

REVIEWS

J. C. F. Littlewood, *D. H. Lawrence: The Major Phase. Studies in Tradition and Renewal*. Ed. William Shearman.

Denton Harleston: Brynmill Press, 2002.

Pp. xxvi+299. £25. ISBN 0907839614

Reviewed by Bethan Jones

J. C. F. Littlewood's *D. H. Lawrence: The Major Phase. Studies in Tradition and Renewal* has unusual status in that the author died in 1984, with the book unfinished. He left a title, a contents page and a completed introduction. The remaining chapters incorporate published and unpublished material, including lecture notes, ranging in date from the 1960s to the time of his death. Problems of provenance are discussed in an introduction and appendices by the editor, William Shearman, who has carefully organised the material and supplied footnotes. Littlewood argues that Lawrence's whole undertaking as a writer was an attempt to make amends to life itself by bringing what his father represented in his imagination into fruitful relation with what his mother represented there – body with soul, female with male (48).

The book seeks to clarify this "fruitful relation", arguing that after the composition of the inherently flawed *Sons and Lovers*, there are two breakthroughs in the development of Lawrence as a writer, the first resulting in *The Rainbow*, the second in *Women in Love*. It also traces Lawrence's development in relation to major literary figures including Shakespeare, Blake, Dickens and Emily Brontë. Historical, cultural and religious circumstances are shown to have had a formative influence.

Littlewood's book reveals his central concern with defining what a study of literature should be, and his trenchant criticism of so many scholars cannot be ignored. He argues that Lawrentian

scholarship “for over a quarter of a century has busied itself with every aspect of Lawrence except ... his genius” (253). More specifically, he makes the odd allegation that in the Cambridge University Press Edition of Lawrence’s *Letters* (and he is referring here specifically to the first two volumes), the “genius has been eliminated altogether”, accusing the editors of exercising erroneous value judgements (253, 257). Clearly the book is controversial and at times wrong-headed, and there have been vast changes in literary criticism in the twenty years since the author’s death. It is essentially a work of traditional literary criticism, as might be expected from a pupil and admirer of F. R. Leavis – yet, as such, it remains a searching and compelling study.

***D. H. Lawrence: Literature, History, Culture.* Ed. Michael Bell, Keith Cushman, Takeo Iida, and Hiro Tateishi.
Tokyo: Kokusho-Kankokai Press, 2005.
Pp. 502. ISBN 4336047308**

Reviewed by Jonathan Long

This book is based on the Ninth International D. H. Lawrence Conference in Kyoto in June-July 2003 and it collects twenty-four of the contributions to that conference. It is a handsome volume, attractively printed and bound, and unusually for a book of essays it contains a good number of colour illustrations, including Jan Juta’s eight illustrations for *Sea and Sardinia*, only previously printed in full in the Seltzer first edition and the Secker first English edition (not, of course, in the Cambridge Edition, but that’s another story).

The Kyoto conference was entitled ‘D. H. Lawrence: Culture and History’, and the contributions have been grouped under the headings ‘East and West’, ‘History’, ‘The Company He Keeps’ and ‘A D. H. Lawrence Miscellany’. There is only space here to take a representative sample from each section. Although most of the speakers represented are Japanese or Korean academics, a significant number are familiar names in Anglo-American Lawrence