

Here, I think, Lucas the anthologist transcends Lucas the critic. Many Lawrentians will be astonished to find Lucas saying in the Introduction: 'I have to add that with the exception of "Bavarian Gentians" none of the last poems seems to me to be among Lawrence's best'. But they will be relieved to find the 27-line 'The Ship of Death' included in the selection, plus the longer, more familiar version, even if relegated to an Appendix. Lucas also echoes D.J. Enright (and Richard Aldington) in deploring the 'rasping sterility' of *Pansies and More Pansies*, but admits that 'there are some *Pansies* which one wouldn't be without' and accordingly re-prints 'Nottingham's New University', 'The English Are So Nice', et alia. He may not, with Dr Johnson, rejoice to concur with the common reader, but the common reader, it seems, does weigh with the anthologist, if not the critic.

R. P. Draper

***The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, vol. 6: 1927-28 ed. James T. Boulton and Margaret H. Boulton with Gerald M. Lacy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; pp.xxxii + 645; cloth £50.00)**

Look! we have almost come through! We are now at volume 6 of the Cambridge edition of Lawrence's letters. What more can a reviewer find to say about Lawrence as letter-writer or about the edition itself?

The textual apparatus and the editors' methodology are familiar now to anyone who has delved into earlier volumes. The scholarship remains exemplary: in this case James Boulton is joined by Margaret Boulton and Gerald Lacy, but the remarkable consistency throughout the volumes reflects the rigorous quality of the editorial framework which the presiding editors (led by Professor Boulton himself) constructed for the project at the outset.

There is one more volume to follow, taking us from November 1928 (where the present one ends) to Lawrence's death in March 1930. There is a journalistic temptation to anticipate that end, but I will resist it; let the reviewer of volume 7 offer an overview if it is felt worthwhile. What we can do now, though, is take stock of Lawrence's progress in 1927-8, both in his personal pilgrimage and in his development as a letter-writer.

As the editors point out in their Introduction, an obvious feature of the period covered by the volume is 'the restricted range of Lawrence's movements when compared with earlier periods'. Lawrence was slowing down, racked with illness and troubled by an increasingly burdensome emotional state. Travel had lost much of its appeal, though the *thought* of travel – grandiose projects, none of which would be realised – still drove Lawrence as a major motivating force. Physically this was a

period of enforced stasis, spent largely at the Villa Mirinda, but punctuated by breaks, some for health reasons, in Germany, Switzerland and France. In his letters, Lawrence displays all the characteristics of a caged animal – though, let us face it, he usually did, whether travelling or not. But his ill-humour is tempered by the brand of raw, direct humanity of which Lawrence was uniquely capable. At times, one might almost say he was mellowing; in May 1928, for instance, as he emerged from a miserable winter preceded by a summer of desperate illness, many of his letters display a general sense of beneficence which one would not call characteristically Lawrentian. It was a beneficence tinged with sadness, though; although Lawrence was only 42 (he would be 43 in the September) he seems at times like a man in decline, growing old and writing to friends also growing old and, like him, troubled by illness.

Decline! If most of us at our peak could produce letters in such quantity and of such quality we would be astonished! For example, for the six months from 1 January to 30 June 1928 the volume prints 253 letters; other periods would yield comparable hauls. And these are not mere business letters – even the business letters are not *mere* business letters – nor mere chit-chat. Lawrence was still a writer in full flow, pouring out stories, articles, poems and reviews as well as the flood of letters.

The celebrated 'country of my heart' letter to Rolf Gardiner is not here (written in December 1926, that was in volume 5) but Gardiner was one of the many regular recipients of long letters in 1927 and 1928. The letters to Gardiner are particularly interesting for Lawrence's highly prophetic vision of Germany, where Gardiner was involved in organising youth camps. 'I thought when I was in Germany, I thought there was a new sort of stirring there: a horrible disillusion, a grinning awful materialism, but under it, a stir of life' (18 December 1927); '... the German Bunde I am afraid, will drift into nationalistic, and ultimately, *fighting* bodies...' (7 January 1928). Lawrence seems to favour the German 'consciousness' and 'fighting unity' over the English weariness and over-tenderness, in concepts which come close to the nascent fascism of which he is frequently accused. But these ideas stick out, somewhat like sore thumbs, amongst a much more sympathetic flow of human emotional utterance; they seem oddly theoretical, cerebral even, amidst Lawrence's more characteristically physical thoughts. Nevertheless, we have to acknowledge the existence of such pre-fascist rambling and wonder what might have been if Lawrence had survived into the decade of Hitler.

On an altogether different level, Lawrence's gift for crystalline, unsentimental reminiscence is famously displayed in his letter to J.D. Chambers (the last in the volume, 14 November 1928): 'Whatever I forget, I shall never forget the Hags – I loved it so ... it really was a new life began in me there ... Oh I'd love to be nineteen again, and coming up through the Warren and catching the first glimpse of the

buildings ... Whatever else I am, I am somewhere still the same Bert who rushed with such joy to the Hags'. As familiar as the letter is, it still provokes a pang of poignancy in the reader which must be not unlike the feeling shared by Lawrence and David Chambers and Jessie whenever they thought back to those early years of innocence.

Above all, this volume is dedicated to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The period is dominated by the novel, its creation, production, publication and reception; the novel seeps through Lawrence's every pore and haunts his every waking thought. As a chronicle of the creative process, this volume is of immense value; as a testament of the agony which a pioneering writer must endure in bringing forth his most controversial work, it is incomparable. And if there is a hero to the collection, it is Pino Orioli, *Lady Chatterley's* Italian publisher, though really just a small bookseller in Florence. Without Orioli, the book would almost certainly not have seen the light of day, so determined was the opposition of the authorities in England, America and elsewhere. Lawrence's avalanche of letters to Orioli – and the many references to him in letters to others – are testimony to a warm and sympathetic working relationship, a mutual trust quite distinct from Lawrence's relations with friends and literary acquaintances. People like Lawrence need people like Orioli, and fate sometimes kindly thrusts them together; this volume is a fine tribute to the vital role played by a quiet hero in the Lawrence story.

Andrew Cooper

***D.H. Lawrence cent'anni dopo. Nuove prospettive della critica Lawrenciana*, ed. Carla Comellini and Vita Fortunati (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1991; pp. 181; paper L.21000).**

This collection of essays is the result of a symposium organised by the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of Bologna in 1987, to mark the centenary of Lawrence's birth. Its main aim is to approach its subject without any prejudice or stereotyped ideas and to concentrate on aspects of Lawrence's work which, in the opinion of the authors and editors, have been neglected or misunderstood. This approach represents the main unifying element of these essays, their methodology varying as much as their subject matter. This book is a significant contribution to the already substantial body of Italian criticism on Lawrence, and since there are no essays here about any of the Italian-based works, it confirms how wide-ranging is the interest of Italian scholars in Lawrence.

Silvia Albertazzi, in 'The Man who Loved Women (in his way): Notes of a "hell-bird reader"', reconsiders Lawrence's complex relationship with women, and the danger that it may sometimes turn towards male chauvinism or even misogyny, and notes

how Lawrence can be seen as a forerunner of Freud in his attempt to solve 'the enigma of womanliness'. Her discussion of *Mr Noon* is particularly illuminating, showing how Lawrence shares with Calvino the use of stylistic devices which imply complicity with the reader. 'Psycho-narration and interior monologue in "The Prussian Officer" and "The Fox"' by Serena Cenni, is about the hatred and sadism latent in the relationships of the captain and his attendant and March and Banford, each text representing an extremely important stage in Lawrence's career, as he tried to go beyond the old firm, balanced ego. Carla Comellini, in an essay on *Kangaroo*, argues that the novel has been misunderstood by those critics who say that it lacks unity. Its unifying point is Somers' psychological growth, while its experimental form is the outcome of Lawrence's attempt to represent the flow of the unconscious mind. Lawrence himself defined *Kangaroo* as a 'thought adventure' and a 'quest', through which he tried to solve his contradictory feelings about having been born into the working-class but having become bourgeois.

Simonetta de Filippis, in 'The Plays of D.H. Lawrence: Between Tradition and Experiment', highlights the importance of Lawrence's plays in relation to his development as an artist, and how they throw light on the themes of his other works. In this genre, free of the burden of the fictional tradition, Lawrence felt free to concentrate on linguistic and formal experiment. Mario Domenichelli in 'Lawrence, the Unconscious and Freud: the Limit and the Repetition' argues that the man who wants to teach women how to liberate themselves, is actually trying to free the feminine in himself. The result is a form of 'spoken' or 'written' sex which, for Domenichelli is 'written perversion'. Mark Kinkead-Weekes in 'The "Gringo" Senora who Rode Away', offers a highly original reading of the 'The Woman Who Rode Away', placing it in the context of the decolonisation of the European mind, and arguing that, apart from Kipling, Lawrence is the only English writer who has ever tried to understand the religious and cultural dimensions of civilisations other than his own.

Vita Fortunati, in '"The word unsaid": Homosexuality in the work of D.H. Lawrence', maintains that Lawrence, far from being the priest of love who believed that sex as a natural and vital force could solve any problem, is deeply ambivalent about the subject. She believes that the obliqueness of his writing about lesbianism and male homosexuality reveals a man fighting to keep his real ideas from surfacing. Donna R. Miller's 'The Rainbow: Three Women, the Unknown and the Holy Spirit' offers a deconstructionist reading of the novel. She draws attention to 'the narrative moment' and 'the narrative process' in Lawrence, which she sees as the 'law' which both the text and its creator depend upon. The 'law' that Lawrence himself applies to the text is based on the notion of polarity. The final essay in the collection is Rina Nicolai's 'The Collected Poems of D.H. Lawrence: the Meaning of Poetry in Lawrence's Career'. She traces Lawrence's struggle to acquire the right poetic style