gamekeeper hates "'any sign of culture'", so "'I won his respect one afternoon when he found me trespassing in the woods because I was watching some maggots at work in a dead rabbit. That led us to a discussion of life'" (*WP* 146). Sharing Cyril's interest in vermin, the gamekeeper tacitly dismisses the protagonist's act of trespass and their class differences, to take him as an "acolyte"; and he proceeds to introduce Cyril to a philosophy of life indicative of Lawrence's developing thought: "When he thought", Cyril explains, "he reflected on the decay of mankind—the decline of the human race into folly and weakness and rottenness. 'Be a good animal, true to your animal instinct' was his motto" (*WP* 147). When Annable touches Cyril, the latter takes it as

paternal: "He treated me as an affectionate father treats a delicate son; I noticed he liked to put his hand on my shoulder or my knee as we talked; yet, withal, he asked me questions, and saved his thoughts to tell me, and believed in my knowledge like any acolyte". Whether paternal or platonic, Cyril thrives on their conversation and is absolved of "trespass" for the duration of their friendship.

In the last references to "trespass" in this novel, George – a young working-class farmer to whom Cyril is attracted – undergoes his own fascinated, tremulous initiation into a swanky hotel restaurant and then a theatre. In this passage, Lawrence completes the transposition of "trespass" from its conventional legal usage to the context of class, thereby transforming "trespass" from an illegal infringement to signifying a pleasurably transgressive expansion of horizons, both of nature and culture. George strikes Cyril as like "a man who has lived in a small island when he first sets foot on a vast continent. This was the first step into a new life, and he mused delightedly upon it" (*WP* 246). The trespass is complete when they "go to the theatre in the evening ... We went into the dress circle 'like giddy dukes', as I said to him, so that I could see his eyes dilate with adventure again" (*WP* 248). George has "the air of one who does something forbidden, and is charmed, yet fearful, like a trespassing child. He had begun to trespass that day outside his own estates of Nethermere ... The bold free way in which Carmen played with life startled [him] with hints of freedom".

Although the word "trespass" never appears in Lawrence's second novel, *The Trespasser* (so named after he gave up on its provisional title of *The Saga of Siegmund*), this title refers to the principal character, Siegmund, as an adulterer who "trespasses" against his wife. Ford Madox Hueffer and, subsequently, Lawrence worried about how "erotic" this novel was (*T* 14–16). Though based on Wagner's famously tragic, mythic hero, the name "Siegmund" is assigned to a modern Englishman, a professional violinist, who "walks out" with his younger, unmarried female protégé (Helena) in town and country, living their relationship as much through walks outdoors as in bedrooms. On vacation on the Isle of Wight, they court

the dangerous edges of sea and cliff. But their transgression of the institutional norms of marriage fails to evolve into a new life for either of them, and back at home with his family, Siegmund kills himself.

"The Trespasser" thus becomes synonymous with sexual transgression against proprietary marriage norms in this second novel; at the end, literally hemmed in by family and household, Siegmund hangs himself at the threshold to a bedroom. As Elizabeth Mansfield argues, the novel's proposed titles suggest "the primary sense Lawrence intended by the word 'trespasser' – one who enters illegally the property of others, and especially the territory of love, implied by the reference to Cythera, birthplace of Aphrodite" (*T* 20), which he considered in the longer variants 'Trespassers in Cythera' or 'Trespassers in the Isles of the Happy' (as a substitute for Cythera). Deletion of "Cythera" from the title, however, confines the valence of this novel's "trespasser" to its orthodox Christian meaning, not permitting metaphoric transformation. Then again, Mansfield also surmises that "Other implications may have occurred to him, such as the French word *trépasser* (to die) or the position of [the narrator] Cecil Byrne, the Lawrence figure, as trespasser in the private memories of Helena". Since Lawrence based this narrative closely on a diary composed by his friend Helen Corke, that last interpretation of this text's narrator (and Lawrence figure) as a "trespasser" on the bereaved Helena's memories becomes particularly compelling.

In a passage Edward Garnett had deleted from the original manuscript of *Sons and Lovers* (now restored in the Cambridge University Press and Penguin editions, edited by Carl and Helen Baron), "trespass" recurs in a sexualised context, where it signifies a violation of another person's privacy. When this novel's protagonist, Paul Morel, is chided by his lover Clara Dawes for a casual mention of her estranged husband's name in the midst of a debate about beauty (on the question of whether it is intrinsic to nature and people as opposed to towns). The offence begins when Morel asks, "'Besides, wasn't Dawes natural?'" (*SL* 314), reminding Clara of her

dislike for Dawes. Paul then adds several insults to this injury by, first, identifying Dawes with animality; second, locating him as a "mixed" creature on a Darwinian evolutionary scale between "the chimpanzee" and "the christs"; and, third, calling him a good match for one of Clara's co-workers, Hilda – "'Dawes suits Hilda'". When she chides him for having "'not yet learned how to respect another person's feelings'", he instantly apologises, "'I am reprimanded'", then explains his mistake as the result of being so "interested" in their discussion, "'as if they were 'up above the world so high, like two cherubs in the sky"'. Charmed by this rendition of a famous children's lyric – it is "The blithe ignorance in which he trespassed through her private places [that] disarmed her" – she finds herself smiling to herself, thinking of him, merely, as naively young: "He was an interesting, but such a young boy". Aloud, she calls him an "'enfant terrible'", which the narrator characterises dismissively as "something of a platform trick of speech". "'Call me what you like'", Paul responds, '"a rose would smell as sweet etc"'. In his later, post-war writings, however, Lawrence often issued complaints of such "trespass through" another person's "private places" rather than accepting them as quietly as Clara does.

When "trespass" resurfaces in *The Rainbow*, its figurative development begins with a simultaneously legal and metaphoric application: in the first chapter Lawrence recalls the construction in "About 1840" of a canal "across the meadows of the Marsh Farm", noting that the "Brangwens received a fair sum of money from this trespass across their land" (*R* 13). In this re-positioning of the term, the canal's "trespass" sets the stage for the still larger "invasions" of the land by a colliery, railway and town. Such legalities of property rights themselves constitute "trespass" in this passage.

But with its next occurrence, Lawrence transforms the term into the sexual metaphor that Garrett Stewart first noted.[5] When Tom Brangwen asks Lydia Lensky to marry him, she resists at first – Brangwen strikes her as frighteningly "impersonal" – and he desponds. But then she succumbs, "gladly":

> Then she looked up at him, the wide, young eyes blazing with light. And he bent down and kissed her on the lips. And the dawn blazed in them, their new life came to pass, it was beyond all conceiving good, it was so good, that it was almost like a passing-away, a trespass. He drew her suddenly closer to him. (*R* 45)

In this transformational use of language, as Stewart explains, "trespass" becomes a synonym for "crossing" or "passing" out of an old, dead ego into new subjecthood.[6] By breaking the word down to its literal roots, Lawrence rewrites the English term, changing its religious signification of "to sin" into "to come to pass ... conceiving good", and the pun on "trespass" (derived from French) of both "to die" and the "little death" sexualises and renders it resurrectional. Through trespass, through the passage of morals, bodies, selves, and language, Tom and Lydia undergo rebirth.

Such trespass, though, is as fleeting as the most transient of carpe diems. In the next moment, this climax is followed by another deflation in emotion, with Lydia now "tired, effaced … and in her tiredness was a certain negation of him" (*R* 45). Their brief encounter is succeeded by reversal in their essentially antonymic positions. Lawrence had already produced the philosophic version of this passage in *Study of Thomas Hardy*, where he argues for just this sort of unending process of conflict, encounter and renewed conflict as paradigmatic of the relations between the genders. Later in *The Rainbow*, a third set of references to "trespasses" functions as an ironising gloss on Tom and Lydia's experience; this next set appears in relation to the stalemate in the next generation's relationship – the marriage of Will and Anna Brangwen.

As Anna is angrily thinking her husband deaf and dumb to the meanings of the church service, the perspective suddenly shifts to Will Brangwen's contemplative inner thoughts about it and, more specifically, to his reasoned resistance to the theological denotation of "trespass", instead of which he prefers the "great mysteries of passion" (*R* 147). Brangwen sees "trespass" as referring, literally, to an unimportant batch of secular problems. As he reacts to repetitions

of the word during the church service, however, he passes beyond both the secular and doctrinal to enter a mystical state of feeling. Deftly here, again, Lawrence transfigures "trespass": instead of suggesting that Brangwen is too literal-minded to concern himself with theological meaning, Lawrence develops the counter-suggestion that Brangwen contemplates both its legal and religious usages, but seeks something more literally and authentically religious than everyday scraps with his neighbours or church doctrines:

> The Church teaching in itself meant nothing to him. "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us—" it simply did not touch him. It might have been mere sounds, and it would have acted upon him in the same way. He did not want things to be intelligible. And he did not care about his trespasses, neither about the trespasses of his neighbour, when he was in church. Leave that care for week-days. When he was in church, he took no more notice of his daily life. It was week-day stuff. As for the welfare of mankind,—he merely did not realise that there was any such thing: except on week-days, when he was good-natured enough. In church, he wanted a dark, nameless emotion, the emotion of all the great mysteries of passion. (*R* 147)

As Diane Bonds argues of Lawrence's language, especially in *Women in Love*, Lawrence is as keen to literalise a figure that he realised earlier for its metaphoric (and metamorphic) potential, as he is to evoke the figurative possibilities of the literal.[7] So too in a passage such as this, he demystifies a religious rite in order to actualise a mystical possibility.

Although, after the first chapter in *The Rainbow*, "trespass" recurs only once, in Ursula's plucking of the snowdrops, "trespass" does crop up in four texts written roughly contemporaneously: in the prose metaphysic 'The Crown' (1915), begun as early as September 1915 (according to Mark Kinkead-Weekes) and completed prior to Lawrence's move to Cornwall in late December 2015;[8] in the

discarded Prologue to *Women in Love* of April 1916 (*WL* xxviii); in *Women in Love* itself, written in conjunction with *The Rainbow* and completed in its first version in Cornwall in late 1916;[9] and in the opening stanza of the poem 'New Heaven and Earth' (one of the last pieces in the sequence *Look! We Have Come Through!*, published in 1917).[10] Two of these usages build upon Will Brangwen's sense of "the great mysteries" to etch a relationship between the "I" and the supra-personal unknown. In 'The Crown', Lawrence's voice is ecstatic as he charts the experience of dying into a new life:

> Shock after shock of ecstasy and the anguish of ecstasy, death after death of trespass into the unknown, till I fall down into the flame, I lapse into the intolerable flame, a pallid shadow I am transfused into the flux of unendurable darkness ...
>
> Till, new-created, I am thrown forth again on the shore of creation ... (*RDP* 266)

Having reached this shore, the "goal", he explains, is to reach "the opposite eternity, to the infinite light of the Spirit". The sole "absolute" is, oxymoronically, the ephemeral, shape-changing "rainbow that goes between" the antinomies (*RDP* 266). The one "absolute", in other words, is the process of "trespass" between the extremes of earth and spirit. While thus explicating the transformative passage about sexual death and resurrection in *The Rainbow*, this metaphysic also shifts its focus to the "I", heralding a larger shift in Lawrence's texts from a relational context, inward, into a sovereign "I". In 'New Heaven and Earth', the use of the "old pun" of trespass (as Fiona Becket calls it) "to describe a passing away as the old self disembarks from the old life into the new" recaptures the tenor of *The Rainbow's* rhapsodic transformation for the speaker, alone:[11]

> And so I cross into another world
> shyly and in homage linger for an invitation
> from this unknown that I would trespass on.

> I am very glad, and all alone in the world,
> all alone, and very glad, in a new world
> where I am disembarked at last. (*Poems* 210)

After these opening stanzas, the poem tracks the speaker's relationship to his beloved and to the world, although in the rest of this long poem, the term "trespass" does not recur.

Composed after 'The Crown', the 'Prologue to *Women in Love*' – subsequently set aside by Lawrence – contains what may be the most ecstatic of all passages in which "trespass" appears, and it refers there to a climax in intimacy between three men on a mountain hike. Lawrence describes this encounter explicitly as a "transfiguration", writing in the sixth paragraph:

> The world that lay below, the whole field of human activity, was sunk and subordinated, they had trespassed into the upper silence and loneliness. The three of them had reached another state of being, they were enkindled in the upper silences into a rare, unspoken intimacy, an intimacy that took no expression, but which was between them like a transfiguration. As if thrown into the strange fire of abstraction, up in the mountains, they knew and were known to each other. It was another world, another life, transfigured, and yet most vividly corporeal, the senses all raised, till each felt his own body, and the presence of his companions, like an essential flame, they radiated to one enkindled, transcendent fire, in the upper world. (*WL* 489–90)

In the seventh paragraph, the transfiguration instantly dissolves, as "Then had come the sudden falling down to earth, the sudden extinction" when they "parted" at Innsbruck (*WL* 490).

In the single scene where the term "trespass" appears in the final text of *Women in Love*, moreover, in the chapter 'Sunday Evening' (where, instead of attending church or walking out afterwards, Ursula is meditating death), there is nothing sensual or

transformational about the word. Although this scene is set again in an "upper world", "trespass" is abruptly disassociated from personal relationship to acquire the opposite valence as ultimate environmental violation: "The air they claimed too, shared it up, parcelled it out to certain owners, they trespassed in the air to fight for it. Everything was gone, walled in, with spikes on top of the walls, and one must ignominiously creep between the spiky walls through a labyrinth of life" (*FWL* 179; *WL* 193). From earth to atmosphere – in the air battles of World War I, the territorial skirmishes of nations – "trespass" had become a legal property issue even above ground. The second sentence indicates how "walled in" life on the ground meanwhile has become as the result of a property rights system that forces people to "creep between the spiky walls" of nearly universally forbidden territory. The world's property owners are its trespassers, and they have walled in the "I".

After Lawrence's time in Cornwall, associations of "trespass" with ecstatic intercourse, as in *The Rainbow* and the 'Prologue to *Women in Love*', or with mystical passage into the unknown, as in 'The Crown' and 'New Heaven and Earth', are not regained. In the first version of the essay 'Whitman' composed in 1918, during Lawrence's retreat to Mountain Cottage in Derbyshire (see *2L* 247), the pioneering American writers, including the poet he most admired, are described, ambivalently, as "invaders": "They have felt that they were trespassing, transgressing, or going very far, and this has given a sort of stridency, or portentousness, or luridness to their manner ... [They] have finished in haste, with a certain violence and violation, that which Europe began two thousand years ago or more" (*SCAL* 403). Lawrence might as well have been speaking, defensively, of his own writing in the first of these sentences. This passage, however, is a glancing moment in a vast sketch of historical cycles that oscillates between the great "phase" of "spirit" (European and American), which sought to "annihilate" the "sensual being in man", and the sensual phases, past and future. This language evokes the physical invasion and violent appropriation of the land and the

body noted above in *Women in Love*, re-contextualised in a supra-personal vision of global history.

After Lawrence leaves England in 1919, trespass drops its legal and theological associations, in their stead acquiring, on the one hand, associations with social etiquette and, on the other hand, subjective associations with intrusions on a man's privacy. As Jane Costin has argued, Cornwall, in particular, had offered Lawrence a utopian refuge from within England, especially in the encounters it yielded with a pre-Christian ancient Celtic past.[12] After being shamed by war recruiters and then forcibly evicted on suspicion of spying, Lawrence retreated into himself. That a neighbour, Miss Frost, in *The Lost Girl* (1920) does not "trespass" counts among the woman's few positive attributes: the "lost girl", Alvina, feels slightly repelled by Miss Frost despite her apparent "openness, explicit and downright. Not that Miss Frost trespassed. She was far more well-bred than Miss Pinnegar" (*LG* 45). In *Mr Noon* (begun after finishing *The Lost Girl* in 1920),[13] when an angry mother confronts the members of the Knarborough Education Committee with the "criminal commerce" of their teacher Mr Noon with her daughter, her excessive politeness to Mr Noon is tinged with prideful sarcasm: "We wish above all things not to trespass. But we find we must have an answer from your own mouth" (*MN* 54–5). Where "trespass" is mentioned in *Kangaroo*, the autobiographical character Somers invokes it in the context of hospitality: "If he trespasses on my hospitality, coming creeping in here, into my house, just to draw me and get the better of me, underhandedly, then I'll pour no drink for him" (*K* 42).

"Trespass" also develops a distinctly new set of associations with threats to a man's deepest self – and to a woman's. In his essay 'Education of the People', Lawrence writes that the modern parent-child relationship "resolves itself into one series of trespasses across the confines of the two natures" and recommends that the parent, paradoxically, "drive [a child] into his own soul's inviolable singleness" since willy-nilly a "child will trespass", and the modern child is born "with an irritable craving to trespass into the nature of

the mother" (*RDP* 139). In 'Adolf', a sketch from 1919–20, even a rabbit quivers against "trespass" by "Love and Affection" (*EME* 203). In no uncertain terms, Lawrence writes also in *Mr Noon* that "For a woman to trespass into a man's extremity is poison, and for a man to trespass into woman's final remoteness is misery" (*MN* 212). The following passage then reframes the philosophy of the "rainbow" in 'The Crown' as a "game" between eternities: "So there we are—the old, the eternal game of man and woman: the time-balancing oscillation of eternity. In this we live". Although that reference is not necessarily ironic, the next one shows how easily this "game" can be reduced to a travesty of invasive behaviour: when "Johanna, a lynx without scruples, read everything he wrote. He rather liked this trespass on his privacy. For, not being at all sure about his own emotions, it rather pleased him to see Johanna play skittles with them" (*MN* 250). Perhaps, as Will is also warned in *The Rainbow*, the problem here is that neither Johanna nor Mr Noon can go more than halfway: "'Don't you be so sure o' your walkin' powers … There's many a man gets no further than half way, nor can't to save his life, let him live for ever'" (*R* 131). In 1921, composing *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, Lawrence is back to his parental warnings: "Make it [the child] know very definitely that it shall not and must not trespass on other people's privacy or patience" (*PFU* 124).

More than hospitality is at stake also for Lawrence's autobiographical protagonists in subsequent novels. In *Aaron's Rod* (conceived shortly after leaving Cornwall in 1917 and finished in 1921), when the sickly Aaron confronts the writer Lilly directly on the question of their "differences", "trespass" appears in the context of belief rather than mere politeness. Feeling wrong-footed by Lilly and looking faintly ridiculous in pyjamas, akin to a "jealous God", Aaron questions Lilly as to whether or not he "believe[s]" that "a difference of jobs" is the essential difference between them: "'You don't believe that though, do you?'", he says, and Lilly slides away from the question, demurring, "'Nay, now I reckon you're trespassing'" (*AR* 111). After a brief adulterous affair with a friend's

fiancée (from which Aaron thinks he has contracted influenza), Lilly has been challenging him to consider leaving his estranged wife and a job as a union officer in the mines, for an uncertain life with Lilly in Italy. This passage thus also evokes the double-negative of the ending of *Women in Love*, where Birkin "'do[es]n't believe that'" there "'can't be two kinds of love'" – the second love, not with a woman, but with a man (*WL* 481). Whereas Birkin's denial signals the possibility of belief, Lilly's "reckon[ing]" refuses conversation and implies that "disbelief" is a private matter, none of Aaron's business. Aaron defies this charge of "trespass" – "'Why am I? I know you don't believe it'" – but Lilly throws the question back at him, "'What do I believe then?'" (*AR* 111). The conversation reaches a stand-off when Aaron speculates that Lilly thinks himself superior to Aaron, a "difference" Aaron himself " do[es]n't see'". "'If you don't see it, then it isn't there'", responds Lilly. With another double negative, Lilly eliminates the very question.

What further emerges here, though, is Lilly's wish not to trespass. When Aaron accuses Lilly of being "'a God-Almighty in your way, you know'", Lilly replies, "'So long as I'm not in anybody else's way'" – thus completing this Lawrentian doctrine, not to "trespass" upon anyone else, just as, earlier, Lilly asked Aaron not to 'trespass' upon him (*AR* 111). When Lawrence lets Lilly have the last word, it is with a trivialising, if suggestive, remark, "'Don't catch cold there with nothing on—'", as Lilly flees the room, "'to catch the post'", "almost before there was time [for Aaron] to speak", nor does he. Neither physically nor verbally naked, the "not" governs these episodes.

Lawrence presents a scathing picture, however, of the Englishman's self-protectiveness in a 1923 piece, 'On Coming Home'. Even the notion of the value of the free and private, untrespassing self cannot become an "absolute"; its sovereignty does not go unquestioned:

> At the centre of this little globe sits the Englishman, his own little god unto himself, terribly complacent, and at the same time,

> terribly self-deprecating. He seems to say: My dear man, I know I am no more than what I am. I wouldn't trespass on what you are, not for worlds. Oh, not for worlds! Because when all's said and done, what you are means nothing to me. I am god inside my own crystal world, the strictly limited domain of myself, which after all no-one can deny is my own. I am only god within the bubble of my own self-contained being, dear sir, but there, god I am. (*RDP* 180)

In this context, the policy – do not trespass on another man's privacy as you desire him not to trespass on yours – becomes an Englishman's "complacent", falsely "self-deprecating" self-perception as "his own little god" and sovereign "domain" in and of himself, "strictly, self-contained" in his "bubble". The effect of that attitude is "intolerable shut-in-edness", so that "coming home ... to one's fellow countrymen feels", Lawrence says, like being enclosed in Chinese boxes, one person after another – in the middle of which is "a tiny porcelain figure": oneself (*RDP* 180). Nothing could seem more mocking than this sarcastic portrait of the sovereign free individual of English Common Law. Just six months earlier, writing *Kangaroo*, Lawrence's reconstruction of his life during the war is notable for his hard-won claim to freedom: although he had decided not to volunteer for civil service, he considered "his feeling" to be "private to himself, he didn't want to force it on any other man [and] would just act alone" (*K* 214). Yet he also refused to be cautious in what he said, claiming freedom of speech as well: "He still believed in the freedom of the individual.—Yes, freedom of the individual!" (*K* 227).

As different as Lawrence's next two novels were – *The Plumed Serpent* (begun in 1923 and finished in 1924–25) and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1926–28) – in both, the context for "trespass" is that of a person's privacy. But in both there are also subtle turns back toward relationship. "Trespass" occurs, first, when – after having imposed her "help" on the Mexican Indians – Kate feels her "privacy" being "mock[ingly]" trammelled by them (*PS* 147); then,

in contradistinction, when she shrinks from "prying" and withdraws into the "untrespassing" self (*PS* 183); and, finally, when Cipriano threatens her with "trespass" (*PS* 188). In these passages, Kate is gradually being pressed back from trespassing on others, and in the third, she acknowledges that "he would never encroach on her, he would never seek any close contact"; it is paradoxically an absence in him – his "incompleteness" – that "sought her out" (*PS* 188). In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Connie feels her "privacy" and "inner freedom" trespassed upon by the young men who make love to her (*LCL* 7), while Mellors dreads Connie's trespass on his solitude: "Here was a trespass on his privacy, and a dangerous one! A woman! He had reached the point where all he wanted was to be alone" (*LCL* 88). Unlike Annable in *The White Peacock*, he feels "powerless" in these woods: "he was a hired man, and these people were his masters". At the same time, both novels also presage new relationships in which neither trespasses on the other.

Trespass thus becomes a metaphor for unwanted touch between people in the post-Cornwall writings, as Lawrence's protagonists retreat inward, and no longer a figure for erotic intercourse. Yet, as in other respects, Lawrence returns, in his last writings, to the potential for both relationship and the self to blossom. By the time Lawrence was revising his verse for a collected edition in 1927–28, he had decided that the freedom of a man's "soul" depends on untrespassing "harmony" with others and so he writes in 'Discipline':

> Learn they must to obey, for all harmony is discipline,
> And only in harmony with others the single soul can be free.
>
> Let them live, the boys, and learn not to trespass; I had to learn
> Not to trespass on them with love, they must learn not to trespass in the young
> Cruel self; the fight is not for existence, the fight is to burn
> At last into blossom of being, each one his own flower outflung.

> They are here to learn but one lesson, that they shall not thwart each other
> Nor be thwarted, in life's slow struggle to unfold the flower of the self. (*Poems* 58–59)

Correlatively, Lawrence returned in the last years to the possibilities of touch – as long as this was not gained through trespass. So, in his 1927–29 novella, *The Escaped Cock*, he writes of Isis, "She is making herself completely penetrable. Ah, how terrible to fail her, or to trespass on her!" (*VG* 156).

As he approached death, Lawrence became eloquently preoccupied with the coming transmutation, and the late poem 'Image-making love', which appears to contain his last reference to trespass, proclaims that "And now / the best of all / is to be alone, to possess one's soul in silence" (*Poems* 517). Not quite silent yet, he imagines himself, not only "naked" but "unseen", and finds this "a relief like death": this "is better than anything else in the world". What burns, however, "at the core of me" is "the small flame of anger, gnawing / from trespassed contacts, from hot, digging in fingers of love". "I" once again is up against the world. Against the "gibe" of those who have misconstrued him, remaking him in "the image of him they loved" – a "simulacrum" – he asserts his non-image, his "nakedness", and dedicates himself to its "preserv[ation]". As if foreseeing a postmodern age of simulacra taken as or instead of anything real, Lawrence bolsters his voice against those gibes: he wishes himself unseen, untouched, untrespassing, and untrespassed, silent yet still heard.

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1 Frank Kermode, *D. H. Lawrence* (New York: Viking, 1973), 10.

2 Not detecting "trespass" in the Cambridge University Press or other print editions of *The Trespasser* that I have read, I also ran searches, which uncovered no references, using Google's book search tool and other archival sources, including a digitalised version of the original 1912 edition (London, Duckworth), contributed by the University of California Libraries to archive.org <https://archive.org/details/trespasser00lawrrich>, last accessed 10/21/2017. In general, I have noted references while reading and

rereading Lawrence's texts in the course of a long-term interest in this word in addition to running internet searches like this one of *The Trespasser*. Nonetheless, I do not consider this analysis comprehensive and invite readers to contact me (and/or the editor of *JDHLS*) with any references I might have missed.

[3] Garrett Stewart, 'Lawrence, "Being", and the Allotropic Style', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction,* vol. 9.3 (1976), 217–42, 227.

[4] John Worthen, *D. H. Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider* (London: Allen Lane, 2005).

[5] Stewart, 'Lawrence, "Being", and the Allotropic Style', 227.

[6] Ibid., 226–7.

[7] Diane S. Bonds, *Language and the Self in D. H. Lawrence* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research P), 1987.

[8] Mark Kinkead-Weekes, *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile, 1912–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 269. 'The Crown' was serialised in *Signature* in 1915 and revised for subsequent publication in *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine* in 1925.

[9] What is now known as *The First Women in Love* is the version sent to publishers (and universally rejected) in late 1916–1917.

[10] Lawrence sent a shorter version to H. D. for inclusion in *Some Imagist Poems* in October 1916 under the title 'Terra Nuova' (*2L* 664); its composition dates back to Lawrence's stay in Greatham in January 1915, according to Kinkead-Weekes, *D. H. Lawrence: Triumph to Exile, 1912–1922*, 419.

[11] Fiona Becket, *D. H. Lawrence* (London: Routledge, 2005), 84.

[12] Jane Costin, 'Lawrence's "Best Adventure": Blood-Consciousness and Cornwall', *Etudes Lawrenciennes,* vol. 43 (2012), 151–72.

[13] Although it is usually assumed that Lawrence began writing *Mr Noon* in 1920, Barbara Kearns has argued that there were earlier drafts dating back to 1912–13: 'Getting it off his chest: Some implications of D. H. Lawrence's affair with Alice Dax', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, vol. 4.1 (2015), 67–94, 83.