

Her originality lies in her attempt to write the story of a couple and study the interaction of husband and wife. The attention she pays to Frieda's unusual personality is one of the strong points in her work. But I am not sure that Lawrence and Frieda really emerge more likeable or interesting in the end. Still more than Feinstein's biography, this book, with its many unflattering close-ups, gives us the image of a pathetic and infantile Lawrence which might very well confirm the opinion of "those who cannot read Lawrence" - whatever the amount of truth in this portrait. It is obvious Lawrence's female biographers of the end of this century would never have succumbed to his charm. Fortunately, if in real life his voice was high-pitched and unpleasant, the one that speaks through his published prose and poetry may still charm a number of readers. No matter if the man was a disappointing lover and the unpredictable husband of an unmanageable woman, as long as the writer retains some of his aura and remains the "priest of love" he had chosen to be.

Paul Poplawski - *D.H. Lawrence: A Reference Companion*, Greenwood Press, Connecticut, 1996.
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Stating his preference for Tylor's *Primitive Culture* over *The Golden Bough*, Lawrence once celebrated Tylor's volume as "sound and substantial". The sound and substantial nature of Paul Poplawski's new reference companion is undeniable: this is a volume that will undoubtedly prove to be an invaluable asset to students, critics and readers of Lawrence alike.

The volume may be best summarised in Poplawski's own words: it is a "comprehensive but easy-to-use guide to the life, works and critical reception of D.H. Lawrence". It is targeted at all breeds or brands of "Lawrentian" - from the beginning student and casual reader to the scholar or specialist - and claims to enable the reader to identify relevant material quickly and easily. The emphasis is on providing information rather than interpretation and critical commentary, so that subjectivity is kept to a minimum, and even in the more "interpretative" sections a counter-balance is provided or implied in the wealth of bibliographical details designated for future reading.

The "Preface", in which Poplawski postulates such claims as the above for the nature and purpose of the book, is a good indication of the scrupulous methodology that is adopted throughout. It is entitled: "How to Use This Book", and sets forth its precise way of formatting and categorising information for the ultimate coherence and ease of access. The book is divided into five main "Parts", with the titles: "Life", "Works", "Critical Reception", "Reference Bibliographies" and "Indexes". The first three parts are further subdivided into "Sections" so that "Part II. Works", for instance, is split into "Novels", "Short Fiction", "Poetry", "Plays" and "Other Works". Each of these sections incorporates yet more subdivisions, so that the sub-section entitled "Novels" can include a separate entry for *The White Peacock*, *The Trespasser* and *Sons and Lovers*, for instance. These entries are numbered sequentially throughout the entire book, from "1. Background and Youth: 1885-1908" (in Section A of Part I) to "48. Screen Adaptations of Lawrence by Nigel Morris" (in Section 3 of Part V). This system excludes bibliographies, which are numbered separately from 1 to 98.

The bibliographies are not copious but thoroughly researched and comprehensive. I will take as an example Bibliography 63: the "Master Bibliography of Criticism of Lawrence's Poetry", which relates to my own area of research. It is prefaced by a list of abbreviations - such as LPO for *Love Poems and Others*, A for *Amores* etc... - so that it is possible to identify at a glance the verse-book that is the focus of the listed critical work. As well as including the standard book-length studies of the poetry, such as Sandra Gilbert's *Acts of Attention*, Poplawski also incorporates lesser known but equally significant texts such as Holly Laird's *Self and Sequence*: a book which has been omitted

from the bibliography of the 1992 Everyman Selected Poems edition. The most striking aspect of the bibliography, however, is the range of reference to essays and articles in (sometimes obscure) journals, pamphlets, anthologies, quarterly publications and theses. Having explored and consulted considerable numbers of these sources, I was surprised to encounter several unfamiliar articles in which the abbreviation LP indicated that the piece of writing was geared specifically towards *Last Poems*. I suspect that even the most knowledgeable and eminent of Lawrence scholars will find such surprise articles: articles which may subsequently be consulted, and will introduce new perspectives into their particular area of research. This may be especially true of the most recent criticism; and in the bibliographies of the novels and short fiction, for example, Poplawski has usefully divided the references into works of criticism published before 1979 and those published between 1980 and 1994.

While the bibliographies are scholarly and comprehensive, the commentary provided by Poplawski for each fictional text or group of texts is clear, succinct and (as the Preface claims) easy to find and use. The "Novel" section, for instance, contains information under the headings "Written", "Published", "Who's Who and Summary" and "Setting" before the relevant bibliography is printed. It is in the "Who's Who" and "Setting" sections that the book becomes most evidently useful for beginning students of Lawrence needing to acquire a provisional (perhaps superficial) summary of the main "plot-line" or events of the novel. For more scholarly Lawrentians, too, it is often useful when analysing or even referring cursorily to a particular text to be reminded of such details. This is true particularly in the case of the numerous short stories and individual poems, as well as the essays and articles collected in such volumes as *Phoenix* and *Phoenix II*.

As the five "Part" headings suggest, the book is concerned not only with texts but also with contexts: it incorporates biographical material (provided by John Worthen) and also detailed bibliographical information about the reception of Lawrence's works. The "Critical Reception" part merits specific consideration in its interesting and diverse selection of material. It is divided into three sections, entitled "A General Guide to Lawrence Criticism and Scholarship", "Varieties of Lawrence Criticism" and "The Popular Image: Lawrence and Film". The second of these categories incorporates seven bibliographies, each devoted to a particular literary theory. The lists include texts adopting historicist, psychoanalytical, feminist, linguistic, mythic, archetypal, philosophical and religious approaches, appropriately categorised and thus easily identifiable. The third section dealing with "Lawrence and Film" incorporates a discussion of Lawrence's own response to film; a consideration of screen adaptations of Lawrence; a comprehensive bibliography of these film adaptations and a chronology of cinema and broadcasting (mostly written by Nigel Morris).

It may be argued that an entire section devoted to Lawrence and film constitutes an over-emphasis. Yet this section, concerned with "The Popular Image", effectively balances the previous section which focuses on scholarly and theoretical perspectives. This juxtaposition reflects the aim of the volume in general, which is to bring into conjunction and satisfy the requirements both of academics and of the general reader. In this aim the book unquestionably succeeds: to the general reader it is a user-friendly guide (as its title suggests); for the scholar it represents not only an invaluable aid to research, but also a challenge.