

REVIEWS

John Turner, *D. H. Lawrence and Psychoanalysis*.

London: Routledge, 2020.

Pp. 257. £120 (hardcover). ISBN 978 0 3674 1615 7. £33.29

(eBook). ISBN 978 0 3674 7344 0.

Reviewed by Howard J. Booth

John Turner's book will become one of the touchstone texts of Lawrence Studies in the years ahead; it will change our understanding of his developing thought and many of his most important texts. Some might be sceptical that a book on Lawrence and psychoanalysis could be so significant. Two related initial questions might be "how much of this is new?" and "why has this not been done before?". After all, it is now ninety years since Lawrence died, and much ink has been spilt on him, with quite a bit of that on the topic of Lawrence and psychoanalysis.

The major reason why we have not had a book like this before is the sheer range of knowledge required to write it. Some of the work of recovery needed on key figures such as Otto Gross and David Eder has been done over the last thirty plus years by Turner himself. He combines a formidable knowledge of pre-War German intellectual culture with the language skills necessary to an understanding of the radical early psychoanalyst Otto Gross, who had affairs with both Frieda Weekley and her sister Else. The latter had a child with Gross, though she soon rejected him personally and intellectually as she tacked back to what Turner calls "the Heidelberg language of discipline and duty, restraint and responsibility" (23) epitomised by their friend Max Weber.

Turner also shows a ready mastery of the early years of psychoanalysis in Britain. As he points out, there is still no good modern account of that topic up to the end of the First World War,

and the shifting responses to the ideas of Freud and Jung as they moved apart. Psychoanalysis's father-figures later imposed simplified accounts of the movement's history – a narrative written by the victors as it were, with Ernest Jones, whom Lawrence knew, providing a good example – that pushed to the margins more questioning theorists like Gross and the American analyst Triggant Burrow, and downplayed moments when things could have taken a different turn.

A sure-footed guide to the development of psychoanalysis, Turner is able to compare thinkers and clarify differences and similarities despite the distinct terminologies they deployed. This extends to object relations theory – he has also written on Donald Winnicott – important given Lawrence's stress on the pre-Oedipal, with further material here to support the claim that Lawrence was responding, through what Eder and Barbara Low told him, to the very origins of that body of thought. As Turner acknowledges, he benefits from the recent work that brings together key papers by Burrow, who moved away from Freud to help found group analysis. Lawrence engaged with Burrow's work immediately after the War; he later reviewed *The Social Basis of Consciousness* (1927), with Burrow sending Lawrence his articles from the mid-1920s. The significance of that engagement for Lawrence has long been recognised, if again without the strong sense of Burrow's wider thought and the context out of which it emerged found in this new study. Add to this Turner's impressive knowledge of Lawrence's texts, biography and criticism (especially psychoanalytically informed work) and one can see that this was a book that had to await a multi-talented critic not temperamentally disposed to rush fences. All of this knowledge and understanding could be in place and yet the text still difficult to engage with because of its structure and style; Turner, I'm pleased to report, is lively, organised and lucid even when dealing with the most complex ideas.

Another sceptical question might be "just how important is psychoanalysis to Lawrence anyway"? It would be easy to jump to conclusions here. Psychoanalytic thought and its place in the realm

of ideas was very different in the 1900–1920 period from even a decade or so later. Where we might assume that we are being asked to think of Lawrence as having an allegiance to discrete, fully worked out systems of thought and practice – how we regard psychoanalysis, perhaps – it was, until the end of the First World War, open and fast developing, with many connections to other responses to modernity. Gross, for example, in addition to early psychoanalytic writings, responded to Nietzsche, emerging discourses around gender and sexuality, and anarchist politics – he had told Frieda (according to H. D.) that “if love is free, everything is free” (qtd. 156). What may well have struck Lawrence was that here was a way of reviewing one’s own responses to the world in an act of self-analysis conducted through writing and creativity, a practice that even by the 1930s had to be reclaimed by writers such as Marion Milner. By the time he was finishing *Women in Love*, however, Lawrence did not believe that psychoanalysis offered a way forward for individuals or for society, that it was not directed towards the future. That said, such a position has much in common with Eder’s stress at this time on aiming for “something in the morrow which is quite unlike to-day” (qtd. 152).

Psychoanalysis came to focus on an individual’s adjustment to society, rather than opening up to question the form taken by society. (There are of course exceptions, as the history of psychoanalysis in South America, in particular, demonstrates.) Fascinatingly for how we think about psychoanalysis and Lawrence, Gross saw the legacies of a family upbringing as the result of wider middle-class culture and what it imposes. An interest in sexuality, relationships and wider society is not a connection that Lawrence made against the grain of the thought of his time then – rather he often found terms and ideas to help him in the emerging field of psychoanalysis, often at just one remove from analysts and thinkers such as Gross, Freud and Jung.

Turner offered a greatly condensed account of his main claims in a short chapter in Andrew Harrison’s edited collection *D. H. Lawrence in Context* (Cambridge UP: 2019). In a book-length

study, though, Turner has the space to show rather than assert; his approach is able to be more historicising and expository. I think it is right that Turner has undertaken readings of Lawrence that are informed by his particular intervention. I disagree with reviewers who demand both a claim and then the detached consideration of its relative weighting with other possibilities all within the covers of the same book. That seems to demand that one person does the work of debate in a deeply improbable internal dialogue, and makes for a reading experience that combines dullness with passivity. Here Turner engages thoughtfully with *Sons and Lovers*; *The Rainbow*; *Women in Love*; the initial versions of the essays on American Literature and the two psychoanalysis books; and *Mr Noon* and *Aaron's Rod*. The book concludes with a fascinating brief consideration of Burrow and late Lawrence. The readings of *Women in Love* and *Aaron's Rod* struck me as particularly strong, though I will be returning to all of them.

All those interested in Lawrence are urged to read this important book; it makes one think again about psychoanalysis and Lawrence's life, his times and many of his most significant works.

D. H. Lawrence, *Life with a Capital L*, Essays chosen and introduced by Geoff Dyer.

London: Penguin Books, 2019.

Pp xviii + 492. £9.99 (paperback). ISBN 978 0 2413 4460 6

Reviewed by Paul Filmer

Any new collection of Lawrence's writings is to be welcomed, even if its justification rests on Geoff Dyer's provocative championing of Lawrence's essays over the rest of his oeuvre, including the fiction. Invoking Lawrence's problematic critical legacy in the wake of Leavis, Orwell, Millett and others to explain that "Lawrence's reputation has been in more or less continuous decline since the 1970's", Dyer proposes extending

the critical catchment area beyond the fictive straits of F. R. Leavis's 'great tradition' to include forms of writings that are considered ancillary or minor. If Lawrence remains a great writer today, that is due in no small part because his enduring freshness and force is found in ... the scatter of his essays ... in his inability to confine himself to the arena he most valued, he seems a distinctly contemporary writer. Lawrence as loose canon, so to speak. (xi)

Notwithstanding his invocation of other critics to underwrite his assertions, Dyer does have his own longstanding form on Lawrence. More than two decades ago he published an "unfinished, unfinishable record of how [he] failed to live up to [his] ... ambitions" for a study of Lawrence. *Out of Sheer Rage: In the Shadow of D. H. Lawrence* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2015 [1997]) roams entertainingly through recurrent personal, philosophical, epistemological justifications for Dyer's failure, before concluding that "One way or another we all have to write our studies of D. H. Lawrence ... to make some progress with our books about [him] ... the best we can do is to try to make some progress with our studies of [him]" (237).

Thus, *Life with a Capital L* might be seen as a report on the progress Dyer has made since his earlier unfinished-because-unfinishable study of both Lawrence and himself. On these terms, it establishes a new contemporaneity for Lawrence through assembling in chronological sequence, rather than around thematic concerns, an anthology of thirty-six less well-known and, mostly, shorter pieces on the principle of their common "tendency to stray from stated intentions" (xii), constituting ammunition, perhaps, for Dyer's clumsy pun on "Lawrence as loose canon". They include writings on philosophy and travel, as well as criticism, journalism and metaphysical reflections. Dyer sees them, it seems, as offering continuity with the character of Lawrence's writing in his *Study of Thomas Hardy*, which, he proposes, "represented the first glimpse of a more labile relationship between criticism and fiction, between

the necessary restraints of academic discipline and the vagrant life of the mind” typical of Lawrence’s work in the pieces collected here (viii).

Lawrence provides Dyer with the model as well as the title of his account when, in a letter to J. B. Pinker dated 5 September 1914, referring to what he calls the “colossal idiocy” of the First World War, Lawrence announces that “Out of sheer rage I’ve begun my book about Thomas Hardy. It will be about anything but Thomas Hardy I am afraid – queer stuff – but not bad” (2L 212, qtd. xii–xiii). Dyer’s own work opens with the admission that, “Conceived as a distraction, it immediately took on the distracted character of that from which it was intended to be a distraction, namely myself” (*Out of Sheer Rage*, 1). Perhaps as a later justification of this, Dyer includes as an epilogue in *Life with a Capital L* the moving ‘Elegy’ to Lawrence published by Rebecca West shortly after his death. She concludes that whatever Lawrence appeared to be writing about was always also a report in symbolic terms on the state of his own soul. She suggests he was forced to do so, as are all great artists, by the inadequacies of existing vocabularies to the representation of the hidden depths of self-consciousness, necessitating that they repurpose terms used to describe what can be seen in order to characterise what cannot. To write in this way, West suggests, against the prevailing naturalism of his time, required especial courage from Lawrence (485–6). Dyer makes a similar point that although “Lawrence was often carried away by stuff about a metaphorical ‘river of dissolution’ ... he noticed with stunning clarity of vision, all the flora and fauna on the literal riverbank” and that he “was always at his best when facing the finite and the particular” and “often best when most off the cuff”. The “stuff” about dissolution is a reference in part to Lawrence’s philosophy which Dyer claims he “was keen to share with the world (to put it mildly)” but “involved him writing against his strengths” (xiv).

To have included excerpts from Lawrence’s fiction would have seemed odd in a collection of what Dyer acknowledges are

awkwardly termed as essays (xi). But deliberate omission of fiction, given that Lawrence championed the novel over all other forms of writing, deprives Dyer's selection of an important binary element in the "more labile relationship between criticism and fiction" that he glimpsed on first reading Lawrence's work on Hardy. It is ironic, then, that central to this selection are Lawrence's essays on the novel. Whether as critical reflection, introduction or review, almost a third of them are concerned explicitly with it. Some move on to philosophical reflection, as in the chapters from *Study of Thomas Hardy*; others, like parts of these, are written in the biblical cadences sometimes employed by Lawrence (what one supposes Dyer and Millett might be referring to as Lawrence's "liturgical pomp") to reflect his repeated claim that "the Bible is a great confused novel ... it is really about man-alive" (*STH* 195) and, to extend Dyer's chosen title, "Life with a capital L is only man alive" (*STH* 194, qtd. 254–5). Lawrence argues these claims in his essay on 'Why the Novel Matters', one of five on the novel written in 1925. Another, 'The Novel' sets out its three essential qualities: it must be quick, vitally and organically interrelated, and honourable.

Honour, being true to oneself in life, which for Lawrence is fundamental to the representation of character in fiction, is explored at length in the remarkable memoir written as an Introduction to Maurice Magnus's *Memoirs of the Foreign Legion*. Lawrence explores Magnus's mendacious, self-deceiving character in a depth made possible by a complementary, analytically self-reflective examination of his own complex and problematic response to his subject. Whilst criticising Magnus's dishonourable amorality, Lawrence casts serious doubt on whether his own behaviour had been honourable. As a writerly examination of character, it supports the contention that Lawrence, whatever his topic, was always also writing in symbolic terms about the state of his own soul.

Dyer's engaging selection of Lawrence's writings could introduce him to a readership that may have been deprived, by literary critical fashion and convention, of the brilliance of his

insightful engagement with and reflections on human experience. But it remains the case that, for Lawrence himself, “only in the novel are *all* things given full play ... when we realise that life itself ... is the reason for living” (STH 198, qtd. 259). The absence of any of Lawrence’s fiction calls into question whether Dyer’s intention to expand the critical catchment area of Lawrence’s writings is either necessary or justified on Lawrence’s own behalf. It might also be seen as fulfilling a rather different purpose: if it makes Lawrence seem, as Dyer suggests, “distinctly contemporary” then it puts Dyer himself as a contemporary writer in distinguished company, if only by association. Some progress, indeed, in Dyer’s “own studies of D. H. Lawrence”.

Claire Hélie, Elise Brault-Dreux and Emilie Loriaux, eds. *No Dialect Please, You’re a Poet: English Dialect in Poetry in the 20th and 21st Centuries*.

New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2020.

Pp. 220. £101.49 (hardcover). ISBN 978 0 3672 5804 7

Reviewed by Annalise Grice

D. H. Lawrence’s masterful reproduction of the dialect of the Nottinghamshire-Derbyshire border is (for this local reader at least) one of the joys of reading his works; we need only point to examples such as the playful and intimate exchanges between Walter Morel and Jerry Purdy in *Paul Morel*, Mrs Gascoyne’s verbal sparring with her sons in *The Daughter-in-Law* and, most iconically, Oliver Mellors’s unapologetic use of his broad Derbyshire dialect as a marker of class difference and self-assertion in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. In Edward Nehls’s *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography Volumes 1–3* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1957–1959), memoir accounts relate Lawrence’s own enjoyment of the performance of dialect; Willie Hopkin recalled that he and Lawrence would rehearse it together “much to

the bewilderment of any visitor from elsewhere” (1:25) and Montague Weekley noticed in 1926 that Lawrence “retained a markedly Midlands accent, *e.g.* ‘Sargent, sooch a bad pēynter’” (3:70).

Such remarks reflect the findings of this diverse volume, which repeatedly and inevitably returns to the politics of dialect. Dialect refuses to conform to a “standard” language and is often associated with members of the working class or those judged to be provincial and/or uneducated; correspondingly, dialect poetry has traditionally been sidelined due to perceptions of its low status subject matter and regionality. Scholars have celebrated Lawrence’s status as a working-class writer, so it is perhaps surprising that there has been a lack of critical attention paid to Lawrence’s early dialect poetry. Elise Brault-Dreux’s close readings of ‘The Collier’s Wife’, ‘The Drained Cup’, ‘Whether or Not’ and ‘Violets’ in her co-edited collection are therefore a welcome starting point for further research that narrows the divide between literary studies and linguistics. Brault-Dreux draws attention to the ways in which Lawrence utilises the phatic or social qualities of language to stage the circulation of gossip within working class communities. The conclusions of the chapter may not come as a surprise, given the balladic form of much dialect poetry and its often bawdy subject matter: “The dramatization of dialect exchanges among poetic *personae* is in fact strikingly foregrounded and physicality is peculiarly promoted” (39). So Lawrence’s amusing dialect poems are typical of the genre, but Brault-Dreux has omitted another fruitful reading of these texts which might have considered the more explicit revisions Lawrence made to ‘The Drained Cup’ (to which he added five racy stanzas) and ‘Whether or Not’ for the English edition of *Collected Poems* (1928); the addition of the word “cunt” to the latter poem somehow evaded the publisher’s notice.

Reading *No Dialect Please* in its entirety allows us to place Lawrence’s dialect poetry within a literary tradition that gathered ground in the nineteenth century, due in large part to spelling and grammar books and pronunciation guides popular in the eighteenth

century which aimed to standardise English. The English Dialect Society was founded in 1873 and it supported the publication of Oxford philologist Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898). Notions of dialect poetry as a constrained form which is limited to comedic caricatures, pathos or vulgarity is rendered reductive by the volume's contributors, who explore writers' purposeful rejection of dominant poetic models and their presentation of distinctive cultural heritages.

Alan Chedzoy examines William Barnes's evocation of Dorset dialect and provides evidence that Barnes served as a local model for Thomas Hardy's early dialect poetry (20). Lawrence, too, knew Barnes's work: Brault-Dreux observes that he mentions Barnes in a letter dated 11 July 1915 when writing to an unknown recipient about the difficulties of transcribing dialect without "discrepancy and awkwardness" (8*L* 15). Sue Edney provides a sensitive reading of the Lincolnshire dialect in Alfred Lord Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer' poems and there are several chapters on Yorkshire. Mike Sweeting analyses how Ted Hughes's poetry "follows the cadence of his 'mother tongue'" (85) and Stephan Wilhelm conducts a phonetic analysis of Ian McMillan's 'Fruity Yorkshire Brogue'. Jane Hodson uses the case study of The Yorkshire Dialect Society following an important theoretical section to her chapter which outlines the history of "dialect" as a term and foregrounds its culturally constructed nature: linguists prefer to speak of "linguistic variation" rather than "dialect", since geographical areas have no uniformity of grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation and there is no clear break between areas and those that lie adjacent (57). Cécile Marshall provides a wide-ranging discussion of the proud "Northerner" Tony Harrison, including poems such as 'v.', a modern, urban version of Thomas Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard', which inspired a young Andy Burnham (103), and the ironically titled 'National Trust', which mourns the disappearance of the Cornish dialect (110). The political implications of Harrison's poetry are also present in Katy Shaw's discussion of women's dialect poetry and the 1984–5 Miners'

Strike. In these poems, “distinct dialects from Northumberland to Nottinghamshire are raised as verified discourses of equal worth to the ‘official’ discourses of standard English, polit-speak, and media assertion” (88). Samuel Trainor’s “Birminghamization” of Homer’s *Iliad* satirises the “reifying tradition of Homeric translation” (204) and in common with many of the poems read in this refreshing book, demonstrates dialect poetry’s subversive potential.

Despite its title, the cultural heritages explored within this volume span not only “English” regions but also Scots and Scottish English (Mathilde Pinson’s fascinating chapter traces a line from Robert Louis Stevenson to Hugh MacDiarmid’s 1920s Scottish modernism, and then to Tom Leonard’s post-war working class Glaswegian) and Ireland (Clíona Ní Riordáin considers Seamus Heaney and the Cork poet Greg Delanty). These chapters show how dialect is mobilised to remind us that “while many speakers of English in the world may be monolingual the English language can no longer be viewed as monolithic” (162). The legacies of colonialism are also addressed by David Bousquet, who considers Jamaican Creole in the Dub Poems of Linton Kwesi Johnson and Benjamin Zephaniah, and Sara Greaves, who explores Daljit Nagra’s ‘Punlish’, a “transgressive heteroglossia [which] makes for an enhanced sensuality” (182). Nagra’s blending of Punjabi and English allows him to make “puns” through creative wordplay and innuendo.

This volume sent me back to the original poems with enthusiasm, a better appreciation of the linguistic creativity of dialect poets and an insight into an alternative version of the poetic canon. To paraphrase the editors (who in turn take inspiration from Basil Bunting), why should “standard” English – “a dialect among others, that of ‘the Saxon South of England’” (2) – be the accepted tongue of poetic expression?

Stefania Michelucci, Ian Duncan and Luisa Villa, eds. *The British Aristocracy in Popular Culture: Essays on 200 Years of Representations*.

Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co., 2020.

Pp. 269+viii. £54.50 (paperback). ISBN 978 1 4766 7487 2.

£20.62 (eBook). ISBN 978 1 4766 7487 2

Reviewed by Michael Bell

The continuing prominence of the aristocracy in modern Britain, whether it is a scandal or a bastion of stability, invites cultural historical, if not psychological, explanation and in that respect artistic representations may be crucial. Yet maybe its very obviousness in the national culture has led to analytic neglect. In their Introduction the editors note that despite abundant study of the aristocracy by historians, notably David Cannadine, its literary representations have received relatively little attention even after Len Platt's book-length study *Aristocracies of Fiction* of 2001 to which the present collection offers itself as a fine-grained expansion. But if the topic is obvious it is no less elusive for that and, after the editors' helpful scene-setting, there is no summative essay seeking to draw general conclusions. In the light of recurrent themes and questions in the essays readers may feel stimulated to do something of this for themselves. It may be also that the controversial prominence of the aristocracy in British public life makes it difficult to view objectively with a native eye, and it is appropriate that the volume has a significant proportion of non-British authors as well as an American publisher. The literary writers discussed are Disraeli, Dickens, John Forster, Trollope, Hardy, Lawrence, Waugh and Ishiguro but the volume includes, appropriately for its popular cultural purview, chapters on other figures and media.

The sequence begins on an international stage with a discussion of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The opera was composed at the time of major crisis for the European aristocracy; a crisis by which the

British aristocracy, even if they escaped beheading, were nonetheless affected. Ian Duncan notes the telling contrast between the complex inner lives of the three women abused, as we would now say, by Giovanni and his complete absence of interiority. This may be taken to reflect both the personal condition of the serial womaniser, a condition inviting psychological analysis, and the representation of a mythic archetype.

The ambiguity here strikes a premonitory note for the subsequent treatments of the British aristocracy in which a mythic hollowness continually interacts with social and psychological realities. Nor is this just an inner dynamic of fictional worlds: it is played out in the country's social and political institutions. It may be that the distinct decline yet equally distinct persistence of the aristocracy has encouraged "harmless" fictional topoi, such as P. G. Woodhouse's Bertie Wooster and other "chinless wonders", to flourish while also allowing them to spill over into national life. The striking current instance of this effect is the politician Jacob Rees-Mogg. If not strictly an aristocrat, and perhaps by virtue of this, he performs the patrician role with a finely calculated awareness of his comical absurdity as perceived by most of his fellow citizens. As a supposedly entertaining national "character" he becomes largely impervious to criticism, if not indeed thriving on it. The House of Lords is the symbolic and institutional expression of this dual effect. Its abortive reform in 1911 left the country with no possibility of a properly reflective and representative second chamber; something most comparable jurisdictions regard as a necessity. It suits successive governments, and the Commons as a whole, to have a neutered second chamber whose democratic illegitimacy can always be used against it if it offers any serious challenge. Meanwhile it is the nation's only second chamber and among its swollen ranks of cronies and the entitled there are many eminently suitable individuals who perform its proper function. That is why, despite the inevitable jibes, there is no inconsistency when Labour politicians who have spent a political career campaigning for abolition of the House of Lords

accept a peerage. Some may indeed be ermine sniffers but there is no need to suppose they are accepting anything other than a continuing voice in the national counsels through the only institutional means currently available. A similar justification is surely available to Mark Twain who is lightly twitted in the volume for accepting an honorary doctorate from the University of Oxford.

Not surprisingly, therefore, a recurrent emphasis throughout these essays is ambivalence: a good aristocrat can do a lot of good, a bad one can do a lot of harm. And to that extent the most interesting treatments are the most complex and ambivalent. It makes sense to concentrate on fictional representations in so far as the aristocracy draws so much sustenance from its hold on the national imaginary and, sure enough, fiction and reality are seen to interact throughout. Indeed, Luisa Villa's essay on Disraeli, the first of the British authors to be discussed, makes the claim that his fiction provided the arena in which he explored and honed political postures almost as a by-product. In seeking a fictive genre that would provide him with a wide and lucrative readership, he was inevitably sifting public values and moods.

For readers of D. H. Lawrence, the most significant chapters will be those on Lawrence himself and on Lady Ottoline Morrell. Stefania Michelucci revisits the question of the "natural" aristocrat with special reference to Oliver Mellors in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Lawrence appropriated the idea of the aristocrat for his ideal of the integral individual even as Sir Clifford, the institutional aristocrat, undergoes the collapse of the self. Part of the elusiveness of the aristocratic idea lies in its various migrations and trans-mogrifications. A number of contributors refer casually to the supersession of the old inherited aristocracy by intellectual, artistic or moneyed "aristocracy". Lawrence gives a specific interpretation of this but in general usage it is hard to assess to what extent this is a loose metaphor or a claim of institutional reality. Michelucci, looking partly through Lawrence's eyes, examines with some scepticism a version of the latter claim as argued by the American historian W. C. Lubenow. Scepticism is particularly appropriate

wherever the notion of the aristocrat encompasses political authority. Lawrence's own "leader" figures should in this respect be sharply distinguished from his integral individuals even if they are all imbued with some common values.

One of the earliest examples of such metaphorical migration in the European context is Goethe's idea, within a still highly class ordered society, that the artist is a new form of the aristocrat. Whereas the bourgeois has the primary function of producing economic wealth the aristocrat can be devoted to the cultivation of the self. Despite the ennobled Goethe's heavy administrative duties in the court of Saxe-Weimar, this is a loaded conception of the aristocrat privileging personal freedom rather than social responsibility, and not surprisingly so since Goethe's genius answers as much as Wordsworth's to Keats's phrase "the egotistical sublime". As a mobile metaphor the notion of the aristocrat is endlessly malleable.

In contrast to these metaphorical appropriations, however, Anna Viola Sborgi revisits a case of genuine aristocracy in Lady Ottoline Morrell. Drawing on previous biographies of Ottoline, she presents a persuasively sympathetic account of her subject by throwing a different light on Ottoline's social rank as an inescapable reality: a restriction as well as a resource. The essay opens with a thoughtful review of the Hermione Roddice/Ottoline Morrell question, leaning towards the notion of unfair caricature rather than independent fictional creation. It then opens into a more general analysis of Ottoline's situation as aristocratic bohemian and patroness of the arts. Whereas her fraught relation with so many of her protégés is often attributed to her personality, Sborgi argues that it was rather a structural fact of her social rank. She inhabited different worlds but could not fully belong to any of them. An acute quotation from Virginia Woolf catches the point with a sharp analytic sympathy as the predicament of the aristocratic woman is seen from the inside. Her artistic protégés

see her not as the aristocrat who is cut off from them although they may for a moment come into contact with her, but as the disembodied spirit escaping from her world into a purer air, where she can never take root. This gives their intercourse a kind of lustre and illusion: they are always conscious that she comes from a distance, with strange colours upon her; and she, that these humbler creatures have yet a vision of the divine. (130–1)

And the relativity of all this is fortuitously reinforced by the fact that Michelucci, in the next essay, uses the same quotation from Woolf with a more critical implication (147). With her more postmodern conception of identity, Sborgi leaves Ottoline's personality, within the objectifiable elements of her situation, as shifting, multi-faceted and elusive to judgement. She sets this against Lawrence's comment, in his late reconciliatory letter to Ottoline, that there is "only one Ottoline" although Lawrence surely meant that she was unique rather than one-dimensional.

Several essays give high quality close reading of single texts, notably Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* and Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. Sergio Crapiz examines Waugh's narrative technique to argue its complexity and objectivity against Edmund Wilson's critique that the novel "lacks genuine religious feeling" (167) and identifies religious tradition with the aristocracy. For this reviewer the novel has always been soft-centred, revealing a queasy sentimentality in respect of religion and the aristocratic life. On that reading it illuminates the theme of the volume primarily, and perhaps more significantly, as a symptom of the national culture, of the spell cast by the aristocracy even on a writer principally known for his satiric eye. But irrespective of whether one is finally convinced, Crapiz's careful case underwrites the novel's pervasive melancholy. *The Remains of the Day*, by contrast, is an object lesson in the dangers of sentimental attachment to aristocratic tradition and the reading by Laura Colombino includes comparison with the film version. She points out how the film sets the fascist

connections in the 1930s, thereby invoking iconic expressions of political evil, whereas the novel sets them in the '20s when these movements were still nascent and more ambiguous. Once again, the theme lends itself to constant shifting from complexity to simplification.

The volume includes more discussion of screen representations and ends with comparison between *The Queen*, *The Crown* and *Downton Abbey*. One might quibble over the rubric through which the two former, a film and a television series respectively, are introduced: they examine “the meaning of the monarch and, by extension, of the aristocracy” (231). A substantial proportion of the British citizenry might make a sharp distinction here and, if asked, would be in favour of keeping the Queen but on a reduced Belgian or Scandinavian model shorn of the aristocratic entourage. But no matter, both are high quality popular examinations of the monarchy exercising the same generic function as Shakespeare’s history plays. This reviewer must confess to not having seen more than brief clips of *Downton Abbey* which has seemed more in the nature of a costume drama feeding the apparently endless appetite for the aristocratic lifestyle as spectacle. Artful as it may be, it is surely as much a symptom as a treatment of this enduring British condition. It may be supposed that, if the British polity has not completely collapsed by then, a similar volume could be produced in a hundred years’ time.

Helen Rydstrand. *Rhythmic Modernism: Mimesis and the Short Story*.

New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Pp. 247. £96.00 (hardcover). ISBN 978 1 5013 4341 4

Reviewed by Susan Reid

Rhythm was central to the development of the modernist arts, from Pound’s notion of “absolute rhythm” in poetry to the rhythmic

paintings of Kandinsky and the pounding cross-rhythms of Stravinsky's controversial *The Rite of Spring*. Indeed, it is difficult to think of a literary modernist who was not preoccupied by questions of rhythm. Among the earliest was John Middleton Murry, a co-founder in 1911 of *Rhythm* magazine, the short-lived 'Art, Literature, Music' quarterly that brought him into lasting relationships with Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence (both of whom feature in chapters here). Helen Rydstrand's meticulously-researched study opens with Murry's definition of modernism (in *Rhythm* 1.1) as something that "penetrates beneath the outward surface of the world, and disengages the rhythms that lie at the heart of things, rhythms strange to the eye, unaccustomed to the ear, primitive harmonies of the world that is and lives" (qtd. 1). Murry is also the subject of much of the first, contextual chapter, 'Rhythm and Mimesis in Modernist Literary Culture', which reminds us not only of the influence that circulated between Murry, Mansfield and Lawrence (witness Sydney Janet Kaplan's excellent 2010 comparative study titled *Circulating Genius*), but also of Murry's broader importance in debates with his contemporaries (notably T. S. Eliot) about the rhythms of literary modernism.

At the core of this multi-layered book, however, is a form that Murry did not practise – that of the short story. Alongside Lawrence and Mansfield, Virginia Woolf completes a trio of short-story writers, who form what Rydstrand presents as a loose set, rather than an established group or movement. A direct link is provided by Woolf's literary friendship / rivalry with Mansfield, but the less direct resonances between Woolf and Lawrence are, for me, among the best bits of this ambitious and deeply interesting book. While Rydstrand perceives "an ethical motivation" for the rhythmic writing of all three of her chosen short-story tellers (19), she notes, more specifically, how "Woolf's argument that society, art and individuals would gain practical, creative and spiritual benefits from developing greater sensitivity to rhythm rests on the rather Lawrentian basis that it amounts to an attunement with the

universe” (152). Such observations retune perceptions of both writers.

Rhythm is a capacious term, which Rydstrand recognises at the outset as encompassing:

a huge variety of “real” and interconnected rhythms – vocal, organic, developmental, sexual, pathological; broader natural rhythms – circadian, seasonal, lifespan, generational, cosmological, astronomical; physical rhythms – vibrations, pulsations, waves and currents, whether thermodynamic, electrical, sonic or material; social rhythms – everyday, communal, interpersonal, gendered; psychological or interior rhythms – intellectual or emotional, conscious or subconscious, healthy or unhealthy; and lastly, historical rhythms – both modern (urban patterns of labour, traffic and transport, as well as clock time and the measurable, mechanical or artificial in general) and ancient, primitive and ritual. (2)

Although it might seem improbable for a single study to cover so much ground, all these rhythms do figure, to some extent, since part of the book’s aim is to show their interconnections. But even this long list is not exhaustive: musical rhythm, though not included here, recurs frequently, beginning with citations from Lefebvre’s *Rhythmanalysis* (1992) that provide theoretical underpinning. Rydstrand borrows terms such as “eurhythmia” and “arrythmia” to reflect literary depictions of being in or out of tune with the rhythms of “nature and culture, the everyday and the body” (3–6), as well as Lefebvre’s unifying sense that:

Musical rhythm does not only sublimate the aesthetic and a rule of art: it has an ethical function. In its relation to the body, to time, to the work, it illustrates real (everyday) life. It purifies it in the acceptance of catharsis. Finally, and above all, it brings compensation for the miseries of everydayness, for its

deficiencies and failures. Music integrates the functions, the values of Rhythm. (Lefebvre, qtd. 5–6)

Lefebvre's philosophy thus informs subsequent analysis of musical rhythm in writing by Woolf and Mansfield – but not by Lawrence. Certainly the author finds more overtly musical cues in work by Mansfield, whose manuscript drafts sometimes “use[d] treble clefs to separate sections of the text” (121), and Woolf, who is portrayed as taking up “the conductor's baton” in her orchestration of the “unified rhythm” of her story ‘Kew Gardens’ (179). Disappointingly, at least for this reviewer, there is no such sensitivity to the musical rhythms of Lawrence's prose (or the fact that he composed music for his play *David* [Plays 590–601]), nor any mitigating explanation for excluding similar textual analysis from this comparative study, but then music is not its primary focus.

Rydstrand's overarching interest is in how literary modernists deployed rhythm to mimetic effect – whereby “rhythmic mimesis is like an echo, enacting a vital connection between a subject and its representation” (34) – particularly in the short-story form that she “resituates at the heart of the project of modernist experimentation” (191). While this latter claim is familiar to scholars of Mansfield, short fiction remains a relatively neglected part of the oeuvres of both Lawrence and Woolf and comparisons between them are also fruitful. Rydstrand perceives all three writers as experimenting with the boundaries between poetry and prose in their short stories, although she asserts that Woolf did so “more directly” than the other two (150). This is a point that I for one might contest in relation to Lawrence (the most accomplished poet of the trio), but the over-arching question of why early twentieth-century writers were so interested in interrogating and combining the properties of “poetry” and “prose” is important (189). In this context my niggles risk churlishness, although if the book's scope had remained more tightly focused around this central concern then perhaps such criticisms would have been forestalled.

The chapter titled ‘D. H. Lawrence’s Cosmic Rhythms’, which precedes those on Mansfield and Woolf, focuses on physical manifestations of rhythm, on the basis that “For Lawrence, the human body is frequently a mimetic medium between the cosmic rhythms of ‘life’ and literary rhythms, via the work of inscription itself as imitation. His veneration of the corporeal is undoubtedly one of the most striking aspects of all Lawrence’s work, including his writing on writing” (67). Starting then with non-fiction examples (a pattern for all chapters in this book), such as the “great systole diastole of the universe” invoked in ‘The Reality of Peace’ (*RDP* 27; qtd. 63) and the “rhythmic form” described in his oft-quoted “carbon letter” (*2L* 183–4; qtd. 68), Rydstrand proceeds to readings of “a thermodynamic aesthetic” (61) in ‘Odour of Chrysanthemums’, ‘The Prussian Officer’ and ‘Sun’, and of his ambivalent engagements with the rhythms of modernity in ‘Tickets Please’ and ‘The Rocking Horse Winner’. By contrast the following chapters focus on rhythms of the mind rather than those of the body or the physical world. In ‘Katherine Mansfield and the Rhythms of Habit’ Rydstrand argues that Mansfield’s “stories are frequently rhythmically structured to bring out this aspect of mind” (117) and in ‘Virginia Woolf, Rhythm and the World as Work of Art’ that Woolf’s “thinking rhythms” are conceived as “representing the inner rhythms of subjectivity as they are shaped by outside forces” (162). The book’s structure thus seems to posit a separation of mind and body, of art and life that all three writers disputed, in their different ways; a structure that is also at odds with a trajectory that ultimately finds that they are more united than divided in their use of rhythm. Discussing Woolf’s ‘The Mark on the Wall’, Rydstrand returns to “Lawrence’s idea of the ‘curious spiral rhythm’ of the mind as it repeatedly approaches a preoccupation until the problem is somehow resolved” (*IR* 172; qtd. 172). A “spiral” rather than consecutive approach to her chosen authors might have led to a more nuanced and cohesive study, which only becomes fully comparative in the Woolf chapter.

This is a book, then, that is best read from start to finish, rather than dipped into, but it more than repays such a reading. The ambition of addressing multiple interrelationships – between types of rhythm, literary forms, and modernist authors – that overflow the boundaries of a single volume is to be applauded – in so doing the author raises important questions that should inspire further research.

Francesca Wade, *Square Haunting: Five Women, Freedom and London Between the Wars*.

London: Faber and Faber, 2020.

Pp. x + 422. £20 (hardcover). ISBN 978 0 5713 3065 2

Reviewed by Lee M. Jenkins

Francesca Wade's luminous first book adapts its title and its topic from Virginia Woolf's 1927 essay 'Street Haunting'. Where Woolf's essay is "a paean to the imaginative possibilities of the city" of London (315), Wade's book is a paean to Mecklenburgh Square, a "quiet enclave on Bloomsbury's easternmost edge" which "hold[s] within its history a female tradition of exactly the sort Woolf was looking for" in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) (7, 10). Wade recounts the history and female tradition of Mecklenburgh Square with reference to five women writers who lived there in the years encompassing the two world wars: H. D., Dorothy L. Sayers, Jane Ellen Harrison, Eileen Power and Woolf. As Wade explains, "These women were not a Bloomsbury Group: they lived in Mecklenburgh Square at separate times, though one or two knew each other, and others were connected through shared interests, friends, even lovers" (8).

The chapters Wade devotes to these five remarkable female residents of Mecklenburgh Square are all absorbing and are as readable as they are well-researched. Of particular interest to Lawrentians are the chapters on H. D. and Jane Ellen Harrison.

Lawrence first met H. D. on the eve of the outbreak of the First World War at an Imagist dinner party hosted by Amy Lowell at the Berkeley Hotel in Knightsbridge; the friendship between the two would develop in 1915, when they were near neighbours in Hampstead. In the autumn of 1917, following their eviction from Cornwall on suspicion of spying for the Germans, Lawrence and Frieda sought temporary refuge in H. D.'s bed-sitting room on the first floor of 44 Mecklenburgh Square. Both Lawrence and H. D. would revert to the traumatic events of 1917, Lawrence in *Aaron's Rod* (1922) and in 'The Nightmare' chapter of *Kangaroo* (1923), and H. D. in her autobiographical novel *Bid Me to Live* (1960), in which she recapitulates both the break-up of her marriage to fellow Imagist poet Richard Aldington and the gendered debates which defined her literary relationship with Lawrence (and, in Wade's analysis, H. D.'s unrequited sexual desire for Lawrence).

In *Square Haunting* "We enter Mecklenburgh Square" when H. D. did, in February 1916, "a time of significant turmoil, in and outside its walls" which Wade evokes by way of Lawrence's words in *Kangaroo*: "it was in 1915 the old world ended. In the winter of 1915–1916 the spirit of the old London collapsed, the city, in some way, perished, perished from being a heart of the world, and became a vortex of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears and horrors" (30–3; *K* 216). In *Aaron's Rod*, Lawrence nonetheless identifies the novel's proxy for Mecklenburgh Square, as the "dark, bristling heart of London" (*AR* 70): it is here, in the chapter titled 'The Dark Square Garden', that Aaron refuses to kiss Josephine Ford, the fictional surrogate for Dorothy ("Arabella") York, who also lived at 44 Mecklenburgh Square and with whom Aldington began an affair at the end of 1917. Aaron's rejection of Josephine is a synecdoche for Lawrence's rejection of the "vortex of broken passions" in which the residents of 44 Mecklenburgh Square were caught up in the latter years of the war. His friendship with H. D. ended when she embarked, early in 1918, on an affair of her own with musicologist Cecil Gray, who had been a neighbour of the

Lawrences in Cornwall and who would father, but not acknowledge, H. D.'s daughter, Perdita.

Lawrence was closely connected to 44 Mecklenburgh Square and its residents, lodging there himself from 20 October to 30 November 1917, and returning to visit afterwards: the famous game of charades representing the Book of Genesis was played in H. D.'s bed-sitting room, with Frieda, H. D., Gray, Aldington and York among the players, and Lawrence casting himself in the role of God (see H. D., *Bid Me to Live* [London: Virago, 1984], 121). Lawrence has only a walk-on part, however, in Wade's women's history of Mecklenburgh Square. In her chapter on H. D., Wade seeks to correct the biographical record according to which "H. D.'s life is often told as the story of her relationships with men", Lawrence among them, whereas, Wade argues, H. D.'s "life is the story of her attempts to step out of their shadow and establish an identity on her own terms – a struggle rooted in Mecklenburgh Square" (35).

Dorothy L. Sayers's struggle was likewise rooted in Mecklenburgh Square. In December 1920, she rented the first-floor rooms at no. 44 which H. D. had occupied. Sayers would struggle there with Russian-born Jewish American writer and translator John Cournos, who had himself been a resident at no. 44 during the First World War and who had brought Dorothy York, his sometime fiancée, there in 1917. The cases of Cournos and of Lawrence show that there are connectivities between women and men, negative and positive, as well as between women, in the literary history of Mecklenburgh Square. Cournos blamed H. D. for encouraging York's affair with Aldington, an allegation he makes in letters and repeats in fictional form in his roman à clef, *Miranda Masters* (1926). Lawrence likewise travestied H. D. in *Aaron's Rod*, but the intertextual connections between H. D. and Lawrence in the fiction and the poetry of both, are more generative than the mere bearing of a grudge. Virginia and Leonard Woolf ran the Hogarth Press together from no. 37 from August 1939 to October 1940.

The classical scholar and founder of the "myth and ritual school", Jane Ellen Harrison, who lived at 11 Mecklenburgh Street,

adjoining the Square, between May 1926 and April 1928, was an important figure for Lawrence, as well as for H. D. and Woolf. As Wade explains, Harrison's recuperation of pagan female goddess figures "mounted a forceful challenge to women's current subordination", and for modernist writers, her "efforts to reread history through the lens of gender and power offered fertile encouragement to their own experiments with radical new forms" (166–7). Wade notes that "Lawrence read Harrison's *Ancient Art and Ritual* a few months before he first met H. D., and told a friend that 'it just fascinates me to see art coming out of religious yearning', though he supposed it to have been written by 'a school marmy woman'" (166–7). Lawrence supposed wrong, but it is nonetheless the case that "Harrison's book opened up exciting new artistic possibilities" for Lawrence, as well as for his female contemporaries, H. D. and Woolf (168).

The prologue to *Square Haunting* ends with Mecklenburgh Square "in ruins" in 1940, when the side of the Square on which the Hogarth Press was situated suffered significant bomb damage (4). The conclusion takes its epigraph from H. D.'s poem-sequence *The Walls Do Not Fall* (1941): "An incident here and there, / and rails gone (for guns) / from your (and my) old town square" (317). H. D. may be addressing Lawrence here, in her return, in the years of the Second World War, to the old town square where both had lived in 1917. *Square Haunting* concludes, however, with a reaffirmation of the female history and tradition of Mecklenburgh Square. With the post-war construction of William Goodenough House, Mecklenburgh Square has become a hub for international students: where Virginia Woolf's study at no. 37 was once located, a room is now allocated each year to a woman student, who, as Wade imagines her, is the successor of Woolf, H. D., Sayers, Power (a pioneering scholar in the field of medieval women's history) and Harrison as she "crosses Mecklenburgh Square, climbs the stairs, turns the key in the door of her new home, and finds a book sitting on the desk, ready for her to turn the first page: *A Room of One's Own*" (344).

David Trotter, *The Literature of Connection: Signal, Medium, Interface 1850–1950*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Pp. 283. £30 (hardcover). ISBN 978 0 1988 5047 2

Reviewed by Michael Bell

David Trotter is especially well-known for his compendious knowledge of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fiction and in his present book he seeks to show the pervasive significance in this period of a modern theme which he defines as “the romance of connectivity”. In the early twenty-first century no one can escape awareness of, or involvement in, systems of global inter-connection but Trotter extends this experience, and its literary representations, back to the pre-internet, or even electronic, age. His authors include, to give the best-known names, Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis, Mina Loy, Katherine Mansfield, Franz Kafka and Claude McKay.

As Trotter points out, systems of communication often require not just that a message is accurately transmitted but that it is not accessed, or hacked, by third parties. And for the sake of accuracy the unambiguous signal is privileged over the interpretable sign. These imperatives impel such systems towards hermetic and totalising enclosure. But while “connectivity” denotes the mechanism, or medium, the word “romance” focuses on human investment and response. Drawing on the now overwhelming experience of connectivity, and the body of reflections to which it has already given rise, Trotter probes its less apparent antecedents and intimations. So, for example, the quarterdeck of a ship or, later, the cockpit of an airplane are powerful nodes of connectivity. Yet both are instances in which human agency is usually thought to be not only exercised but enhanced. The driverless car, by contrast, seems to represent a diminution of personal agency and increasingly perhaps of the very faculty. That may suggest the increasing dominance of the connectivity system and the loss of

human investment, or romance, except of course that this prospect is itself the object of intense human concern both positive and negative.

If the human dimension is ineliminable there is maybe another specifically contemporary factor which justifies Trotter's term "romance". In an unpublished Ph.D. thesis at the University of Warwick the Lawrence scholar Hiroshi Muto discusses the cultural reception of new media around the turn of the twentieth century. Radio transmission and phonograph, the latter enabling us to listen to the voices of the dead, took on a magical or ghostly aura until the new media settled into familiarity. Muto cites Kipling's story 'Wireless' which, as Trotter observes, "has to do with Hertzian waves of both the telegraphic and the telepathic variety" (139). Yet a century later, as the spookiness of connectivity has faded into apparent banality, we are finding new reasons to fear its secret powers.

We might say that where Freud revealed the extent to which the human ego is subject to unconscious psychic processes so Trotter shows its involvement in largely unconscious modes of connectivity. These, however, are unconscious rather by their familiarity, their being hidden in full view, and the historical cases therefore require some unearthing: they are almost completely enfolded in the romance, the human purposes to which they are put. Perhaps the most striking literary case of missed communication in the period, although it does not quite come into Trotter's purview, is Tess Durbeyfield's letter to Angel Clare which goes under the carpet of his room and remains unread. I imagine my experience of this must be fairly typical. Reading it as a schoolboy I thought it yet another example of Hardy's heavy thumb in the scale, piling on the misery of fate. In more mature years it took on a different pathos and psychological acuteness as a representation of Tess's divided state of mind in wanting to tell and fearing to do so. Rather than the external accident of miscommunication it became the expression of psychological inwardness. In Lawrence, who learned so much from Hardy, there are, we might say, no "mere" accidents. The drowning

in the 'Water-Party' chapter of *Women in Love* is an outcome of the inner and outer forces at play throughout. The relative externality of the event in Hardy relates to that willed aspect of his "metaphysic" that Lawrence rejected. The communication theme is there in the Hardy episode, to be sure, but so fraught with these multi-layered meanings as to remain unnoticed as such and much of the value of Trotter's book lies in its close readings as he reverses the focus of attention to bring out new aspects of the romance.

As well as literary texts, Trotter draws on other contemporary cultural developments including scientific theories some of which have a significant bearing on his reading of Lawrence. He shows Lawrence to have absorbed the discovery of electromagnetism as a medium of wireless communication and associates this with a major shift in his understanding of human being around the time of *Women in Love*: a shift from "blood" to electrical "polarity". Trotter claims no originality for this observation as such but gives it a new force by showing the possible aetiology of this change and its consonance with contemporary science. One might add that in seeking to dissolve the conventional dualism of body and mind Lawrence had used the challenging oxymoron "blood consciousness" in which the dualistic terms still assert themselves albeit under erasure whereas the electrical terminology takes the dissolution to another level. What has often been taken as obscurantist rhetoric becomes vividly poetic, yet soberly literal, expression of an invisible reality newly known to science. Trotter cites the poem 'Bare Almond Trees' in which the closely observed description in lines such as "Do you feel the air for electric influence / Like some strange magnetic apparatus?" (96) could hardly be a more direct statement of the connectivity theme as he has defined it.

Connectivity is inescapable and if Lawrence's almond trees seek connection there are human beings who seek to avoid it. The likely consequences of this are not good as Trotter suggests by placing Lawrence's 'The Man who Loved Islands' beside Sarah Orne Jewett's *The Country of the Pointed Firs* and Strindberg's *The*

People of Hemsô, in each of which a character who seeks the solitude of an island finds the ultimate isolation of death.

Readers may not be equally convinced of all the readings even as these remain teasingly suggestive. The great empires of history have all depended on networks of communication and Trotter comments on Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, in which Marlow dutifully concludes his mission by reporting both to his Brussels employers and to Kurtz's "Intended": "The danger Conrad might be thought to have warned us against is the medium's transcendence of the message" (82). Every so often Trotter states his theme in a baldly abstract language and here, as Marlow tries to negotiate the political and economic forces of which Conrad will give a magisterial account in *Nostromo*, the connectivity theme may feel like a reductive distraction although it is, of course, part of Trotter's point that such forces are transmuting into the apparently neutral functions of media. The ultimate value of Marlow's professional expertise and sense of duty begins to shimmer. Indeed, Trotter's mention of the quarterdeck recalls for me a "lightbulb" moment in the twenty-four-episode documentary *War at Sea* presented for the BBC by Louis Mountbatten in the 1960s. In a brief aside he mentioned a concern of the naval high command that the whole arsenal of warships was directly linked only through radio officers. These were not usually officer class but working-class boys who had liked playing with radios, and the Second World War, the myths of national unity notwithstanding, was no exception to the long British history of strikes and insurrections in time of war. Mountbatten's aside was a brief lifting of the veil which Trotter seeks to hold open.

The lenses and other tools of the critic always tend to produce the phenomena they seek. As Trotter's theme takes him through a miscellaneous range of authors, this reader is left wondering to what extent this is an important new key to the literature, and the historical period at large, or is a *vade mecum* along a speculative by-way. Either way, it provides a closely argued yet accessible opening to a new conversation.

Lise Jaillant, *Cheap Modernism Expanding Markets, Publishers' Series and the Avant-Garde*.

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018.

Pp. xii + 172. £35 (paperback). ISBN 978 1 4744 4132 2

Reviewed by Jonathan Long

Lise Jaillant's excellent monograph on the development of the marketplace for modernist literature through the publication of inexpensive reprints is part of the series Edinburgh Critical Studies in Modernist Culture. The focus of the series is not on individual authors or works but on broad themes and contexts such as cultural history and theory, including studies on modernism and gender, sexuality and politics, to provide "breadth of scope and an expanded sense of the canon of modernism". It is generally believed, quite accurately, that many modernist titles were first published in modest-sized editions for consumption by small numbers of those interested in the avant-garde. Less is known though about how those titles often eventually reached a wide readership, not just in the UK but on the Continent and beyond, with many readers not being native English speakers.

In the publisher's words, this is the "first account of European reprint series that sold modernism to a wide, international public at the beginning of the twentieth century". Jaillant had previously explored a comparable phenomenon on the other side of the Atlantic with her monograph *Modernism, Middlebrow and the Literary Canon: The Modern Library Series, 1917–1955* (2014), which told the story of The Modern Library and its major role (principally in the 1920s) in making available inexpensive copies of modernist books in North America and beyond. She claims the accolade of being the first to explore the phenomenon in Europe because of scholars' previous emphasis on periodicals. Cheap reprints of other books had been circulating for many years when modernist titles were first published. The best-known publisher was the German company Tauchnitz, which published many hundreds

of titles in uniform paperback editions. And as the books were out of copyright they were cheaper and easier to publish. In the UK, the move from paying to borrow books from lending libraries, such as Mudie's, to buying them was being encouraged, made easier with technological improvements and attractive to those aspiring to be "upwardly mobile". The series involved included the World's Classics, Everyman's Library and The Wayfarer's Library, but they were selling traditional, out of copyright, titles. Jaillant traces the move to make generally available more challenging contemporary fiction. These new series, publishing copyrighted modern texts, included the Travellers' Library, the New Adelphi Library and the Phoenix Library. They were offering books for 3/6 that were often 7/6 or more in their first editions.

Having set the scene in the introduction, *Cheap Modernism* is divided into five chapters. Each of them focuses through different approaches on a "cheap" reprint series that included modernist authors in its list. The first chapter tells the story of the World's Classics series, published by the Oxford University Press. It had a reputation for being conservative in outlook, avoiding living authors and experimentation. Sir Humphrey Milford, publisher to the University of Oxford, known to readers of this journal for publishing the first edition of *Movements in European History* (1921), was less conservative in outlook and added popular texts with modernist illustrations to an otherwise traditional list with titles by eminent writers in accurate texts as its hallmark. This new mixed approach was epitomised by the publication in 1928 of *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins with an introduction by T. S. Eliot and *Sentimental Journey* by Laurence Stern with an introduction by Virginia Woolf. Both these modernist writers had previously expressed their approval of these classic texts, and their involvement, as Jaillant saw it, helped to develop their image as "members of the artistic establishment".

In another angle on the popularisation of modernism, chapter 2 looks at how Jonathan Cape and Martin Secker used their cheap reprint series to publish modernist copyrighted texts. This is set

against the background of the debate at the time (1926) over the publication of “indecent books” featuring the Home Secretary William Joynson-Hicks and the MP Joseph Kenworthy. Jonathan Cape published *Dubliners* through his Travellers Library and Martin Secker published *The Captain's Doll* as Volume VI in the New Adelphi Library, the first of about a dozen in that series. They were capitalising on the reputation of Joyce and Lawrence as subversive writers – *Ulysses* had been banned and Methuen had been prosecuted for publication of *The Rainbow*. Jaillant describes how the success of these cheap reprint publications shows that there was “an untapped market for texts by the most subversive modern writers” (19).

Quite a different story is told in chapter 3. The cheap reprint series created by Chatto & Windus was the Phoenix Library. It published *Tarr* by Wyndham Lewis in 1928 in an edition that was completely revised and more accessible. The first edition was for many “unreadable” (84). Jaillant describes the significant role that Chatto & Windus played in bringing Wyndham Lewis to a wider audience by giving him the opportunity to rewrite the book.

Chapter 4 takes us to mainland Europe and the histories of Tauchnitz and the Albatross Modern Continental Library. The story of the latter is now told in detail by Michelle K. Troy in her monograph *Strange Bird: The Albatross Press and the Third Reich* (2017). Both these German publishers provided English literature to a wide audience, especially expatriates. The reputation of Tauchnitz was declining though and the dull appearance of its books symbolises that. Albatross books were published in a bright modernist design by Hans Mardersteig, who provided many elements of the look of Albatross books, inspiration for other publishers such as Penguin (the naming of that publisher after a bird was perhaps not a coincidence) which eventually took much of the Albatross market. Jaillant describes how Albatross published many modernist texts and promoted modernism in many ways, eventually taking over Tauchnitz. It established its Odyssey Press

imprint to publish uncensored editions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Ulysses*.

The Hogarth Press is perhaps best known amongst book-lovers for the limited and now scarce first editions of Virginia Woolf's works, some with covers designed by her sister Vanessa Bell. However, as described in chapter 5, the last of *Cheap Modernism's* vignettes, it also published titles in a Uniform Edition, promoting Woolf's work in reasonably priced volumes for the "ordinary reader", enhancing her reputation. No longer was her work solely for a small audience interested in the avant-garde; it had become canonical and collectable. Jaillant's research in the Hogarth Press archive demonstrates that the success of the Uniform Edition here encouraged Harcourt Bryce to issue a similarly successful edition in America.

In her conclusion Jaillant tells us how the cheap series declined here after their zenith in the 1930s, the paper shortages and distribution problems of the Second World War taking their toll. Changes in tastes thereafter meant that paperbacks prevailed, either through old series such as World's Classics adapting and producing quality paperbacks, or through new publishers, principally Penguin, founded in 1935, revolutionising publishing from then on with cheap paperbacks.

Benefiting from significant fellowship funding, Jaillant has been able to carry out extensive archive research and tell her story in a detailed but very readable and interesting fashion, selecting a handful of modernist writers and a similar number of reprint publishers to make her points. The book benefits considerably from her judicious use of illustrations, in colour as well as monochrome, of rarely seen early reprints, and also her refreshing penchant for using graphs and other statistical methods of presentation to justify her conclusions. Readers of this journal will be particularly interested in what Jaillant has to say about Martin Secker's New Adelphi Library. That series focused on Lawrence's less controversial work. There is more to be said about Secker's simultaneous publication of Lawrence's more ground-breaking

work, chiefly his novels, in what Secker called his “thin paper edition”. The fact that those equally inexpensive slim volumes, bound in red, are still widely available is testament to the extent of Secker’s success in making Lawrence a significant author in the cheap modernism story.

Marie Géraldine Rademacher, *Narcissistic Mothers in Modernist Literature: New Perspectives on Motherhood in the Works of D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Jean Rhys*.

Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag, 2019.

Pp. 178. £27.99 (paperback). ISBN 978 3 8376 4966 6

Reviewed by Judith Ruderman

Mothers have suffered from stigmatising designations for a very long time. So-called “refrigerator mothers”, distant and cold, were blamed for their children’s atypical behaviour in the 1950s. At the other extreme, the psychological disorder Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, named in 1977, defined mothers who caused or exacerbated their children’s illnesses in order to gain attention for themselves. And then we have the “helicopter parent” of more recent decades, typically the mother, who hovers over her children in an unnaturally strong connection that stifles the child’s autonomy (and is the bane of college faculty and deans). With all this mother-blaming and mother-shaming, this reader looked with hope to a study that attempts to find the positive outcomes of what the author, Marie Géraldine Rademacher, calls narcissistic mothering: to find a new perspective, as her subtitle proclaims. Chapters on D. H. Lawrence (the longest in the book), James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Jean Rhys argue the point that narcissistic mothers in modernist literature, for all their faults, have a benevolent side that is often overlooked.

I will focus on the Lawrence chapter, with a side look at that on Rhys, to give a sense of some of the issues that pervade this study and diminish its effectiveness. Rademacher, in taking a distinctly oedipal approach to *Sons and Lovers*, assumes that because Lawrence was familiar with Freud he agreed with Freud's perspectives on the Oedipus complex. She characterises William's love for his mother as "incestuous" (50); yet Lawrence in fact disagreed with what he saw as Freud's definition of the unconscious as a repository of incest desires. More, he wrote of his mother's love, "It has been rather terrible, and has made me, in some respects, abnormal" (*IL* 190). In his essay on Poe, Lawrence also addresses physical illness as a deleterious effect of spiritual love:

The nerves that vibrate most intensely in spiritual unisons are the sympathetic ganglia of the breast, of the throat, and the hind brain. Drive this vibration over-intensely, and you weaken the sympathetic tissues of the chest—the lungs—or of the throat, or of the lower brain, and the tubercles are given a ripe field. (*SCAL* 69)

It is very true that Mrs Morel's mothering propels Paul to achieve; in that sense it does have its benevolent side. As well, her warnings about Miriam's unsuitability for her son are on the mark, even if they partly derive from her own narcissistic needs. But in Rademacher's effort to find a "new perspective", I believe that she minimises the ambivalence of both Paul Morel and his creator to such mother-love, not to mention Lawrence's suggestion, reinforced in later works, that the cause of Paul's "weak chest" (*SL* 448), and his own, resides with the mother.

The author's discussion of the painting *A Holy Family* exemplifies assumptions that undermine Rademacher's reading of Lawrence. It is one thing to construe the figure in the window as a phallus, since Lawrence told Earl Brewster that he "put a phallus in each of [his] pictures somewhere" (*SL* 648), but quite another thing

to say that this phallus refers to the Oedipus complex. The painting offers no suggestion that the child is “enviously” gazing at the father, as Rademacher characterises the look. To the contrary, the expression seems more one of benignity, and it is not even directed at the father per se; so it is hard to understand how the author sees in it a desire to kill the father. *A Holy Family* is found in the volume of reproductions of Lawrence’s paintings edited and with an introduction by Keith Sagar, as cited by Rademacher, but Sagar’s interpretation of this painting is ignored. Sagar describes the scene in *A Holy Family* entirely differently and more persuasively: “It is a holy family because a proper natural balance of relationships between men and women, parents and children, people and their environment, is what constitutes for Lawrence a ‘condition of blessedness’” (Sagar, *D. H. Lawrence’s Paintings* [London: Chaucer Press, 2003], 30).

More typical than the omission of a contradictory interpretation is this author’s heavy reliance on secondary sources, which too often act as an unnecessary extra layer between the author (and reader) and the text itself. As but two examples among many, she quotes Lawrence through Ernest Tedlock and refers to Roy Spencer rather than to *Sons and Lovers* on the novel’s portrayal of the gentler side of Walter Morel. She also attributes the term “devouring mother” to this reviewer rather than to Lawrence via Jung, and references it in an oedipal context although Lawrence used the term in a pre-oedipal context, as “a kind of incest” (3L 302) different from the Freudian notion.

The chapter on Jean Rhys’s *Good Morning, Midnight*, subtitled ‘A Mother’s Isolation and Marginalization’, also builds on assumptions that do not fit the novel in this reviewer’s reading of it. Neither the narrator nor the narrative ever defines Sasha as a mother, and though Rademacher calls her a “self-absorbed mother”, in no sense but the biological is she ever a mother, no matter how sad the loss of a newborn. Yet, admitting that the infant’s death “is only briefly evoked”, Rademacher asserts that it is the “key to the understanding of the novel” (134), accounting even for Sasha’s

fixation on her appearance. The protagonist's profound despondency, malaise, and feelings of inadequacy, however, more likely antedate the baby's birth and death. To call Sasha a "narcissistic mother" already in the second sentence of the chapter is assertion but not proof. Indeed, multiple nouns have the adjective "narcissistic" attached to them, as if repetition adds up to demonstration (for instance on pp. 142–5). I question as well the thesis that Sasha's newly-developed "positive image of self" resists – indeed is necessary for resisting – the rise of fascism. Nationality is certainly a prominent motif in this Rhys novel, but as a marginalised figure, Sasha empathises with others at society's margins; to argue for more seems to be a reading that Rademacher has absorbed from other critics rather than demonstrated with convincing reference to the text itself.

In sum, while there is value to affirming the positive aspects even of (s)mother love, this book in my estimation needed at least one more reworking between dissertation and final publication. Careful proofreading would also have reduced distracting problems with grammar, awkward constructions, unclear phrases and over-long paragraphs. Time to step away from overreliance on secondary sources, to reconsider the primary texts with a fresh eye, and to refine the prose style would have resulted in a more polished and convincing work.

Chris Forster, *Filthy Material: Modernism and the Media of Obscenity*.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Pp. x + 216. £22.99 (paperback). ISBN 978 0 1908 4087 7

Reviewed by Jonathan Long

Chris Forster's monograph in the well-populated sea of books on modernism and on obscenity has a catchy title, reinforced by the cover design, which lists some of the most notorious novels of the

twentieth century. Those titles are partially or wholly struck through as a symbol of the treatment meted out by censors across the world. The justification for this new book is the innovative approach that Forster takes, tracing the changing approaches to what obscenity is perceived to be, in the context of developing media technology. Put simply, Forster's argument runs, a novel that has ceased to be viewed as obscene in printed form may be obscene if later presented as a film even if the content is effectively identical. The development of technology has meant that the excessive censorship of the beginning of the twentieth century has progressed to what had become by the 1960s more or less the "end of obscenity" (borrowing the title of Charles Rembar's 1968 book on the subject) for the written word.

Filthy Material "brings together two traditions of thinking about modernism: a long line of thinking about obscenity as crucial to the production and reception of modernism, and a more recent tradition of seeing modernism as an expression of the changing media technologies of the early twentieth century" (3). Forster's approach is to use the notion of "media ecology", looking at the various types of media in relation to each other rather than in isolation. That is one of the more straightforward examples of the extent to which Forster uses theory in his book. Unfortunately, at times, particularly in the introduction, some of the language used is difficult to unpack. The prose can be very dense and the narrative on occasion does not proceed very far without quoting another authority, reflected in a list of works cited (not just consulted) that must be in the region of 250 titles; this in a book where the main text is less than 200 pages long.

Forster divides his book into six chapters. The first presents a media history of obscenity, beginning with the early prosecutions for libel through to the Acts of Parliament of the nineteenth century, intended to deal with obscenity as a threat to the well-being of the country. In it the changing definition of what obscenity is can be traced, becoming more sophisticated as the various types of media targeted expand. In one of a number of detailed diversions in the

book, the chapter ends with a review of changing attitudes towards medical texts and their (for some) sexual charge, and for whom those texts were intended. These diversions add to the feeling that the book is at times a potpourri, as they sometimes demonstrate the author's knowledge of a subject without taking the argument forward as much as the space devoted to them would support.

The second chapter contrasts the opinions on the nude in art of Walter Sickert and Percy Wyndham Lewis. The nude, historically a high point in Western art, was becoming undermined because of the mass production of cheaply reproduced "salon" nudes, as photography became an inexpensive technology. Lewis would not accept the nude as an appropriate subject for modernist art whereas Sickert endeavoured to revitalise it through the realism expressed in his series of Camden Town nudes. Chapter 3, of most interest to readers of this journal, also looks at the materialities of reproduction. Forster contrasts Lawrence's response to the piracy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* with Joyce's emphasis on his intellectual property rights. Lawrence's focus was on the superior quality of the originally published text, the design of which he had taken some trouble over, compared with the "filthy" counterfeits. The artisan, handmade quality of the first edition is starkly contrasted with the counterfeits, which were mass-produced using modern technology, in keeping with Lawrence's dislike of industrialisation.

The fourth chapter examines what Forster perceives to be the high-water mark of British censorship in this period. He looks at the precedent created by the suppression of Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* in 1928, which led to the suppression of Norah James's *Sleeveless Errand* in 1929. He argues that they were not suppressed purely because of the same-sex desire between women that they included but because of government concern over liberated female sexuality, with women considerably outnumbering men after so many men were killed in action during the First World War. It is difficult to imagine now how any reasonable person could see either text as a potential threat.

The next chapter demonstrates why the book is not entirely cohesive, interesting though the subject matter may be. Forster examines the use that T. S. Eliot made of obscene doggerel in his letters and notebooks, based on a view that such material fostered social collectivity through orality, in line with the disappearing practice of communal singing. Whilst singing may be a medium, this chapter does not provide the best evidence for Forster's core argument about the effect of technology on censorship.

Finally, chapter 6 usefully contrasts James Joyce's *Ulysses* with the film adaptation made in 1967 by Joseph Strick. Forster demonstrates how the book was not banned, particularly because of the constant references in the text to its being a printed work. However, the obscene language used in the book created problems for the film over thirty years later because of the perceived potential impact of a film relative to a book.

In a further example of the eclectic nature of this book, there is a coda that examines the publication by the Obelisk Press of Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* and the Olympia Press's publication of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*. The approach of the former was to cement "a vision of new and experimental literature as inextricable from the transgressive and the obscene" (185), a vocation for its owner. The approach of the Olympia Press was mainly commercial, to provide "an outlet for controversial avant-garde works" (184).

Whilst Forster's book includes much interesting material on the legal, social and policy issues surrounding his topic and puts together in substance a good argument, which is too detailed for a short review such as this to do justice to, unfortunately these benefits are overshadowed by an over-reliance on the work of many other scholars, evidenced by the significant use of quotations throughout the book, particularly in the introduction. The reader is left wondering what Forster himself thinks about some of these matters, and whether he would have been better to leave writing the book until he was further distanced from the dissertation on which it is clearly based, to make his points more clearly and with more of his own words.