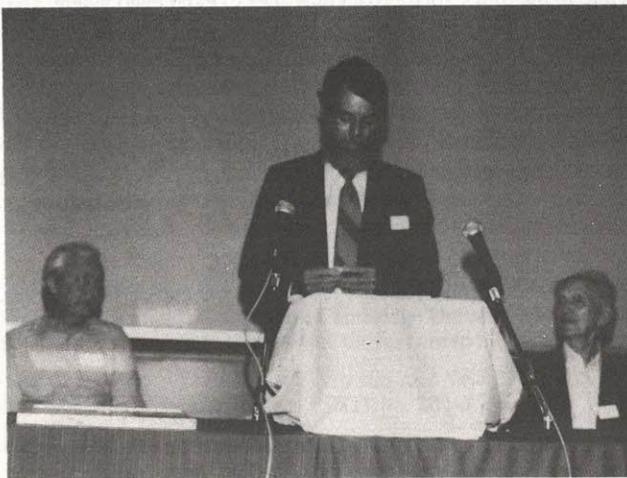
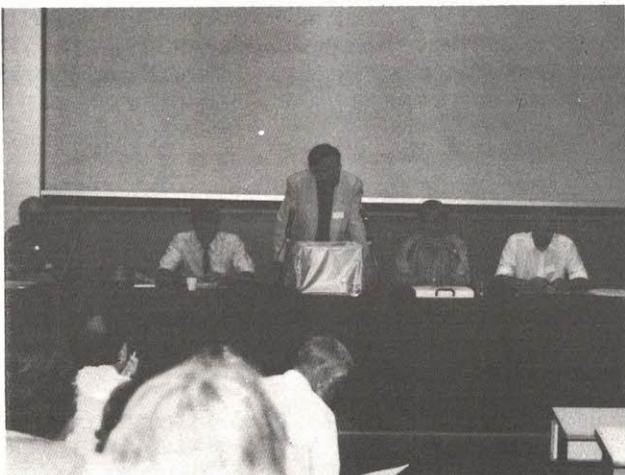


LAWRENCE CONFERENCE, MONTPELLIER, JUNE 1990



Prof. Ian McNiven presents the D.H.Lawrence Society of North America Harry T.Moore award for services to Lawrence scholarship to Profs. James T.Boulton (l) and Emile Delavenay (r).



The 'Editing Lawrence' panel in session, with (l to r) Prof. L.D.Clark, Dr. Paul Eggert, Prof. Charles Rossman, Dr. Charles Ross and Prof. John Worthen.

photographs by LaVerne Harrell Clark.

Book Reviews

D.H.Lawrence and M.L.Skinner, *The Boy in the Bush*, edited by Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; cloth £45)

The basic facts concerning the authorship of *The Boy in the Bush* were laid out by Harry T. Moore in his preface to the Phoenix edition of 1972 and are well known. It is generally agreed, for instance, that since the whole of the novel is in D.H.Lawrence's manuscript, he has stamped his authorship on the work. The various statements by Mollie Skinner and Lawrence about their relative share in the undertaking have been generally accepted. There are, of course, some questions about authorship that cannot be answered unless a lost manuscript or typescript of Mollie's novel *The House of Ellis* turns up. Meanwhile, Paul Eggert's meticulous and exhaustive work on the available texts extends the area of the questions that can be addressed and the answers, some definitive, that can be given. In this way the possibilities for creative criticism have been expanded, which to my mind is the final justification for the work of the Cambridge editors.

The choice of Paul Eggert, an Australian teaching at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra, has ensured that the historical, geographical, botanical and linguistic aspects of the novel have been thoroughly explored (see Appendices III and IV and the numerous explanatory notes on Australian flora and slang). Research into Mollie Skinner's family background is also significant. All this adds immeasurably to the insights that the reader brings to the novel.

Let me briefly refer to the textual apparatus. The base-text for this edition is Lawrence's five MS notebooks. Of the three typescript copies ordered only two survive (TSIa and TSIb) and the autograph revisions made on these while he was in London in the spring of 1924 give a vivid picture of Lawrence zig-zagging between one copy and the other, marking corrections and revisions on the one, transferring them to the second and then continuing to work on that one. The discussion of problems connected with the shared authorship of the novel and the changes made to Mollie's original story are partly dependent on this meticulous examination of the texts. Final editorial choices are fully discussed in the notes, the introductions and/or the textual apparatus.

Paul Eggert's main contribution to a new assessment of *The Boy in the Bush* is his concern to place it firmly within the context of Lawrence's general experience and literary development, so that it ceases to be a kind of 'one-off job'. The editor outlines Lawrence's preoccupations at the time of his first meetings with Mollie Skinner at "Leithdale", Perth, in May 1922, when he was already reading the *Western Australian Yearbook 1902-04* lent to him by William Siebenhaar. This coupled with his reading of Mollie's existing work *Black Swans* may have suggested Western Australia as a possible setting for 'losing oneself away from the world' - an idea that was very likely reinforced when, fifteen months later, on 19 August 1923 in New York, he received the typescript of Mollie's fresh attempt at a novel, *The House of Ellis*. By this time he had written *Kangaroo* and had been working on his first draft of *The Plumed Serpent* which was to explore the same

problems. To quote Paul Eggert, 'Lawrence must have foreseen, at least in dim outline, how Mollie Skinner's novel would enable him to explore his current preoccupations. This helps account for his willingness to take her novel over' (xxvii). Indeed, he had started on the job before he received her assent. So, for the next three months (September to November 1923) Lawrence's major activity was the writing of *The Boy in the Bush*, first in Los Angeles and then on his travels in Mexico with Kai Götzsche. During this time he was preoccupied with his revolt at the oppressions of American society and the possibility of cutting adrift in some country like Mexico. These experiences, according to Paul Eggert, account for the psychological development he felt constrained to introduce in the characterisation of the adventure-story hero, Jack Grant. 'By the end of the novel he is fast becoming a latter-day biblical Patriarch ... and entertaining unashamedly polygamous intentions' (xxvi).

By the time Lawrence had arrived back in London (14 December 1923) he had completed *The Boy in the Bush* as far as chapter XXV, including the daring development of scrapping Mollie Skinner's conventional ending and substituting Jack's heterodox 'new line of emotion'. It is argued that the writing of chapter XXVI, 'The Rider on the Red Horse', was not undertaken till after 9 January 1924, and reflects a new turn in Lawrence's literary interests and a new feeling of optimism. On 9 January he received from Willard Johnson a copy of *Laughing Horse*, a magazine he edited, and in reply Lawrence wrote, 'Dear Old Horse: A London Letter' for the next number. The last chapter of *The Boy in the Bush* echoes this 'London Letter' in a number of ways and in addition, as Paul Eggert points out, 'The physical state of the autograph manuscript confirms the date of c. 9 January 1924, for its composition' (xxxiii). The connection made between Hilda Blessington and Dorothy Brett may at first sight seem somewhat far-fetched, but can hardly be gainsaid in view of the fact that at that time Lawrence thought she might be joining him and Frieda in Taos. Developments introduced in the last chapters obviously necessitated revisions in earlier passages, so that these textual considerations are highly relevant to the allocation of authorship. As for the publisher's disregard of Mollie's suggestions regarding the final chapters, Paul Eggert argues that Lawrence himself does not bear any responsibility.

Finally, the editor discusses at some length the reception of the novel, pointing out that in 1924, at least 138 reviews and notices of the work appeared around the world, with the *New Statesman* describing Lawrence as one 'whose mind ... has burnt its ships, with complete courage and complete honesty' (quotes vii).

Let me end by quoting the editor's claim: 'The facts, taken together that the autograph manuscript is in his hand alone, and that he claimed the novel as a collaboration when he habitually (and modestly) underestimated the extent of his own assistance to other writers' works, are strong evidence that he had made the novel his own and, importantly, that he had accepted responsibility for it: it would be - it is - a Lawrence novel' (liii-liii).

Rosemary Howard

Tony Pinkney, *D.H.Lawrence* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990; pp. 180; cloth £30 paper £8.95)

In a comparatively short book Tony Pinkney has succeeded in focussing on many of the central issues that Lawrence's fiction raises for the contemporary reader. I emphasise the fiction because the American title of the book, *D.H.Lawrence and Modernism*, may suggest a wider range of discussion than is in fact offered; in particular there is no attempt to record all Lawrence's remarks about his 'Modernist' contemporaries and to answer any theory that might be extracted from these, nor is his poetry (in connection with which the same questions may obviously be raised) considered. The book is organised in three main chapters: 'Englishness and Realism' which deals mostly with *The White Peacock* and *Sons and Lovers*; 'Northernness and Modernism', with *The Trespasser*, *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love*; and 'Structures of Modernism', with *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo*, the *Chatterley* novels and the *Plumed Serpent*. The overall thesis is that in reading Lawrence's *oeuvre* we are aware of a struggle to fight off the feared constrictions of 'classicism' - defined as belief in "reason", "truth" or the "essentially human" as situated in a transcendental reality beyond history, beyond what it regards as the superficial distractions of local custom, class, gender, race, sexuality' (3). That fight, it is argued, is successful only in *The Rainbow*, where an admission of 'female' values generates a work of sustained vitality that can keep the demons of classicism at bay, however precariously.

This argument is articulated in a lively and often persuasive way. I was particularly interested in the contrast drawn between the flowing 'female' style of the writing in *The Rainbow* and the more fractured and assertive method of *Women in Love*, texts which are too easily assimilated in many critical accounts. It seemed to me that Dr. Pinkney's case would have been strengthened by more attention than is given to Ursula Brangwen as the heroine of the novel, with her partially successful resistance to the masculine worlds of the school and, through Skrebensky, the army; but the method here is mainly to concentrate on the imagery. This is related to what is traced as the Gothic element in Lawrence's sensibility, going back to Ruskin as well as to the Brontë-esque, and forward to contemporary German culture, particularly the early post-war thought of Walter Gropius. Lyonel Feinginger's woodcut of the 'Cathedral of Socialism', which illustrated the Bauhaus Manifesto, is used on the cover of this book, which does encourage a re-reading of the implications of the well-known cathedral scene in the novel. Pinkney suggests that the argument between the unironic Will and the mocking Anna is 'not just a turning point in this particular human relationship but also a major intervention in the modernist aesthetic debates of the early years of this century' (73). The 'Germanic' Lawrence, in other words, is here repudiating the classicism of Hulme and Eliot in terms of a Gothic aesthetic which 'contains its own "negation".' This is an attractive argument, although it is not obvious to me that Anna's view of the exclusiveness of the cathedral vision, which I take to be that of Christianity itself, is subverted by the text: is 'something free and careless and spontaneous' any longer to be found in this building so long used