

would have been a good place to compare the essay's "spontaneous being [that] is subject to no law" with Woolf's "moments of being" in relation to utopia and the body. Nevertheless, Son's focus on social space allows for the book to address the complex political implications of the works of Lawrence and Woolf and to highlight the subversive role played by literary discourse in "intervening in the production of social space" through its "critical interaction with dominant spatial codes" (207).

Eunyoung Oh, *D. H. Lawrence's Border Crossing: Colonialism in His Travel Writings and "Leadership" Novels*.

London: Routledge, 2007.

Pp. ix+202. £45 (hardback). ISBN 0415976448

Reviewed by Neil Roberts

As its title suggests, Eunyoung Oh's book approaches Lawrence's fictional and non-fictional travel writing from a postcolonial perspective. Her texts are mostly well-chosen, and she rightly discusses *The Lost Girl* as well as the books implied in her title. I think, however, that some consideration of 'The Woman Who Rode Away', 'The Princess' and *St. Mawr* would have been more rewarding than *Aaron's Rod*, which is so lacking in non-English characters.

Her study is fair-minded, well written and offers interesting insights into all the texts discussed. She makes a telling contrast between the unchallenged authorial voice of Lilly in *Aaron's Rod* and Somers's much more dialogically situated voice in *Kangaroo*; she perceptively identifies the "emotionally vulnerable and untrustworthy" (40) narrator of *Sea and Sardinia* and has a telling analysis of the perspective of the opening of *Kangaroo*, where Somers and Harriett are seen through the eyes of the Australian workmen. More broadly, the book is informed by a strong sense of the "conflict or tension" between Lawrence's "sense of superiority as a civilized white man and his sense of repulsion to the white

civilization” and of his simultaneous embrace of “hierarchy” and the “incomparable and incommensurable” nature of being (23, 57).

In her Introduction, Oh claims that “there are few attempts to read Lawrence’s travel books in relation to the issue of colonialism” (3). This is an embarrassment for the present reviewer, since she has apparently not read my *D. H. Lawrence, Travel and Cultural Difference* (2004), which attempts exactly this. The mutual encounter of Lawrence studies and post-colonialism has been going on for a decade or more and Oh’s book, for all its merits, is a little belated. It is, for example, unnecessary at this date to argue that the category of “leadership novels” is inadequate and misleading.

One of her strongest points is her argument for the strong and unorthodox political undercurrent that persists throughout these works, and that is not narrowly associated with Lawrence’s ideas of “leadership”. She rightly identifies an anti-colonialist position in all the travel books (53) and writes interestingly about the political dimension of “the spirit of place”, though she seems unaware of the troubling origin of this idea in nineteenth-century racial theory.

Indeed, there is a general lack of hinterland in her presentation of these texts. There is no discussion of Lawrence’s ideas of “otherness” and their relation to post-colonial and other critical theories. The long chapter on *The Plumed Serpent* is subtitled ‘Rewriting Mexican Colonial History’, but there is nothing about that history, or actual Aztec religion and culture, or Mexico’s revolutionary history which, still rumbling in the 1920s, made a mass movement such as Don Ramón’s imaginable.

I have stressed the book’s fair-mindedness but I must protest against one exception. *The Plumed Serpent*, Oh claims, is characterised by “the exclusion of women’s desire” (156). But when she quotes a passage representing Kate’s desire for Mexican Indian men she calls it “an acceptable means of expressing [Lawrence’s own] desire for other men” (153). This is an irritating echo of the days when Lawrence was damned whatever he did.

Finally, Oh does not quote from the Cambridge texts. This may be because of the copyright problems that all Lawrence scholars

have encountered, but if so she should have said so, since quoting from out of date editions is inconvenient for the reader and looks unscholarly.

***D. H. Lawrence around the World: South African Perspectives.*
Ed. Jim Phelps and Nigel Bell.**

Empangeni: Echoing Green Press, 2007.

Pp. xxii+335. £35 (hardback). ISBN 9780980250114

Available for purchase from www.africabookcentre.com

Reviewed by Andrew Harrison

This new volume of essays commemorates the particular and distinctive contribution of South Africa to D. H. Lawrence studies. In their editorial Introduction, Jim Phelps and Nigel Bell explain their motivation for undertaking the project. Jim, who will be familiar to participants at recent international Lawrence conferences, felt that “there was really very little contemporary sense of South Africa’s contribution to the study of Lawrence” – a point driven home by the country’s lack of representation in Takeo Iida’s excellent book, *The Reception of D. H. Lawrence Around the World* (1999). The reasons for this oversight are evidently rather complex, though the editors cite South Africa’s “previous isolation” from the international community, together with “the lack of significant and recent international publication, and attendance by South Africans at ... conferences” (xv).

The volume addresses this regrettable situation thoroughly and admirably. It reprints essays which are past landmarks in D. H. Lawrence criticism in South Africa; it collects reminiscences from critics who first encountered Lawrence in South Africa (including H. M. Daleski, Mark Kinkead-Weekes and Christopher Heywood); it contains reflections on the teaching of Lawrence in the country’s various universities; and it also includes new essays from a current generation of South African Lawrence scholars. There is even a listing of articles on Lawrence in South African journals, and a