Time Present

The Newsletter of the International T. S. Eliot Society

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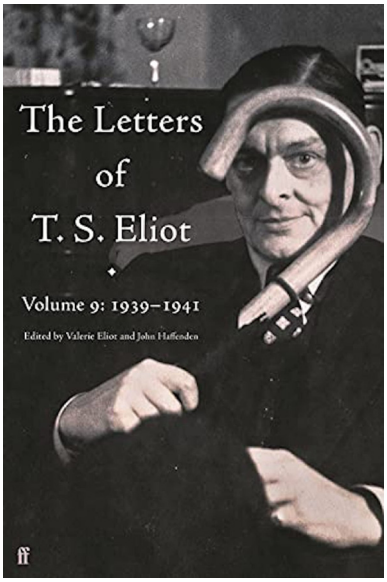
The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 9: 1939-1941, edited by Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden

London: Faber & Faber, 2021. lxix + 1072 pages.

Reviewed by Timothy Materer
University of Missouri



In the cover photograph of *The Letters of T. S. Eliot*, Volume 9, TSE peers through the handle of an enormous umbrella in a gesture that seems both defensive and aggressively alert. In English newspapers, the umbrella became an emblem for Neville Chamberlain (252n1) and his unfortunate attempts to negotiate with Hitler. Eliot's observational genius immerses the reader in those anxious and confusing times. As in all the volumes, there are striking personal revelations, confessions of failures, and poetic insights; but this one excels in telling the story of a man coping with wartime challenges to an earlier, relatively peaceful existence. The immediacy of these letters, filled with the daily details of living and writing, recalls those of epistolary masters such as Virginia Woolf. Rather than simply reporting events—life in the country with London refugees, nights of fire watching in London, coping with dull razor blades and abrasive toilet tissues—Eliot seems to recount events as they are occurring. Continual references to using pen, pencil, various typewriters, and the quality and scarcity of paper enhance the spontaneity. In a warm letter to Virginia Woolf, he recalls her "suggestion that war-time ought to see a revival of letter-writing" and worries over "my inability to satisfy the standards of correspondence which are set by even a post-card from yourself" (373). He tells a hostess that "I have much higher standards of letter writing than I can ever live up to, and

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The Fall of a Sparrow: Vivien Eliot's Life and Writings

by Ann Pasternak Slater

London: Faber and Faber Limited, 2020. xiii + 770 pages.

Reviewed by Frances Dickey
University of Missouri

Immortalized as a neurotic wife in *The Waste Land*, skewered by Bloomsbury contemporaries ("a bag of ferrets"), and used as an interpretive tool by a parade of critics and biographers, Vivien Eliot has been the subject of gossip for the last hundred years. In *The Fall of a Sparrow*, Ann Pasternak Slater attempts to tell the unhappy story of Eliot's first wife as objectively as possible. The work has three parts: the life, closely based on Vivien's archive at the Bodleian Library (her fiction, surviving diaries, account books, and scrap books); her writings, some previously published in *The Criterion* and others printed for the first time; and a digital text of her papers, including diaries, at the TSEliot.com website. Interspersed throughout Slater's text are detailed interludes ("Notes") sorting out such rumor-shrouded questions as the nature of Vivien's infidelity with Bertrand Russell, the drugs she took, and "Captain Eliot's" flat. Though Slater's rigorous investigations cannot illuminate every corner of Vivien's murky life, she does dispel many of the errors and half-truths damagingly asserted twenty years ago by Carole Seymour-Jones in *Painted Shadow*.

Most biographies are premised on the significance of their subject's life, while biographies of the wives of famous men perch uneasily between the wife's importance and her husband's. If the marriage is unhappy, the husband's failings can provide a raison d'être for the story of the wife, like Effie Gray, wife of John Ruskin, or Zelda Fitzgerald. In this vein, Seymour-Jones depicted Eliot as an angry, alcoholic homosexual whose misogyny doomed their marriage from the start (at this distance, her hit job seems catty more than feminist, laying much blame on the mothers of both parties). One of Slater's missions, as a commissioned biographer, was to dismantle that account of the Eliots' marriage, and to her credit she avoids assassinating Vivien's character on behalf of her husband's reputation. Whether because Slater scrupulously avoids a sensationalist narrative or simply because Vivien's life was messy and incoherent, her *Life* reads as a more or less disconnected sequence of years. Beginning in 1914, the year of Vivien's earliest surviving diary and one year before the fateful "convergence of the twain" at a dance hall in London, each year has its own chapter through to her committal at Northumberland House in 1938. Information about Vivien's childhood and youth might help create a narrative with a three-dimensional protagonist, but that is not Slater's aim; she seeks to lay out the events of Vivien's life as documented by her writings and Eliot's published *Letters*, augmented by John Haffenden's annotations.

One constant in Vivien's life does help explain what Virginia Woolf called her "chops and changes": substance abuse. While Woolf and others noted Viven's ether use in the 1930's, Slater is the first to tell the story of her lifelong drug addictions. According to second-hand accounts, Vivien suffered tuberculosis of the bone as a child, an illness whose symptoms can include severe back pain, and she began using pain-killers on a doctor's prescription as a teenager (115, 249). While it is not known how regularly she used substances in the early years of her marriage, many of her nebulous health complaints may be traced to chloral hydrate, a "hypnotic depressant" that was a Victorian "novelty narcotic of choice"— Dante Gabriel Rossetti was a famous user—leading to addiction within two weeks and causing permanent liver damage (216). (Vivien's doctors more than once raised an alarm over her liver, which might seem like quackery from a modern perspective, but was accurate; indeed, she wrote "fearful liver" in her diary as early as 1914 [11].) Overdose symptoms include neurological and digestive impairments and skin conditions, all of which she complained of, while withdrawal can lead to "delirium and hallucinations, deep stupor," unconsciousness, and death (217). Vivien's years-long addiction to chloral hydrate was discovered in 1925 and explains her strange behavior as described in Eliot's letters, including a period of eleven weeks in early 1925 when she did not get out of bed, sleeping almost continuously, more than once seeming near death. (The context of "The Hollow Men" becomes clearer.) After 1925, though her doctors kept her from using chloral, she seems to have had recourse to other addictive substances including barbiturates, bromides, ether, paraldehyde, phenacetin, and Adalin (351-55).

Many of Vivien's physical and psychological ailments may have originated in and interacted with

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International T. S. Eliot Society
43rd Annual Meeting

The Waste Land Centennial

September 23-25, 2022, in St. Louis

Call for Papers

This cfp can also be found at our website. You can help us to advertise this conference by sharing the link.

The Society invites proposals for papers to be presented at our annual meeting, this year held in St. Louis, MO from 23-25 September (Friday to Sunday). Clearly organized proposals of about 300 words, submitted as Word or PDF documents, on any topic reasonably related to Eliot, along with brief biographical sketches, should be emailed by June 1, 2022, to tseliotsociety@gmail.com, with the subject heading "Conference Proposal."

Each year the Society presents the Fathman Young Scholar Award to the best paper given by a new Eliot scholar. Graduate students and recent PhDs are eligible (degree received in 2018 or later for those not yet employed in a tenure-track position; 2020 or later for those holding a tenure-track position). If you are eligible for the award, please mention this fact in your submission. The award, which includes a monetary prize, will be announced at the final session of the meeting.

Memorial Lecture

We are pleased to announce that our Memorial Lecture will be delivered this year by **Douglas Mao**. It will be titled "The People of 1922." The lecture will focus on how people are represented in *The Waste Land*. What affective and dispositional textures come into play in such representations, and with what result?

Douglas Mao is Russ Family Professor in the Humanities at Johns Hopkins University. He is the author of *Solid Objects: Modernism and the Test of Production* (Princeton, 1998); *Fateful Beauty: Aesthetic Environments, Juvenile Development, and Literature 1860-1960* (Princeton, 2008); and *Inventions of Nemesis: Utopia, Indignation, and Justice* (Princeton, 2020). He is also the co-editor, with Rebecca Walkowitz, of *Bad Modernisms* (Duke, 2006) and the editor of *The New Modernist Studies* (Cambridge, 2021) as well as the Longman Cultural Edition of E. M. Forster's *Howards End* (2009). Professor Mao has been president of the Modernist Studies Association and held a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship. Formerly Senior Editor of *ELH*, he currently serves as Series Editor of Hopkins Studies in Modernism, from the Johns Hopkins University Press, and as a member of the editorial boards of *ELH*, *Textual Practice*, *Modernism/modernity*, *English: the Journal of the English Association*, and *The Journal of Wyndham Lewis Studies*.

Peer Seminars

The peer seminar format offers the opportunity to share your work in a more in-depth way with a group of participants who share your interests. Participants will pre-circulate short position papers (5 pages) by September 1; peer seminars will meet to discuss the pre-circulated papers for two hours at the beginning of the 2022 Society Conference. Membership in each peer seminar is limited to twelve on a first-come, first-served basis. Please enroll by July 18th, by sending an email with the subject line "peer seminar" to tseliotsociety@gmail.com with your contact information.

The Society will award a prize, sponsored by *The T. S. Eliot Studies Annual*, to the best seminar paper presented by an early-career scholar. Graduate students and recent PhDs who attend a seminar are eligible (degree received in 2018 or later for those not yet employed in a tenure-track position; 2020 or later for those holding a tenure-track position). For consideration, papers must be sent as Word or PDF documents to tseliotsociety@gmail.com by September 1 with the subject line "Seminar Prize Submission." The winning paper will present original research and a persuasive argument in clear and fluent prose; it will also respect the length requirements of a typical position paper (5 pages double-spaced). The winner will receive a monetary prize.

Peer Seminar leaders include Casey Andrews (Whitworth University) and Ronald Bush (Oxford), who will be leading a virtual seminar on Zoom.

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Peer Seminar 1:

Eliot on Peacemaking, War, and Reconstruction

Led by Charles Andrews
Whitworth University

The famous lines in *The Waste Land* that link the dead of the Great War to the ancient militarisms of the classical past are but a small sample of the many facets of T. S. Eliot's responses to the problems and possibilities of war. This seminar intends to engage in conversation about Eliot's responses to war through his various genres as well as his work as a publisher and editor. But besides the typical discussions of modernism as representation of and response to violence and trauma, this seminar encourages thoughtfulness about the resources in Eliot's work for thinking about peacemaking and reconstructing society. Though not a pacifist in the mode of someone like his friend Virginia Woolf, Eliot still offers nuanced and complicated views about the problems of war and the potential for peace-building. Relatedly, his stated theories and literary imaginings of reconstructing societies damaged by war (or configured in ways that support and sustain militarism) offer possible resources for those of us today seeking to address the structural violence of our current social systems. This seminar hopes for conversation about the wide range of Eliot's engagement with diverse views on peace, war, and reconstruction.

Possible approaches include but are not limited to:

- Eliot and the peace movement
- Eliot and the aesthetics of peace
- Interdisciplinary peace studies approaches to Eliot
- Eliot's collaborations with combatants and peace workers
- Eliot's influence on antiwar, pacifist, and internationalist voices
- Eliot and post-World War II reconstruction
- Building just, equitable, and nonviolent societies
- Wartime as problem and possibility
- Responding to war, violence, and trauma in Eliot's work

Charles Andrews is Professor of English at Whitworth University where he teaches courses in modern British, Irish, and postcolonial literatures as well as film studies. He is the author of *Writing against War: Literature, Activism, and the British Peace Movement* (2017). In addition to writing on T. S. Eliot, he has published articles and chapters on peace studies approaches to several figures including Virginia Woolf, Leonard Woolf, George Bernard Shaw, Aldous Huxley, and Vera Brittain. He is currently completing a monograph entitled "Challenging the Nation: The English Modernist Novel as Political Theology," which explores literary resources for resisting militarism, civil religion, and the enchantments of the nation-state.

Peer Seminar 2:

Reading Eliot with Ronald Bush

Led by Ronald Bush
St. John's College, Oxford

This seminar will be held remotely on Zoom for participants who cannot travel to St. Louis.

Ronald Bush is Emeritus Drue Heinz Professor of American Literature and Emeritus Research Fellow at St. John's College, Oxford, where since 1997 he taught courses in American literature from the beginnings to the present, and also in 20th-century English literature, especially modernist poetry and fiction. (Previously he taught at Harvard and Caltech.) He is as well a senior fellow at the Institute for English Studies at the University of London's School for Advanced Studies. Bush is the author of *The Genesis of Ezra Pound's Cantos* and *T. S. Eliot: A Study in Character and Style*; the editor of *T. S. Eliot: The Modernist in History*; and co-editor of *Prehistories of the Future: The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism* and of *Claiming the Stones/Naming the Bones: Cultural Property and the Negotiation of National and Ethnic Identity*. Among his recent publications are articles on Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Nabokov, and Roth, as well as the chapter on "Modernist Poetry and Poetics" in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature*. His major work in progress is a multi-volume textual and genetic study of Ezra Pound's *Pisan Cantos*, culminating in a critical edition of the suite based on its full manuscript record.

Stay tuned...we are continuing to frame topics and choose leaders for other Peer Seminars

Report from the Forty-Second Annual International T. S. Eliot Society Meeting

September 23-25, 2021

John Whittier-Ferguson
University of Michigan

Last year's 42nd Annual Meeting of the International T. S. Eliot Society was our second annual gathering in virtual space. There were periods in the early summer, when many of us were emerging from seclusion, vaccinated and temporarily brave (and when it was possible to find charts and forecasting models that told us we were approaching the end of the pandemic), that the conference-planning committee second-guessed its decision to postpone, yet again, an in-person gathering of our Society. But as summer turned to fall and the Delta variant spread, meeting together on Zoom came to seem not only a wise choice, but desirable in its own right.

As with our 41st meeting, this 42nd boasted robust attendance: 131 people registered, all the sessions amply populated with several screens full of attendees (most of them with cameras on—a new way to measure engagement). There was the "chat" function, as active as it had been last year—with citations and questions, yes, but also with hellos and compliments on pets' unscheduled appearances on camera; there were the now-familiar ragtime clips between sessions, and updated slides to go with them. All of us had learned a thing or two about Zoom in the year since our first virtual gathering (fewer "you're muted" and "turn off your microphone" reminders needed; fewer folks lost without links; smoother social hours with us self-sorting into break-out rooms). We dodged the bullet of a Zoombombing. And most moving, at least for me—the greetings and "where are you?" and "what time is it there?" queries scattered throughout each day's sessions: connections around the world, commiserations and admiration for people up way past their own midnights, joining us at half-past two, or half-past three not for lunar incantations but for conversations about Eliot. As was true last year, too, our post-conference comments from you all included many requests that we continue to hold at least part of all our Annual Meetings online so that our gatherings can be global going forward. In a world that seems bent relentlessly toward keeping us isolated, our virtual gathering provided us all with respite from the solitude of our rooms: *Dayadhwam*.

Fabio Vericat

Dídac Llorens Cubedo

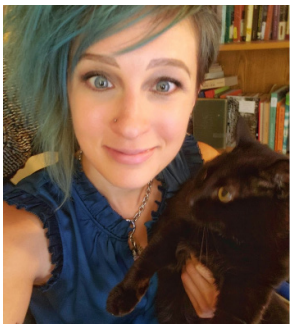
We once again hosted four peer seminars, each of them well attended and ably led. **Dídac Llorens Cubedo** and **Fabio Vericat** continued their project of advancing discussions about Eliot's drama with a seminar on "Eliot's Plays, the Stage, and the Dramatic Arts." **Patrick Query** (our incoming Vice President), offered a session on "The Secular, the Religious, and the Modern in Eliot," and **Tony Cuda** led a group working on the subject of "Eliot's Influence." **Megan Quigley** hosted a "*Waste Land* in 2021" conversation and was joined by **John Whittier-Ferguson** to lead a roundtable discussion on "Teaching Eliot." The presenters on Eliot in the 21st-century classroom—**Ria Banerjee**, **Josh Epstein**, **Patrick Query**, and **Johanna Winant**—sparked a lively conversation following their lighting-round talks; there are plans to put together a printed version of this roundtable in the next *T. S. Eliot Studies Annual*.

Patrick Query

Ria Banerjee

Megan Quigley

Report from 42nd Annual Meeting *cont.*



Elysia Balavage

Our panels extended over a day and a half and, as is always the case (and always also a delightful surprise), they suggested myriad connections among and across sessions. The first paper of the conference came from **Elysia Balavage**, who attended closely to food and drink as signs of cultural (specifically class) positions—not simply what Eliot's personae desire but what and where they eat. Elysia was particularly interested in working-class meals and social standing in Eliot's poetry. Also focusing on the demotic Eliot, especially in the poet's early years, **Kevin Rulo** took us into pensions, boarding houses, and bedsits, not only those found in Eliot's work but in modern literature and culture more generally: places where Eliot found friendships, enmities, the voices of others—all aspects of life at close quarters as he experienced it at various points in his young manhood. **Parker Gordon** turned us to a later, editorial Eliot, putting him alongside Hugh Walpole, who worked to publish a piece through Eliot with Faber in the mid-1930s. Parker's piece offered us an inquiry into Walpole's and Eliot's professional networks in the publishing world.

Parker Gordon

I invariably leave our gatherings of Eliot scholars newly attuned to the voices of others in his poetry, aware of expanded circles of correspondence and influence. **Suzannah Evans** taught us to find Tristan Corbière in Eliot's poetry and how to understand and distinguish Corbière's influence in locations where we've tended to see only Jules Laforgue. **Sarah Coogan** brought in the poetry and visual art of David Jones as she considered how both poets' formal innovations serve to address suffering and wartime violence. **Magdalena Kay**, attuned especially to the subject of notalgia, argued for "a deep and foundational debt to Eliot in Philip Larkin's thinking and poetry." **Matt Kilbane** called Louis Zukofsky into our ken, considering not only the place of *Pericles* in Eliot's *Marina* and Zukofsky's *Bottom: On Shakespeare* but also reading *Marina* (included by Zukofsky in his *Objectivists' Anthology* [1932]) as an Objectivist poem.

Ruth Clemens looked backward to Petronius and to a conundrum of translation in Michael Heseltine's edition of the *Satyricon* popular when Eliot's *Waste Land* brought the poem to modern readers' attentions: the Cumaean Sibyl is not necessarily hanging in a cage (or in a "bottle" or a "jar," as earlier critics have suggested); the word "ampulla" can also signify "bombast," and her paper explored the significance of that translation to the poem. **Patrick Eichholz** also looked to Eliot's "classicism," not along the axis of translation but in terms of Eliot's own changing descriptions of himself and his work as "classicist," asking, particularly, what we lose if we consider *The Waste Land* not in its appeals to forms of order but only in its fragmentary aspects. **Soham Deb Barman**, working explicitly within an analytical frame that foregrounded the cultural imperialism practiced by Western modern writers as they turned to non-European sources, discussed the Indic tradition as Eliot deploys that tradition in *The Waste Land*. Eliot's allusive, inclusive, restless poem of 1922 proved hospitable to each of these critics' readings. Cultural distances and differences were also the focus of **Junichi Saito**, who spoke about teaching Eliot in Japan and described in some detail the challenges and the surprises particular to Japanese students' encounters with Eliot's oeuvre.

Ruth Clemens

Two of our most accomplished readers of the Hale archive, **Sara Fitzgerald** and **Jewel Spears Brooker**, returned to that still rich, still new subject—Sara providing us with more information about Hale as an actress and as a crucial influence on Eliot's early forays into drama; Jewel inquiring further into questions surrounding the destruction of Hale's side of the correspondence with Eliot that occurred in 1963.

Sara Fitzgerald

Moving, as Eliot might desire us to, from the biographical to the impersonal, we heard from **Aurelia Cojocaru** on Eliot's self-described "method" in his writing of the late teens and

early twenties, in which he places great poets in the company of scientists—both disciplines valuing the invention of new methods of thought. **Emma Felin** showed us how Eliot, using Bertrand Russell's philosophical inquiries into scientific epistemologies, worked over many years to place poetry into productive conversation with contemporary theories of science. **Joanna Rzepa** also took up the subject of Eliot as theorist, focusing on his engagement with the "pure poetry" debates set in motion in 1925 by Henri Bremond, a "theological modernist" who helped Eliot and John Middleton Murry and others (on both sides of the Channel) to think about the relationships between religion and literature.

Joanna Rzepa

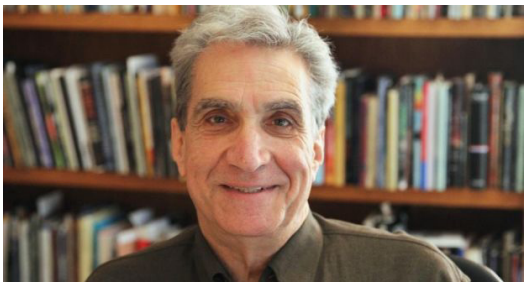
Michael Rizq began with Eliot's turn from philosophy to literature, away from absolutes and toward relativism, and then focused his paper on sound and rhythm in Eliot's later poetry, studying the material, sensorial appeals of even the most religious poetry (*Marina*, the *Quartets*). **Michael Rutherglen** was also attentive to sound, noting that the comic, parodic uses of rhyme (and other "poetic effects") common in early Eliot proved challenging for the poet to shake off or recast entirely when he turned to his more serious, Christian poetry of the 1930s. **Cécile Varry** took us to the origins of sound in poetry—breath itself—and Eliot's own difficulties with respiratory distress and disease. Breathlessness in his poetry is not merely figurative but has among its sources the poet's own illness and his experiences of illness in others.

An increasing number of the presentations and discussions at our annual gatherings are making use of the splendid new edition of the *Complete Prose*, and **Wendy Queen**, Director of Project Muse, treated us to a tantalizing, exciting view of what that *Complete Prose* will look like and how we'll be able to use it when it makes the leap from the current PDF-based form in which many of us now use its selections to its ultimate digital home on Project Muse sometime in 2022. **Tony Cuda** followed Queen's presentation with a characteristically entertaining and informative talk and slide-show (the only PowerPoint presentation of the conference that featured, among other things, images of Harrison Ford, a blacksmith, muppets, and a great many opossums), giving us some of the backstory on the trials attending the making and bringing-to-print of the *Complete Prose*. Tony directed us, in his stirring conclusion, toward the new editions of the *Prose*. The Project Muse 2.0 version will be "intuitive enough to attract beginning users, and complex enough to satisfy lifelong Eliot scholars and researchers from any field." We will be blessed, Tony assured us, with "the entire *Complete Prose* in three, identical media: the PDFs for,

Tony Cuda with rapt audience

say, printing and assigning to students, or carrying around on your iPad. The HTML for searching and discovering patterns in the entire oeuvre. And the print for browsing and reading, in Eliot's words, 'in the evening, under the lamplight.'"

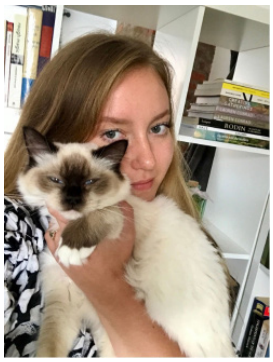
Our **Memorial Lecture**, engagingly delivered from his book-lined study by **Robert Pinsky**, spoke of a lifetime of reading Eliot and of thinking about the social, cultural, and political work that poetry—particularly the poetry of Eliot and of Allen Ginsberg—can accomplish in the making of a nation. The civic dimensions of the talk were appropriate, coming as they did from the only Poet Laureate of the United States to have served three terms. Framing his remarks with two works of



Robert Pinsky in his book-lined study

Report from 42nd Annual Meeting *cont.*

social history and philosophy—*The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Levi-Strauss, and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity* (1974) by John Murray Cuddihy and Samuel Fleischaker's *The Ethics of Culture* (1994)—Pinsky talked about how individual citizens become part of something larger, part of a culture, part of a heterogenous, heteroglot nation. Ranging across Eliot's poetry and prose and Ginsberg's "Kaddish" and his journals, Pinsky spoke of both poets as being not wholly at home in their time and place: "What I continue to feel and hear in these two poets is a relation to culture that is universalizing, alienated, desperate, and aspirationally assimilated." Poetry has the capacities to create, without coercion or violence, wholes that need not become exclusive: "only the unconscious, incantatory quality of poetry can begin to hold these [cultural and social tensions] together into a social reality of the kind that Eliot envisions when he talks about the function of poetry"—a reality that is "incantational and eclectic, hopefully syncretic rather than nationalistic." I held Pinsky's conclusion in suspension with **David Chinitz**'s talk from a couple of hours earlier on this same day—a provocative talk that asked us to consider the increased distances between 21st-century readers and all that Eliot designated (and, as a writer, depended upon) when he invoked "the Tradition" of literature, religions, and culture. In college curricula increasingly concerned with the global and the present-day, it's worth thinking about whether and by what means Eliot will continue to be taught and if he'll remain relevant—this at a time, of course, when there is more of his work in print than ever before.



Emma Felin

Cécile Varry

Matt Kilbane

Gabriela Minden

Jack Hart

Shannon McClernon

One of the dismaying aspects of Zoom is that collective noise—heartfelt applause, for example—is not really a satisfying option, and so we will have to have an extra round of such applause next year for this year's conference prizewinners: **The Fathman Young Scholar Awards** went to **Emma Felin**, **Matt Kilbane**, and **Cécile Varry**. The winners of the **T. S. Eliot Studies Annual Prize** were **Jack Hart** ("The Ambivalence of T. S. Eliot and Geoffrey Hill"), **Gabriela Minden** ("'in the direction indicated by the ballet': T. S. Eliot, Rupert Doone, and a Future for Poetic Drama"), and **Shannon McClernon** "Eco-Spiritual Renewal in *Murder in the Cathedral*").

And we'll applaud, too, for our outgoing President, **Jayme Stayer**, whose tribute—the last official conference event before the second breakout-room Social Hour—I'll quote from here: "As president, Jayme Stayer oversaw the largest increase in membership in the Society's 42-year existence and lifted us to an unprecedented level of professionalism. While many other academic organizations foundered during the pandemic, Jayme steered us surely through two virtual conferences to bring fellowship to Eliot scholars around the world."

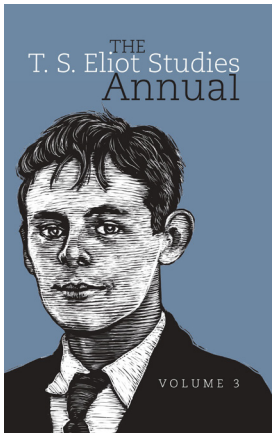
I look forward, with hope, to seeing you, face to (probably masked) face this September in St. Louis!

Jayme Stayer

T. S. Eliot Studies Annual
Announcement and Call for Papers

The *Annual* Joins Forces with the Society

We are delighted to announce that *The T. S. Eliot Studies Annual* is now the official publication of the International T. S. Eliot Society. The Society is joining forces with the *Annual*, which will be published as a journal by Clemson University Press in association with Liverpool University Press. Each volume of the *Annual* provides a selection of original, peer-reviewed essays representing the best in current Eliot scholarship. In addition, the *Annual* publishes shorter research notes, book reviews, and a comprehensive bibliography of Eliot-related publications. John D. Morgenstern, founder of the *Annual* and Director of Clemson UP, co-editors Julia E. Daniel and Frances Dickey, Anthony Cond and Clare Hooper of Liverpool UP, and the ITSES Board of Directors are excited to inaugurate this new partnership in time to celebrate the historic centennial of *The Waste Land.*



Free Digital Access for International T. S. Eliot Society Members

As a result of this new relationship, members of the Society in good standing now receive digital access to the journal. Members should have already received an access code to the *Annual* on the Liverpool UP platform (https://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/journals/id/116) If your membership is up to date and you have not received an access code, please contact us at tseliot.studies.annual@gmail.com. You may wish to check or renew your membership status at tseliotsociety.wildapricot.org.

Volume 4 Coming Soon

Volume 4 is in production now and will be digitally available this summer. This volume marks the centennial of *The Waste Land* with a forum on Eliot's poem as well as themed clusters on his drama and Europe. "*The Waste Land* at 100" contains ten new essays: Jahan Ramazani's "Burying the Dead: *The Waste Land*, Ecocritique, and World Elegy," Jewel Spears Brooker's "Eliot Reading Eliot: Pipit, the Hyacinth Girl, and the Silent Lady," and articles by Aakanksha Virkar, Anthony Cuda, Christopher Bush, Claire Colebrook, William Franke, Seamus Perry, Haun Saussy, and Jayme Stayer. "Drama and Performance" contains a study of Emily Hale's dramatic career by Sara Fitzgerald, John Whittier-Ferguson on Hale in *The Family Reunion*, and essays by Parker Gordon and Dídac Llorens Cubedo. "Eliot and Europe" contains essays by Ruth Clemens, Juliette Taylor-Batty, Cécile Varry and Suzannah V. Evans.

Call for Papers

The editors invite you to submit your work for Volume 5, to be published in 2023. All critical approaches are welcome, as are essays pertaining to any aspect of Eliot's work as a poet, critic, playwright, editor, exemplar of modernism, or influence on 20th-century and contemporary literature and culture. For consideration in the next volume, please send us your piece before July 1, 2022.

- Articles in the range of 4,000 to 8,000 words are accepted.
- Book reviews encouraged: please inquire if you would like to review a book
- Submissions for forums on special topics are also welcome. Send a proposal for a special forum with a title, 150-200 word general description of the theme, and a tentative list of possible contributors.
- Submissions may be emailed directly to the editors at tseliot.studies.annual@gmail.com.

Special Forum: Teaching Eliot

Teaching has never seemed so important and yet how do we do it best? The editors invite contributions from those who regularly teach Eliot to undergraduates. This conversation will be guest-edited by Megan Quigley and John Whittier Ferguson. Please send your submission directly to tseliot.studies.annual@gmail.com with the subject title: "Teaching Forum Vol. 5."

Eliot's *Letters*, vol. 9

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the less perfunctory the letter—the more spontaneously I want to express real feelings" (442). He writes to his most frequent correspondent, John Hayward, simply to "maintain some degree of flow" even if it is merely a "continuum of chatter and gossip and banter" (530). He tells his brother Henry how much more important letter writing is in wartime and writes to a friend that "divided activities" (309) make letters essential to social life. When he hears of Woolf's death, he feels that "a kind of pin has gone which held a lot of people together, and gave their belonging together a pattern and a meaning which has gone" (803).

> Mrs. Eliot...is perhaps the author of some annotations. Who else would write that "TSE loved a stylish umbrella"...?

Even business letters take on a new urgency as Eliot struggles to support his Faber authors and pursue his own projects in times unpropitious for cultural activities. Many letters are to poets whom he hopes will continue to burnish the Faber name, such as his close friends Stephen Spender, Louis MacNeice, and W. H. Auden—though he frets over Auden's absence from England. The editorial job of censoring Ezra Pound's anti-Semitism in his *Cantos* is a major challenge. Eliot tries to find government jobs for scholars, refugees, and even poets such as George Barker and Dylan Thomas who have no essential skills. Social issues occupy him as he writes for and guest edits *The Christian Newsletter* and its satellite discussion group, The Moot. Eliot vigorously defends his tract *The Idea of a Christian Society* (1939) from the charge that he proposes no positive measures; he explains that he can only identify the issues. He replies to critics of earlier works by admitting his mistakes. He calls the Clark Lectures on metaphysical poetry "immature and pretentious" (60).

> In a Gerontion-like mood, he writes to Hayward: "I have no family, no career, and nothing particular to look forward to in this world. I doubt the permanent value of everything I have written; I never lay with a woman I liked, loved or even felt any strong physical attraction to..."

A serious charge comes from a student, J. V. Healey, whom Eliot met at Harvard University, who sends him three letters deploring Pound's *Cantos* and Eliot's remarks in *After Strange Gods* that that "reasons of race and religion combine to make any large number of freethinking Jews undesirable" (560n1). Although Eliot confesses that the book "is of a violence which I now deprecate" and contains statements "which I would now wish to qualify" (561), he defends the specific phrase Healy cites. Eliot explains that free thinkers of any race would be undesirable, and Jews more so because "more deracinated thereby than descendants of Christians" (518). This statement demonstrates apparently willful ignorance of Jewish religion and culture and reflects his confused understanding of the concepts of religion, race, and ethnicity. (To Eliot, the Irish are a separate "race" [915.]) Haffenden's comprehensive introduction (xxvii-xxxi) examines Eliot's responses to charges of anti-Semitism, showing it wasn't until 1952 that he clearly repudiated the "free-thinking Jews" phrase. At the same time, Haffenden describes Eliot's interest in publishing Jewish books and his close personal and intellectual friendships with the Jewish refugees Adolf Lowe and Karl Mannheim.

The volume's annotations almost require a separate review. Its number of words exceeds those of the text in what Eliot might describe, as he did when discussing an edition of Dante's *Inferno*, as "a formidable paraphernalia of information" (86). To understand the grand scope of the notes, readers should recall that in 1966 Mrs. Eliot told a correspondent, "Tom has forbidden a biography [but] I hope to incorporate interesting biographical facts which seem relevant" (V:xxxii); and told another: "the letters will make a most marvelous autobiography, and be a quarry for biographers fifty years hence!" (V:xxxiii). Haffenden explained that she took "infinite pains to be the helpmeet of a future biographer: gathering the raw material whilst she may" (V:xxxiii). Her wishes therefore inform the documentary quality of the notes. She is named as the co-editor of the volume and is perhaps the author of some annotations. Who else would write that "TSE loved a stylish umbrella" (885n4) or describe the wife of Herbert Read as "witty, passionate, volatile" (422n4)? The annotations seem to be by several different hands, some expressing opinions as well as relevant

facts, and there seems no rationale for when foreign phrases are or are not translated. Readers of Eliot's *Letters* have found, as Samuel Johnson warns in his *Preface to Shakespeare*, that the "mind is refrigerated by interruption," so it's best to ignore the notes and only later "attempt exactness, and read the commentators" (Yale Digital Edition, 111). Kept handy on a scholar's bookshelf, the notes are invaluable.

Now in his early Fifties, Eliot becomes nostalgic and often depressed, parodying himself in a letter to Hayward: "Well here it is the middle of March, Easter a week off, a faint indication of green on the trees in the Cromwell Road, and a black week it has been, *en grand deuil* "(451). In a Gerontion-like mood, he writes to Hayward:

> I have no family, no career, and nothing particular to look forward to in this world. I doubt the permanent value of everything I have written; I never lay with a woman I liked, loved or even felt any strong physical attraction to; I no longer even regret this lack of experience; I no longer even feel acutely the desire for progeny which was very acute once. (348)

He worries that some of his Faber poets (like MacNeice reverting to "soft Irish sentiment" [397]) are no longer advancing on their early work. Yet he tells Geoffrey Faber that, once one has established a personal style, one

> is no longer fighting so consciously for the recognition of a new form, one becomes more tolerant and begins to see one's own kind of writing in perspective, not as the only possible kind, but as one kind. Contrasts of "new" and "old" become insignificant. (715)

He maintains, as in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," his conception of poetry as an analogue to "experimental science: younger men seem to me . . . to go on complacently making the old school-laboratory experiments when they ought to be investigating the undeveloped possibilities of their art. To 'discover' has always been the word for me, rather than to 'invent'"(779). He has faith in the innovative and sometimes obscure poetry of William Empson and tells Djuna Barnes, whose novel *Nightwood* he published in 1936: "trouble, I believe, is in your destiny, and the meaning of *that* is that its purpose is to provide you, directly or indirectly, with material for another masterpiece" (674).

Somehow Eliot finds the time and motivation to create the poems that developed into *Four Quartets*. He describes his own poetic method when he speaks of doing "experiments in putting together three or four unrelated things, as one would fiddle with chemicals . . ." (779). One element he hopes to use for a play is the plot of Euripides' *Alcestis* (*The Cocktail Party*) but worries that his "difficulty is in being simple, sensuous and passionate" (289). "Four unrelated things" are probably *Four Quartets* in separate developments, combined chemically, or alchemically, as air, earth, water, and fire. *Burnt Norton* was published in 1935, and Eliot brought it out in pamphlet form in 1943. He mentions a possible sequel to the earlier poem in a letter to Spender (October 1939) that praises Spender's translation of Rilke's *Duino Elegies*. He tells Hayward that early drafts of *East Coker* might be "quite worthless, because most of it looks to me like imitations of myself" (421-22). Even when the poem was successful with a wartime audience, Eliot fretted that he found it "hard to believe that a poem of mine which sells nearly 12,000 copies can be really good" (770). He explains to an Anglican priest the influence of W. B. Yeats and St. John of the Cross in *East Coker,* confesses his failure to endure the sleepless nights of an air raid warden, and adds that he has completed a third poem (*The Dry Salvages*) and begun a fourth (698). Yet his doubts about his poetic powers remain. He feels that *Little Gidding* lacks "some acute personal reminiscence (never to be explicated, of course, but to give power from well below the surface)" (884).

he speaks of doing "experiments in putting together three or four unrelated things, as one would fiddle with chemicals ..."

Helen Gardner's *The Composition of Four Quartets* (1978) contains much of the information in these letters about the poem's development. The fascination of this volume, however, is to see Eliot finding his inspiration among the constant distractions of the illnesses, social commitments, family and godfather responsibilities, lectures, poetry readings, and the pressures of publishing and personal crises, to create a great poem amid a wartime milieu. He wonders at "how people can write an autobiography, but it is probably because they have less to suppress than I have" (761). As Valerie Eliot hoped, his letters serve as a biography. Although earlier volumes may include letters that are more dramatic or revealing, Volume 9 gives readers a more rounded and engaging portrait of Eliot.

PUBLIC SIGHTINGS

Compiled by David Chinitz

The Heaviside Layer (1). Seeing the *Cats* movie in tandem with recreational drug use is apparently a thing. Maura Judkis reports that "hundreds of people have told *The [Washington] Post* their stories about seeing *Cats* while high—some on marijuana, others on psilocybin mushrooms, LSD, and other mind-altering substances." Those individuals came from across the US, from New York City to Louisville to Los Angeles.

The Heaviside Layer (2). Reviews of *Cats* from the stoned:

- The most incredible cinematic experience of my life.
- Cried both times. Planning on going two more times.
- I was so delighted, I was like, "Is this genius? Is this the best thing I have ever seen?"
- Vomited four times but ultimately understood the film on a deep level.
- When Judi Dench turned and looked me directly in the eyes to let me know that a cat is not a dog, I was terrified.
- Just like, okay, we're doing this together, this is a thing that is transpiring, and we are bearing witness.

One medical researcher "found herself plotting a *Cats*-based doctoral thesis while still in the theater: she would examine the class dialectic of 1930s London (when T. S. Eliot wrote the poems that inspired *Cats*), the late 80s heyday of Webber, and police brutality in 2019." The idea fizzled once she sobered up.

The Heaviside Layer (3). The *Post* adds that "some theaters . . . are hosting 'rowdy' screenings of *Cats* where people—many in various states of inebriation—are encouraged to yell at the screen," like audiences of the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Speculation abounds that *Cats* could become a cult classic. ("People Are Seeing *Cats* While High Out of Their Minds." washingtonpost.com, 5 Jan. 2020.)

The Heaviside Layer (4). The day after the *Washington Post* published its article on *Cats* and drugs, the *Washingtonian* magazine published a story on the story behind the article. We learn there that reporter Maura Judkis sought interviewees in "a tweet that quickly went viral." She soon found herself flooded with as many as 500 email responses and Twitter DMs. We also learn that her article originally reported "one source's giggles about the 'implied butthole of the cats,'" but that bit, regrettably, was cut by an editor. In a surprise twist, we learn that Judkis herself refuses to see the movie, because she doesn't want to let it spoil her happy memories of seeing *Cats* on stage as a child. (Andrew Beaujon, "How the *Washington Post* Came to Publish a Story About Getting High and Seeing *Cats*." washingtonian.com, 6 Jan. 2020.)

A formulated phrase. In review of a new book on the former King Edward VIII, A. N. Wilson laments: "The reader might be forgiven for groaning at the publication of yet another book about the Duke and Duchess of Windsor." Regarding the Duke's sordid love affairs, his pro-Nazi sympathies, and his traitorous plans to be reseated on the throne by Hitler, Wilson yawns, "We have read it already, read it all." ("Nice to the Nazis." Rev. of *Traitor King: The Scandalous Exile of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor*, by Andrew Lownie. *TLS* 10 Aug 2021: 10-11.)

That is not what I meant at all. In *Forbes*, Rahul Razdan reads "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" as an extended metaphor for the development of Advanced Driver-Assistance Systems (ADAS) by the automotive industry. In his reading, Prufrock represents the traditional car manufacturers. Have they seen their moment of greatness flicker? Are they still feeling the pain of "past scrutiny" (e.g., of airbags)? Why does ADAS "malinger"? Razdan concludes that Eliot is "saying the traditional automotive OEMs may need to force the 'moment to a crisis' on setting the right expectations and signing up for measurable metrics for autonomous technology or face the prospect of drowning when human voices awaken the world." He's certainly got Prufrock sprawling on a pin. ("Interpreting The Current ADAS Situation Through J. Alfred Prufrock." forbes.com, 19 Aug. 2020)

The Fall of a Sparrow

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her drug use. Slater diagnoses Vivien with Munchausen Syndrome, "a psychiatric disorder whose sufferers feign disease in order to draw attention, sympathy, lenience, or reassurance to themselves . . . now called 'factitious disorder imposed on self' or FDS" (115). Childhood illness is a risk factor for FDS. Slater believes that whenever Eliot became the center of attention, Vivien responded by pretending to be sick. Of course, she may also have induced real bodily illness by taking drugs when she felt insecure or anxious. Similarly, the eating disorder Slater identifies was probably exacerbated by chloral-induced digestive problems. None of her doctors possessed the knowledge of addiction that we now have access to, and it is difficult to say which of her maladies were "real" and which "feigned," when she was also physically and psychologically addicted to mind-altering substances. In short, if there is any narrative that holds together her life, it may be a downward spiral that we are sadly familiar with.

> Slater shows how easy it would have been for Vivien, suffering from a chloral-fueled psychosis, to pass off her writing as her husband's, and how Eliot discreetly "wiped up" the mess she had made.

An addict's life becomes focused on acquiring and using the addictive substance, no matter what the cost, depleting the family's emotional and financial resources and causing their partner to cover for them through lies and concealment. As the spouse of a substance abuser, Eliot was also not in control of his life: his letters are full of last-minute changes of plans to accommodate her wishes and the steady drumbeat of after-hours labor to pay her medical bills. The trauma experienced by spouses and families of addicts is well known, leading to financial stress, disruption of home life, anxiety, depression, guilt, anger, insomnia, substance abuse, weight gain, and illness—conditions all documented in Eliot's letters or others' accounts of him. (The Society's own Tony Fathman was the first to identify Eliot as a "co-dependent," in a 1991 *Yeats-Eliot Review* article). Struggling to explain and contain his wife's erratic behavior without knowledge of the underlying malady, Eliot sought the causes in himself. In 1925, he wrote: "In the last ten years—gradually, but deliberately—I have made myself into a *machine.* I have done it deliberately—in order to endure, in order not to feel—*but it has killed* V" (Letters 2.627). This statement has seemed like a confession of wrongdoing, providing circumstantial support to some of Seymour-Jones's accusations, but Eliot's constant feelings of guilt toward Vivien may instead reflect his desperate attempt to establish his agency in a situation that neither of them could control. Slater does not elaborate this dimension of their relationship, but thanks to her detailed sleuthing, one can easily imagine a plausible explanation of their married life in which neither party was really to blame for the disaster.

The Fall of a Sparrow opens with Vivien's relationships with Charles Buckle and Scofield Thayer, painting a picture of a "temperamentally volatile, and tactically manipulative," sexually adventurous young woman, already using illness to gain an advantage over others (7). Slater prints three previously unpublished, flirtatious letters that Vivien sent to Thayer in the same month as her wedding to Eliot (18-19). Soon she is exercising her manipulative power over Eliot as his wife, but Slater believes there was no affair with Bertrand Russell until 1917, and even then, "a one-night stand is all we know for certain" (73). This infidelity is followed by a period of growing social experimentation, and "by 1919 it looks like an understanding was reached by both partners; Vivien was free to wander, and seems to have tried to encourage Eliot to do likewise" (98). In his letters to Emily Hale, opened just after this biography's publication, Eliot confesses to a single episode of adultery—probably, Robert Crawford has speculated, with Nancy Cunard. Slater suspects Vivien of sexual "adventurings" but finds no specific evidence, and the 1926 "scandal" in Rome was probably drug abuse, not an affair. Sometimes the attention paid to Vivien's possible indiscretions grows wearisome, at this late date, but the *Sparrow*'s table was set by the *Painted Shadow*, and Slater accepts the task of refuting Seymour-Jones's allegations one by one. Knowing what we do now about Eliot's long passion for Emily Hale (which may have been at its most powerful in the 1920's, before they reconnected), the idea of Eliot renting a flat at Burleigh Mansions for the purpose of secret liaisons with Leonid Massine, Jack Culpin, and other men is far-fetched. When we take account of Vivien's increasing drug use during the early twenties, it seems unlikely that either partner was up to anything besides trying to preserve appearances.

The Fall of a Sparrow

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Slater also corrects the record on matters that are potentially more significant for literary scholars, particularly the re-attribution of three letters that, she claims, were written by Vivien under her husband's name. Readers of Volume 2 of Eliot's *Letters* may have noticed two odd missives dated June 18, 1925, from Eliot to Marianne Moore and Lady Rothermere, powerful women with whom he had painstakingly cultivated good relations. Both contain paranoid accusations against Lucy Thayer, Vivien's onetime friend and companion, now assistant at the *Dial*; the letter to Moore is positively insulting. Moore had just rejected Vivien's story "The Paralyzed Woman" for publication at the *Dial*. No matter how angry, Eliot rarely took such a tone with a valuable literary contact. Slater shows how easy it would have been for Vivien, suffering from a chloral-fueled psychosis, to pass off her writing as her husband's, and how Eliot discreetly "wiped up" the mess she had made with both women. In January 1926, she may also have been responsible for Eliot's strangest epistolary production, a page of the *Nursing Mirror* sent to Conrad Aiken (in the hospital) with the words "blood," "mucous," "shreds of mucous," and "purulent offensive discharge" circled. This "letter" has been used to support the view that Eliot's objectionable Bolo phase continued into middle age (Jayme Stayer has argued compellingly that "the vast majority, and probably all, of the Bolo poems were composed at Harvard" [*Becoming T. S. Eliot*, 189]). Pointing to Vivien's penchant for writing on newspaper clippings, her "morbid fascination" with menstruation, her access to Eliot's correspondence, and his apparent ignorance of the incident, which gravely offended Aiken, Slater makes a strong case that he had nothing to do with it. We can hope that her corrections will be incorporated in any future edition of the *Letters*.

> "'The universe is very vast,' said the philosophical mathematician. 'That means nothing,' thought Sibylla, who had heard him say it on countless occasions."

While such scholarly details may appeal only to a specialized audience, Vivien's writings collected in this volume have a permanent literary interest. And if their interest derives from Vivien's proximity to Eliot—well, the same is true of numerous other authors that most of us know only because he alluded to them (Charles-Louis Philippe, anyone?). Vivien's writing career for *The Criterion* was brief—just one year—and ended in a nearly fatal episode of substance abuse, but while it lasted, her photographic eye captured her corner of Bloomsbury and married life with Eliot from a uniquely intimate perspective. Among the many writers to exploit the literary potential of their lives, Vivien and Eliot were the first and most knowledgeable. Enterprising readers may have dug up the productions of "F. M." (for "Fanny Marlow" and "Feiron Morris") in dusty issues of *The Criterion*, but a dozen other stories, poems, and numerous fragments are published here for the first time, showcasing Vivien's inclination toward the "subjective, instinctive, and outspoken" and her "naturally carefree rather than consciously modern" style (512). While Jim McCue claims that Eliot drafted a majority of F. M.'s works, Slater defends the authenticity of Vivien's writing, her voice emerging fully in "Thé Dansant" (510). As Eliot stepped back to give her free rein, her stories became both more autobiographical and weirder, such as "The Paralysed Woman," a thinly veiled account of the Eliots and their helpers Jack Culpin and Pearl Fassett during a summer holiday at Eastbourne: "For two months Sibylla and Felice stayed in the high up sea-side flat, like two birds swung in a cage" (582). Immured in this claustrophobic ménage, Sibylla develops an unhealthy obsession with her wheelchair-bound neighbor.

Every story contains intriguing portraits, centered on the unhappy consciousness of a woman unsatisfied by her empty life. An anxious husband returns home from work in "Ellison and Antony," disappointed but not surprised to find his wife occupying his study ("Antony stooped & kissed Ellison rather gingerly. Ellison's smile was strained. They both seemed to wait uncomfortably. Antony's mind on these occasions was a blank" [598]). In "Columbina," the writer "Cino" "thumped his typewriter" all day, and "by his side on the floor he dropped sheets of paper, one by one, as they were finished. They lay about him like an untidy snowdrift" (599). After dinner he goes to the theater and she stays behind: "Somewhere in her mind there was a fatigue, a fatigue which hurt like a physical pain if it was touched. Having to make definite plans touched it. Having to even answer a definite question touched it" (601). In another story, Sibylla's husband is absent when "Old Hart" (Sydney Schiff) and "B. R." (Bertrand Russell—

"this aristocratic heretic," "dessicated and pedantic") turn up to pay her an evening visit. "'The universe is very vast,' said the philosophical mathematician. 'That means nothing,' thought Sibylla, who had heard him say it on countless occasions" (627). Her guests leave and André has not returned. She goes to bed, saying to herself, "'It is lonely. . . . It is very lonely. But if a ship were to pass, one would not hail it. One would not hail it'" (628).

In "Au Revoir," Vivien unsparingly depicts her own mental instability during the departure of Eliot's family at the end of their 1924 visit:

> as she begins to explain the nightmare his delay has caused her she finds herself seized by the throat & caught up by a fit of rage & passion. Throwing all her parcels down the stairs—which are fortunately quite deserted—she hits André on the face with her umbrella. Having done it once she does it again. The whole world totters—it spins around her. She longs to destroy herself, & looks wildly about but there is no window low enough from which to cast herself, no knife or weapon presents itself for her purpose. She sits on the stairs in a silent convulsion while André collects the parcels. He then takes her arm tightly & gets her out into the street, where she walks mechanically beside him sunk in utter blackness. (614)

No biographer can capture the feeling of what it was like to be caught in that nightmarish relationship better than Vivien herself. As she wrote in the same story, "everything must be faced, & what was more, slapped in the face—to show one was not afraid of it & knew it for what it was" (615). But in the end, the satisfaction of slapping reality in the face couldn't hold back the building tide of addiction, making Vivien's reality worse while temporarily easing her awareness of it, as "Feiron Morris" plaintively attests in "Song in the Night":

> Ah dream on dreaming
> Dream don't fade away
> Pain unendurable
> To face the day
>
> Need I wake ever
> Ah let me dream, on
> Wings, flying ever—
> Ah—fading—ah—gone.

ELIOT NEWS & SOCIETY NOTES

Call for Papers: The International T. S. Eliot Society is hosting a panel at **MLA 2023 in San Francisco**, chaired by **Megan Quigley** of Villanova University. The panel will be titled "Eliot Now or Never," and the CFP asks us to consider how the new volumes of Eliot's poetry, prose, and letters show us Eliot's continued relevance—or not—in 2023, integrating contemporary critical approaches and the newly published materials. Send abstracts of 200 words and a brief CV by March 21 to megan.m.quigley@villanova.edu.

The ITSES will sponsor two sessions at the 2022 annual conference of the **American Literature Association,** May 26-29, at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago. Thanks to **Nancy Gish** for organizing this lineup of papers:

- "Is There a Future for T. S. Eliot?"
  David Chinitz (Loyola U)
- "No True Conservative: The Political Poetics of Eliot and Armitage"
  Domenic Cregan (John Carroll U)
- "What's Missing from the Hale Letters: Canonical and Historical Considerations"
  Jayme Stayer (Loyola U)
- "T. S. Eliot and 'Mindfulness'"
  Deryl Davis (Wesley Theological Seminary).

For information on the ALA and its 2022 meeting, please see the ALA website at www.americanliteratureassociation.org.

T. S. Eliot International Summer School Director **Anthony Cuda** is delighted to announce that the Summer School currently plans to reconvene in person this summer at the Senate House in London, 9-17 July 2022, to celebrate the centenary of *The Waste Land*. Highlights include the launch of Robert Crawford's much-anticipated second volume of his biography, *Eliot: After* The Waste Land, and inaugural lecture by the acclaimed novelist Gabriel Josipovici. If seeking a scholarship, please apply now. This promises to be a particularly exciting and important session for all who gather in London next July.

ELIOT NEWS & SOCIETY NOTES

The **29th Ezra Pound International Conference** (EPIC) is now scheduled for 24-26 June 2022, to be held live, online, sponsored by Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan. The conference theme will be "Pound and Friendship," with papers and sessions on other topics relevant to Pound studies also on the program. Time blocks will be arranged to accommodate participants from across the world. Basic registration fees for the 29th EPIC will be waived, but participants must complete a Registration Form. Although the deadline for proposals has passed, those interested in participating may still contact the EPIC Secretary, **John Gery**, at jgery@uno.edu. This promises to be an unforgettable global meeting.

Call for Papers: "Relational Forms VII: Modernity and its Wake: **Remembering and Reimagining 1922**," an international conference organized by the Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies at the University of Porto, Portugal, 10-12 November 2022. Commemorating the centenary of Joyce's *Ulysses* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*, the conference addresses the artistic, philosophical, and sociopolitical wake of these works throughout the following century. Keynote speakers include Gualter Cunha, **Frances Dickey**, Declan Kiberd, and Fran O'Rourke. The organizers invite proposals for 20-minute papers in English on a range of topics responding to the theme of the conference. For more information about conference theme and submission process, send inquiries to relational@letras.up.pt. Deadline: 30 June 2022.

Call for Papers: The International T. S. Eliot Society invites submissions for its panel at **SAMLA 2022** in Jacksonville, FL from November 11th – 13th. The conference theme is "change." This makes an apt occasion for considering the impact of the watershed of newly published and archival writings from Eliot on our critical understanding of his work and career. The panel invites papers on any subject related to Eliot. Please submit a 250-word abstract and brief bio to Craig Woelfel (cwoelfel@flagler.edu) by June 15th.

We congratulate **Jayme Stayer** on the publication of *Becoming T. S. Eliot: The Rhetoric of Voice and Audience in* Inventions of the March Hare (Johns Hopkins UP). The book answers the question Jayme poses in the first sentence of his Introduction: "How does a young man who writes uninspired doggerel about wilting flowers transform himself—in twenty months, without coaching or mentors— into the author of 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'?"

Pascale-Marie Deschamps, a doctoral student at the Université de Paris, announces a CFP from the Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Cultures Anglophones (LARCA) for a conference to take place in October 2022 in Paris. Pascale-Marie writes that, with this conference on Eliot's "transnational afterlives," "LARCA is hoping to add an exciting event to the celebrations of *The Waste Land*'s 100th anniversary." The deadline to submit papers proposals to "Eliot in Translation" Paris Conference, 13-15th October, 2022, is extended to April 30, 2022.

ELECTION OUTCOME

Following our call for nominations, Melanie Fathman, Julia Daniel, and Aakanksha Virkar were nominated according to the by-laws' stipulations. Because no one else was nominated, there is no competition for seats, and thus no need to hold an election. We are happy to welcome Aakanksha to the board and grateful that Melanie and Julia have agreed to renew their three-year terms. Aakanksha will take up the remaining year of Vice President Patrick Query's vacated seat.

Members may also make nominations for honorary membership and for distinguished service awards. These nominations should be made to the President, John Whittier-Ferguson, by August 1, 2022.

Joining us from the University of Brighton, UK, **Aakanksha Virkar** puts the "I" in ITSES, as the Board's first international member. Aakanksha received her BA from the University of Bombay and her PhD from the University of Sussex. Her work on Eliot considers his poetry in relation to philosophy and music. She was an invited guest on BBC Radio 3's "Beethoven Unleashed" series. Her book, *The Philosophical Mysticism of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, places the poet in the context of Victorian mysticism and visual culture.

A Biographer's Buried Files: The Papers of T. S. Matthews

By Sara Fitzgerald

Since January 2, 2020, many Eliot scholars have been eager to visit the Princeton University Library to read Eliot's over 1,100 letters to Emily Hale, though the library's Covid-19 closure has kept the letters largely off limits for the last two years.

But it turns out that there is another, little-known collection in the same library that has been open for research since 2008: the papers of T. S. Matthews, author of the first, unauthorized biography of Eliot. The 57 boxes of the collection include two that relate specifically to Matthews's work on *Great Tom: Notes Towards the Definition of T. S. Eliot*, in addition to separate folders of his correspondence with many of Eliot's contemporaries and others involved with his book. The papers also include notes from some interviews, drafts of his manuscript, and narratives describing his progress on the biography. While the papers offer little that was written by Eliot himself, they provide a fascinating window into Matthews's struggles to complete the book in the face of Valerie Eliot's strong opposition and the limits major research libraries placed on his access to Eliot materials in their collections. The author's frustrations and his unguarded opinions about the persons he was—and wasn't—able to interview are also captured in the pages.

On January 9, 1970, five years after Eliot's death, Harper & Row editor Frances Lindley reached out to Matthews, proposing that he write the book. She told him,

> I have had a SIGN . . . sort of thing Eliot's magi needed so desperately. Will you please stop doing whatever you're doing at the moment, and do us—Harper & Row Publishers Incorporated—the biography of Tom Eliot which no one else is equipped to do . . . the non-graduate school, non-Marxist, non-Freudian book which only an American poet out of the American Middle West into the Eastern cultural cooker over to England, etc., etc. could do. When I say could do, dearest Tom, I mean that you only could write the book about Tom Eliot that I would be interested in reading, would be passionately concerned to read; who else would provide the marrow and blood-stream awareness of his kind of America and all the rest? The nature of his experience and the intellectual and emotional net of his experience you will either know or will uniquely be able to intuit . . . not least those elements in his mind and psyche (who says "spirit" these days?) having to do with his being a believing Christian.

Lindley stressed that she was serious and added, "PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE. TAKE THREE YEARS, FOUR YEARS. PLEASE."

In the Foreword to his book, Matthews echoed Lindley's letter, speculating that the publisher had approached him to write about the poet because of "the general similarity of our upbringing and background." Matthews had met Eliot about a dozen times in his life and said he admired him. But in describing the things they had in common, he added, "far from being a great poet, a powerful critic and a brilliantly unsuccessful playwright, I was a writer who went astray and became a not altogether repentant journalist."

Matthews was born into a socially prominent family and had served as editor of *Time* magazine. He resigned after working as a speechwriter for Adlai Stevenson, a Princeton classmate, in the 1952 presidential campaign. Matthews then moved to England and considered trying to start a British version of the magazine. After the project fell apart, he remained in England for the rest of his life. (Notably, the second of his three wives was journalist Martha Gelhorn, whom he married after she divorced Ernest Hemingway.) Matthews wrote the book when he was in his early seventies and, the papers demonstrate, was hampered by medical problems and constraints on his ability—or willingness—to travel to the United States.

Matthews's correspondence with his editor, a close friend and confidante, provides some unvarnished views of persons with whom he was dealing. From the outset, Matthews was intrigued by the idea of tackling the project but concerned that Valerie Eliot would restrict his access to her husband's private papers. Harper & Row Executive Vice President Winthrop Knowlton wrote Mrs. Eliot almost immediately, broaching the subject. On January 29, 1970, she sent a terse reply on Faber and Faber letterhead: "I cannot give you the slightest encouragement or help with your proposed biography of my husband, because he forbad one in a memorandum with his Will. In time, of course, such a book must be written, but in accordance with my husband's wishes I cannot assist such a project."

A Biographer's Buried Files, *cont.*

Matthews was also concerned that other Eliot books might be in the works. Robert Sencourt's controversial memoir was published while Matthews was working on his book, a development he and his publishers used to try to encourage Mrs. Eliot and others to cooperate with him. Around that time, Mrs. Eliot decided she would permit the writing of an authorized biography, but as Matthews explained in his Acknowledgements, her reversal came too late for him. Matthews publicly thanked Mrs. Eliot for her courtesy in at least writing to explain her position when others had simply ignored him. But the papers reflect more candid assessments of dealings with Mrs. Eliot, including some from Mary Trevelyan, then fighting her own battle over the memoir she wanted to publish. The papers also detail the battles Matthews and his publishers waged to access Eliot papers in libraries at Harvard, the University of Texas, and Oxford.

As a journalist, Matthews was not accustomed to using footnotes, an aspect of his impressionistic book that was frustrating for anyone hoping to build on his research and identify his sources. As his manuscript was nearing publication, Lindley wrote that the publisher's lawyer had reviewed the book with an eye to permissible "fair use," but added, "Mostly what he wants are specific citations for all quoted passages . . . from everyone and everywhere, which is why I'm dashing this note off now." She said she would follow with the lawyer's "specific itemization," but that in the meantime, she wanted to alert Matthews to "the tedious prospect of rounding up all those effing references." Matthews was not happy about that, wondering if the legal department thought he needed permission to use a quotation, or was it "a kind of blanket insurance against possible legal action?" In the end, the book was published without footnotes, but with citations for material that was quoted directly, mostly from published sources not interviews.

In his Foreword, Matthews wrote that while he admired Eliot, his book would have to address "some awkward questions . . . whether or not they can be satisfactorily answered." He kept two handwritten lists of those questions, and listed some of those in his Foreword, but not the one that had drawn me to his papers: "Why did TSE write more than 1,000 letters to Miss Emily Hale and why can no one read them?"

The papers suggest that Matthews received some early "tips" about Hale's relationship with Eliot but held off pursuing them until very late in his research. One of those tips came from his Boston-based financial adviser, whose firm managed Hale's estate following her death in 1969. Matthews also corresponded with Princeton Archivist William Dix about his library's Eliot-related holdings. It took him five months to focus on Dix's tip about the volume of embargoed Eliot-Hale letters. Matthews wrote Dix back on October 31, 1971, asking: "Do you really mean 1,000—or was that a slip of the typewriter for 100?" Dix replied, "I do not wonder that you questioned the accuracy of my report to you, but the figure is correct."

Matthews then realized he had a new and unexpected question—and that the answer lay on the other side of an ocean. With his time running out, he began reaching out to persons who might have known Hale, starting with Princeton Professor Willard Thorp, whom Dix had suggested. Matthews confessed to Thorp that he knew "nothing" about Hale. "The odd thing," he wrote, "is, a lot of other people, who apparently knew Eliot well, seem to be equally ignorant—even unaware of her existence." Matthews asked Thorp about Hale's roots and relatives, whether she had spent time in Chipping Campden, and "in short, did she introduce [Eliot] to Burnt Norton?"

Thorp added that "Emily is not mentioned in any books about Eliot, but she will be in time."

Thorp responded quickly, explaining that his late wife, Margaret, had been a childhood friend of Hale's, and that the two of them had corresponded "every week" as adults. (Sadly, Margaret destroyed all but a few of their letters.) Thorp said there "was frequently news of Tom in these letters from Emily" and provided what details he could about Hale's life—all of which were correct. He recalled that he and his wife had visited Hale in Chipping Campden in about 1934, and that "Emily, Tom and I took one long walk (a whole afternoon I recall). Good talk all the way." Thorp added that "Emily is not mentioned in any books about Eliot, but she will be in time. They were good friends, and his marriage to Valerie came as a shock to her."

In June 1972, Matthews reported to Dix that "Valerie Eliot remains adamant," but added that "the Bodleaian [*sic*] is going to let me see Vivien Eliot's papers—which I'm told are 'of no interest,'" a curious observation for that library to make. But Matthews was still determined to finish his manuscript, which was due in June 1973.

With the help of one of Hale's former students, Matthews began trying to contact persons who had

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known Hale in the United States. Some were reluctant to help, knowing Hale's own reticence about publicly acknowledging her relationship with Eliot. Dorothy Elsmith, who had provided a home in Wood's Hole, Massachusetts, where Eliot and Hale could meet privately during his visits to the States, insisted on meeting Matthews in person. Matthews's notes from their interview on July 31, 1973, suggest that Elsmith correctly reported several details of Hale's life, but by then Matthews's manuscript was in galley proofs, and he was constrained in the kinds of corrections he could make. Unfortunately his book said that Hale was born in Boston, that she had been orphaned as a young girl, and that she had been raised by her aunt and uncle, errors that later writers repeated. Corrections to his galleys show that he changed his imaginings of Eliot and Hale courting in the home of her "uncle" to that of a "chaperone."

Nearly two decades after Matthews died in 1991, his son, John, another Princeton alumnus, worked with his father's literary executor, the Rev. Timothy Anderson, to facilitate the gift of his father's papers to Princeton. When Princeton announced the acquisition in January 2009, Don Skemer, then curator of manuscripts for the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, said, "The library is particularly pleased to have the Matthews Papers because they complement our excellent holdings on modern literature and publishing history, but also contain some interesting files pertaining to American politics during the Cold War."

Matthews wrote that he chose the title of his Eliot biography to acknowledge "that this will not be the last word on the subject." And indeed, the next fifty years of Eliot scholarship proved just how right he was.

SELFIE SLIDESHOW

Wei Zhou

Marianne Huntington

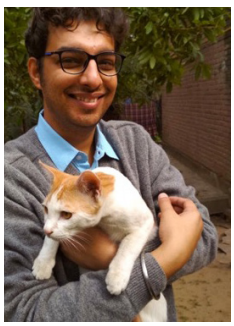
Deborah Leiter

Annarose Steinke

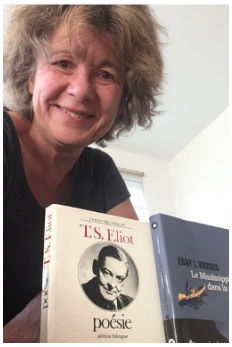
Nancy Fulford

Catherine Paul

Tom Brous



Mohit Abrol



Pascale Marie Deschamps

Chris McVey

Karen Christensen

Mary Grace McGeehan

42nd Annual Meeting of the International T. S. Eliot Society

Online, September 2021

Dissatisfied Diners: Eliot, Food, and Drink

This paper draws upon my research into the relationship between food and working-class spaces in modernist literature. More specifically, it investigates depictions of food, drink, and dining spaces in T. S. Eliot's poetry. By taking these ideas into consideration, I show that Eliot's rhetorical application of food and its adjacent spheres is multifaceted—for instance, Eliot uses these ideas to frame banal interactions in "Interlude in London," crippling social anxiety in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," and the implication of thirst in "What the Thunder Said"—but generally reaches the same conclusion: that is, to ostracize and "other" the subject.

The connection between food and an individual is more than functional: it becomes a strong signifier of personal and cultural ethos. For Pamela Kittler, what one eats defines who one is, and conversely, who one is not. By this definition, food operates as both an object of inclusion and exclusion, a way to physically, culturally, and emotionally "other" those individuals who do not participate in the same meal and eating practices as the majority. Related to the notion of "othering," an additional purpose of food and drink is to define an individual's social status within a specific cultural or economic group. Eliot himself delivers a recipe for "Mrs. Runcie's Pudding," a "gentlemen's pudding" that he ate "many times" (*Prose* 8:27). Keeping their layered purpose in mind, I argue that Eliot engages with this cultural understanding of food and drink and uses these items as tropes that demonstrate an alienation between the subject and its object of desire. Eliot writes his personae to have wants that range from successful social interactions to the acquisition of metaphysical truths; these desires, however, often go unfulfilled, and I conclude that the food and drink that surround them signify or even herald this dissatisfaction. And more broadly, while I do not mean to say that Eliot is a "working-class" writer, my intervention unearths an area of intersection between the ostensibly disparate modes of high modernist poetry and working-class writing within literary modernism.

Elysia Balavage
UNC Greensboro

Eliot, Corbière, and Salt

The name of Tristan Corbière (1847-1875) appears repeatedly in Eliot's criticism, notably in the Clark and Turnbull lectures, where Eliot characterizes Corbière as a metaphysical poet and observes that he is a "finer poet, though a lesser intellect, than Laforgue." While Eliot often speaks of these two French poets in the same breath, Corbière's influence on Eliot has been almost entirely neglected, and little criticism seeks to draw out the differences between Corbière and Laforgue.

My contention is that it is time to revisit Corbière's crucial influence on Eliot, of use to him in *Poems* (1920), as well as for the drafts and final *Waste Land* and beyond. I argue that Eliot, a keen sailor, was irresistibly drawn to the blustery seascapes of Corbière's collection *Les Amours jaunes* (1873), using Corbière's abrasive speech, specialized marine vocabulary, and rough sea sounds to fuel moments of his own poetry. This salty Breton sailor not only offered Eliot a model for a poetic persona that major Victorian figures could not, but also, I argue, a whole new way of speaking.

Suzannah V. Evans
Durham U

Transient Dwelling Spaces in the Poetry of T. S. Eliot

This paper is an extension and further development of certain topics covered in my recent published work, spurred on by discoveries in the Hale archive related to Eliot's referenced encounters with Matt Prichard and Marie von Moritz. The specific events that Eliot refers to involving these two figures are quite different in character—in the former case, terrifying; the latter instance seemingly rather ordinary—but they have some important things in common: they both involve fellow boarders in a pension and they both have significant connection to Eliot's poetry. My talk seeks to pursue this connection between place and poem beyond Prichard and von Moritz and to consider how histories of housing can unlock new readings of Eliot's early poetry. I examine Eliot's life at and around the Pension Casaubon in Paris, but also further backgrounds on the Pension Bürger in Munich, where he finished "Prufrock," in conjunction with larger literary and

social imaginaries of pensions, boarding houses, and bedsits as found in popular literature and in contemporaries like James Joyce, which provide new insight into "Prufrock," the Sweeney poems, "Gerontion," and the drafts of *The Waste Land*. Similarly, I explore Eliot's difficulties with renting and with landlords, as well as his experiences living among the unavoidable yet "disagreeable personalities of one's neighbors" in London flats (*Letters* 1:750), as key contexts for understanding the many voices that Eliot does in his 1922 long poem and for the depictions of the landlord in "Gerontion" and the "small house agent's clerk" in *The Waste Land*. As he lived in these transient dwellings of various kinds, Eliot formed one of his deepest male friendships, enjoyed the company of diverse friends and acquaintances who helped him make something of a home away from home, experienced great trauma and wearying hardships, and felt the throbbing of urban modernity all around him. He was also aware of and participated in literary and cultural mediations of these dwellings. In this paper, I trace how these liminal spaces of occupancy impacted both his life and his poetry.

Kevin Rulo
Catholic U of America

The Dove Descending: Competing Typologies and Modernism's Representation of Violence

Depicting violence is in itself a political act, one which has long preoccupied literary scholars. Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975) famously castigates certain World War I poets for their overly cerebral, insufficiently gritty, and, to borrow Fussell's formulation, overly "Eliotic" depictions of conflict. His argument is a refined version of the more prevalent critique of propaganda, with its sanitized idealization of combat and sectarianism. By contrast, debates in news media and the public humanities have articulated the risks of overly graphic representations of violence, both in desensitizing audience members to human suffering and, conversely, in triggering trauma responses. With these manifold risks, how can literature effectively depict human suffering? This question has only grown more urgent in recent years, as the spate of significant centennials (World War I, the Easter Rising, the Spanish Flu, and the annus mirabilis 1922) has prompted extensive scrutiny of the modes and ethics of commemoration.

As Jahan Ramazani notes in *A Transnational Poetics*, "Poetry functions . . . as a language that can mediate seemingly irresolvable contradictions." This paper will argue that the distinctive formal innovations of modernist poetics, particularly as exhibited by Eliot's work, offer nuanced ways of grappling with violence and trauma. Eliot's poetry deploys multiple overlapping typological interpretations of their poetic imagery to encapsulate the conflicted experience of wartime violence. Most notably, his "Dove Descending" in *Little Gidding* unites the destruction of German bombers with the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit. While this observation may seem obvious, the actual strategy of overlapping, contradictory typology demonstrated here deserves further analysis. This paper contextualizes that formal strategy through comparison to the visual art and poetry of his peer David Jones. Ultimately, in refusing to separate the redemptive purpose of personal heroism from the aimless impersonality of modern warfare, Eliot offers a distinctively modernist poetic solution to the problem of depicting violence.

Sarah E. Coogan
U of Oxford

Unity and Nostalgia: Eliot's Anti-Modernist Afterlife in the Work of Philip Larkin

It may seem willfully perverse or academically tricksy to propose that a vociferously anti-Modernist poet, Philip Larkin, is seriously influenced by T. S. Eliot. Yet I propose to tackle this influence not in terms of glancing comparisons or potentially coincidental echoes (after all, every poet is influenced by their reading, and Larkin read Eliot deeply as a young man) but in terms of a foundational characteristic of both poets' thought: their nostalgic view of a past in which the self and its surrounding culture has not yet been disunified, dissociated, or otherwise disrupted. Eliot's notion of a newly dissociated sensibility informs Larkin's later notion of poetry that should reflect a union of pleasurable feeling, careful craftsmanship, and clear thinking—and the concomitant sense (often rather rancorously expressed) that modern conceptions of poetry often do not value such union; indeed, modernism is, to Larkin, marked by the exaggeration of one aspect of sensibility over all others.

This paper will propose a possibly contentious chain of influence. It will also propose a link between this

Eliotic notion of unity, or re-union of what had become triumphantly dissociated, and a much-maligned aspect of Larkin's poetics: his nostalgia. Larkin's nativist nostalgia is one that is indubitably reflective rather than restorative (to use Svetlana Boym's now-classic dichotomy), while Eliot's tends to be restorative—yet Larkin is more pervasively influenced by the early than the middle-aged or late Eliot, and the type of nostalgia associated with early Eliot is very much in line with Larkin's all-encompassing algia, which battens on a sense of its own futility. This paper will propose a deep and foundational debt to Eliot in Larkin's thinking and poetry, one that goes against the grain of much criticism on Larkin as well as against the poet's own often-theatrical pronouncements.

Magdalena Kay
U of Victoria

T. S. Eliot, Out of Breath

In *The Elder Statesman*, T. S. Eliot compares the difficulty of putting thoughts and feelings into language to the experience of respiratory distress: "like the asthmatic struggling for breath / So the lover must struggle for words" (*CPP* 583). It is not unusual for Eliot to stress, by way of metaphor or analogy, the painfully physical element in poetic composition. The poet engages in "the intolerable wrestle / With words and meanings" (*CPP* 179); his words "strain, / Crack and sometimes break, under the burden" (*CPP* 175). However, I aim to show that the breathing analogy used in *The Elder Statesman* has particular significance. Building on Frances Dickey's discussion of the materiality behind Eliot's apparently metaphorical smoke, and drawing from Eliot's letters, manuscripts and newly published prose, this paper aims to bring the physicality back into images of breath and breathlessness that are often read as purely metaphorical.

My proposal is that Eliot's use of breath and air is ultimately grounded in his awareness of, and close attention to, the physical experience of difficult breathing, and that Eliot's own experience of breathlessness influenced his poetic practice. This paper puts forward new background research on Eliot's history of respiratory distress, and unearths the unexpected pervasiveness of breath and breathlessness throughout his body of work. In particular, while most scholarship has placed emphasis on Eliot's psychological breakdown, I want to read *The Waste Land* in the light of a prolonged episode of bronchitis experienced by Eliot in the months leading up to the poem's composition, and his subsequent practice of respiratory exercises from J. P. Muller's handbook (over the winter of 1919 to 1920). This approach will enable me to shed new light on the poem's introduction of shortness of breath within the Dantean subtext of the line "Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled" (*CPP* 62), and more generally on the poem's strange fascination with breathlessness.

Cécile Varry
U de Paris

Bombast and Sesquipedalian Words in the Epigraph to *The Waste Land*

The epigraph to *The Waste Land* is one of the most well-known paratexts of twentieth century literature. However, as previous scholars have noted, the popularized translation in English of the Ancient Greek of Petronius' *Satyricon* contains a small but significant mistranslation: the Cumaean Sibyl is not actually hanging in a cage. This paper considers the implications of another meaning in Ancient Greek of the vessel in which the poet oracle is trapped, indicated by the word *ampulla*: bombast. Despite the Roman satirists whom Eliot read using *ampulla* to mean bombast, Eliot scholarship has yet to consider the implications of this translation. Using a reading of text and paratext grounded in new-materialist philosophies of textual composition, as well as an attentiveness to theories of translation which consider mistranslation to be an important part of the poetic and readerly process, this paper considers this paratext in a new light. The newly unearthed meanings of *ampulla* thus reconfigure both the significance of the original mistranslation and also the position of the poem itself, with its networks of allusions and paratextual complexities.

Ruth Clemens
Utrecht U, the Netherlands

Conflicting Classicisms in Early Eliot

Six years after publishing *The Waste Land*, Eliot famously identified as a classicist, royalist, and Anglo-Catholic in his preface to *For Lancelot Andrewes*. Six years before *The Waste Land*, in 1916, Eliot taught a course on the modern tendency toward classicism.

On his syllabus, Eliot defines classicism in strikingly similar terms: "form and restraint in art, discipline and authority in religion, centralization in government" (*Prose* 1:471-2).

In "Ulysses, Order, and Myth" (1923), however, Eliot classifies both *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* as classical by radically redefining classicism. Rather than accepting some external authority, be it religious or political, Eliot describes classicism as an individual project, in which the artist works "in secret and without aid" (*Prose* 1:478). Out of this discrepancy, two strategies have emerged for classifying *The Waste Land* as classicist. One option is to go small by seeking the poem's order in the poet's own creative act, a method aligned with "Ulysses, Order, and Myth." The other option is to go big and assert that the hierarchies that Eliot will later avow in Lancelot Andrewes—Church, Crown, and Canon—provide hidden buttressing to the poem's mosaic of fragments.

In 2009, Lawrence Rainey identified classicism as one of the three central terms in Eliot's poetics, but over the past decade the critical focus has shifted away from the *The Waste Land*'s classicist search for order to its ludic instability. In my presentation, I will provide a brief history of Eliot's engagement with classicism during the time he was writing *The Waste Land*. I will then examine what has been lost and what has been gained in the recent shift away from "classicist" readings of the poem.

Patrick Eichholz
Virginia Military Institute

Emily Hale: The Woman Behind the Curtain

In 1935, T. S. Eliot told Emily Hale that his long desire to write plays was "chiefly your doing because I wanted your applause." Hale's contributions to Eliot's early play-writing career have gone largely unnoticed until now, because she told Martin Browne not to mention her in his 1969 book, *The Making of T. S. Eliot's Plays*. This paper details Hale's career as an amateur actress and director up through the 1930s to explore the kinds of experience she brought to the table when Eliot sought her input and critiques. It will discuss how she evolved from the night she performed opposite Eliot in his cousin's 1913 "Stunt Show" to become a well-reviewed comic actress, performing in community theatrical companies and summer stock productions. It will also review her more practical theatrical experience as a director and producer of college plays, and the professionals who guided her along the way. Finally, from my reading of the Eliot-Hale correspondence, I will reflect on how the two of them navigated the emotional minefield of critiques and encouragement, and Eliot's negative views of the world of commercially popular comedies in which Hale thrived. I will draw on my extensive research of Hale's life, as well as on the Eliot letters at Princeton University Library.

Sara Fitzgerald
Independent Scholar

Destruction of the Emily Hale Letters: Why, When, and By Whom?

There has been a great deal of speculation and consternation regarding the destruction of Emily Hale's letters to Eliot. The evidence suggests that the chain of events culminating in the destruction was nuanced and transactional, involving a series of moves and counter moves. In this presentation, I draw on background materials from relevant parties and offer conclusions as to "When" and "By Whom." The "Why" must remain an open question, but there are facts that convey something of the complexity involved and point to mixed signals and possible motives.

Jewel Spears Brooker
Professor Emerita Eckerd College

Before and After the "shred of platinum": Eliot and the Rhetoric of Method

This paper seeks to nuance the now-clichéd idea of the poet's "impersonality" formulated in "Tradition and the Individual Talent." Starting around 1917—long before suggesting that the poet's mind is merely a self-effacing catalyst—and well into the 1920s, Eliot adopts the term "method" to describe a writer's unique, indeed eminently personal "point of view" or "style." I trace the early sources of this term to the poet's philosophical training at Harvard as well as his reaction to Bertrand Russell and map its evolution in Eliot's subsequent debates with the likes of I. A. Richards and A. N. Whitehead. Analyzing Eliot's peculiar use of "method," with its largely scientific undertones at the time, helps explain how his thoroughgoing skepticism about applying science to literature can coexist with

a sprawling rhetoric of analogy between science and literature. For what makes Joyce's or Valéry's styles entirely singular while also identifiable and usable as "methods"? In both literature and science, I show, Eliot distinguishes between the individual genius who discovers a new method and those who merely reproduce laboratory procedures. Yet such analogies between science and literature stop short of suggesting that poetry's truth-content must in any way conform to the scientific notions conjured up by those very analogies: they merely suggest that, at their best, poets and scientists think in strikingly similar, and strikingly unique, ways. It is from this viewpoint that I would like to revisit the claims to objectivity behind the "impersonality" theory, in its own rhetorical entanglement with science.

Aurelia Cojocaru
U California, Berkeley

Standing Science on its Head: Eliot's Philosophy of Art and Science, 1918-1923

In the spring of 1918, Bertrand Russell discussed his plans to "stand the biological sciences on their heads" with his former student, T. S. Eliot. This conversation "impressed [Eliot] very deeply"—so deeply, in fact, that the possibility of overturning "the biological sciences" lingered in his mind for "a few weeks." Thanks to the recent publication of the *Letters of T. S. Eliot*, we now know that Eliot returned to this conversation in a letter dated 13 April 1918, where he wrote that Russell's "avenue of investigation" had "struck [him] as important as anything to be done." What we do not know, however, is why such a project was "as important as anything" to Eliot—never mind how he contributed to it.

In order to answer the first question (why), I examine the correlation between Eliot's growing suspicion of poetry's claim to be epistemically "satisfactory" and continental philosophy's increasing skepticism towards science as an epistemologically supreme system. Turning to the question of how Eliot helped to stand the sciences on their heads, I trace his repeated efforts to emphasize the shared features of poetry and science in British journals like *The Egoist*, the *Athenaeum*, and *The Criterion* from 1918 to 1923. Here we find Eliot writing alongside Remy de Gourmont, Ezra Pound, and Aldous Huxley—all of whom shared his desire to professionalize literature and literary criticism by employing what Russell called "the use of science against science." Thanks to the recent publication of the *Prose* and Eliot's previously unpublished correspondence, we can now begin to carve an even clearer sense of Eliot's engagement with contemporary science—an objective that has occupied brilliant scholars like Douglas Bush, Marion Montgomery, Michael H. Whitworth, Daniel Albright, Benjamin G. Lockerd, and Lois Cuddy for decades.

Emma Felin
U of Oxford

Eliot, Theological Modernism, and the "Pure Poetry" Debate

This paper examines T. S. Eliot's contributions to the theoretical debate on "pure poetry" that broke out in 1925. The debate was triggered by Henri Bremond's lecture on "pure poetry" delivered at the annual meeting of the Institut de France on 24 October 1925 and involved numerous literary critics, poets, and religious intellectuals in France and the UK, including Paul Valéry, John Middleton Murry, Herbert Read, and Wyndham Lewis. Bremond—a Catholic thinker, an ex-Jesuit and theological modernist, and a literary scholar and historian—was a well-known figure in French intellectual circles. He proposed to rethink the relationship between poetic and mystical experiences, putting forward a poetic theory that drew attention to the affinities between religion and literature. His work stimulated much interest among contemporary critics and was reviewed in Eliot's *Criterion*, Murry's *Adelphi*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *Dublin Review*, and other journals. As Herbert Read later recalled in his memoir, "[t]he problem of poetry and belief was endlessly discussed in these years 1925–30, in conversation and in print."

This paper will consider Eliot's engagement with Bremond's theory of "pure poetry" and evaluate its impact on Eliot's exchanges with John Middleton Murry, which were carried out in letters, essays, and reviews. Both Eliot and Murry followed the work of Bremond and his most significant opponent, the neo-Thomist Jacques Maritain, and—as this paper demonstrates—Bremond's and Maritain's arguments stimulated the polemic between Eliot and Murry. Furthermore, I will consider the formative impact of

this somewhat unexpected exchange between French religious intellectuals and English literary critics, showing that it prompted Eliot to rethink his views on the relation of poetry and religion in the 1930s.

Joanna Rzepa
U of Essex

Of "Ganga," "Himavant," and the "thunder": Re-evaluating Eliot's use of the Indic Tradition in *The Waste Land*

Towards the end of *The Waste Land*, rain finally comes to the sterile, arid, and barren land, which is likened by Eliot to the land ruled by the sexually and spiritually impotent Fisher King of the Grail legend. The King's spiritual inefficacy (which stemmed from his sexual impotence) found reflection in the physical body of the land which turned infertile. The rain, on the other hand, symbolizes both physical and spiritual regeneration. This then is the central movement in *The Waste Land*: from spiritual death to a spiritual rejuvenation. But surprisingly, it is not the Christian-European tradition but a non-European and non-Christian framework, the Indic tradition, which promises spiritual regeneration. In my paper, I focus on Eliot's deployment of elements from the Indic tradition in the poem. I first locate the possible sources from which Eliot borrowed non-European textual material. Using a comparatist framework of analysis, I situate the material used by Eliot in its context and then demonstrate how Eliot catachrestically wrested the material from its original context and reworked / refashioned it to suit the telos of his project in *The Waste Land*. Locating my analysis within the larger framework of postcolonial critiques of modernism as a movement in the arts, I point out how Eliot's project is enabled by a whole tradition of colonial knowledge practices which gathered, codified, and translated non-European textual exempla: the poem is buttressed by the forces of imperialism. Such a reading, I argue, takes us to the limits of the text itself. I conclude my paper with a reconsideration of how one might attempt to revisit the text after tracing its connection to structure of imperial domination.

Soham Deb Barman
Presidency U, Kolkata

Teaching Eliot to Japanese Students

What I propose to explain here is how Eliot's Western Christianity might be experienced and appreciated even in a non-Christian society such as Japan. Japanese teachers of English literature have to let students themselves develop a new approach to Eliot's poems. It is a big issue for the Japanese: how they can formulate an argument from a new perspective, beyond their own cultural boundaries. Even without the contexts of Western culture in which *Four Quartets* was written, Japanese students can still appreciate Eliot's poems to some extent if they try to examine the passages logically and concretely. They may need to approach Eliot's poems as an outsider to Christianity and Western culture, observing instead what is going on in their own lives and their own culture. Traditional pedagogy can still be used: teachers can provide their students with good background materials and guidance to help them engage their interest in and expand their appreciation of the masterpieces Eliot created. But they also can help students find new and different meanings in Eliot's poems that are common to all human beings beyond cultural borders.

Junichi Saito
Kanagawa U, Japan

Intermittency, Transparency, & Parody: On Eliot's Rhymes

It is not often enough observed that Eliot's "Reflections on *Vers Libre*" also reflects on rhyme. Eliot's remarks about the "ghost of some simple metre" have tended to overshadow those about the freeing of rhyme from regularity, although discretionary rhyming is intimately related to the freer prosody he imagined. My essay will argue that this asymmetry in the treatment of rhyme is not merely a matter of critical emphasis but also responds to a recurrent, career-long ambivalence in Eliot's conception of his own poetics. In early works like *Prufrock and Other Observations* and *Poems* of 1920, he developed a kind of intermittent, prosodically supportive, but also aloof and ironic style of rhyme which he would eventually question openly in *Four Quartets*, writing a stylistic palinode in *East Coker*. By this time he was speaking of a "bare, rocky directness of statement" that "alone makes good poetry," and of "poetry so transparent that in reading it we are intent on what the poem points at and not the poetry" (*Prose*

4:846-48). Formulations like these bespeak an anxiety over poetic effects in general, which he came to regard as "periphrastic" and fundamentally obfuscatory, and over rhyme in particular. Forged in his engagement with Laforgue and music hall performers, Eliot's rhymes had a parodic tonality that I claim he found difficult to translate into a more serious register, for instance in *Ash Wednesday*. My essay will argue for the changing, though never entirely altered style of rhyme across his works, its culmination in the *Ariel* poems, particularly *Marina*, and its implications for Eliot's engagement with poetic language as such.

Michael Rutherglen
U Chicago

Eliot and the Modernist *Pericles*

At turns wildly popular and intensely reviled, Shakespeare's *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* has weathered an unusually erratic reception history on the stage and in Shakespeare criticism. Perhaps at no time was its star more in ascendence than in the first half of the twentieth century, when this tale of incest, shipwrecks, and the serendipitous restitution of the familial sphere drew the fervid, resourceful attention of writers like James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, and Louis and Celia Zukofsky. This paper reconstructs the modernist fascination with *Pericles*, posing Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and the Zukofskys' *Bottom: On Shakespeare* (1963) as revealing intertexts for *Marina* (1930), where Eliot recasts the play's Act V recognition scene. As readers have long noted, *Pericles* offers Eliot a symbolic matrix through which to figure a mystical homecoming to New England. And yet, when we reinsert *Marina* into the context of the play's wider modernist reception, and when we inflect literary-critical interpretations of the poem with a media studies framework, we discover that *Pericles* also supplies, for Eliot, an irresistible allegory for poesis itself—specifically, an allegory for the aesthetic sublimation of the tension between sight and sound at the heart of lyric materiality. Making this argument will require that we take the unusual step of recasting *Marina*, which Zukofsky eagerly included in his "*Objectivists*" *Anthology* (1932), as an "Objectivist" poem. The metaphysical *Marina* may seem an odd fit for Zukofsky's materialist program, but when read in light of Zukofsky's own affection for *Pericles*, Eliot's poem exerts something of a demystifying effect; it reveals Objectivist poetics for the idealizing method of reading that it is. Thus, this paper aims to leverage Eliot's own encounter with *Pericles* to clarify the protocols of Objectivist poetics, and—at the argument's furthest horizon—to show in what manner a rapprochement between literary and media studies can illumine the material grain of Eliot's poetics.

Matt Kilbane
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Publishers, Permissions, and Printing: T. S. Eliot and Hugh Walpole

On 20 July 1934, T. S. Eliot solicited "either a long 'short' story or a self-contained part of an unpublished novel, or an essay" from Hugh Walpole. In his footnote to Eliot's letter, John Haffenden suggests that this request references a text intended for *The Criterion* that was never published. However, letters exchanged between Walpole and his publisher, Harold Macmillan, reveal that Walpole did indeed send a piece to Eliot: an excerpt from his forthcoming novel *The Inquisitor* (1935) titled *Cathedral Carol Service* (1934). Neither Rupert Hart-Davis's nor Elizabeth Steele's catalogs of Walpole's works include this little-known volume, but it was announced in Faber's 1934 Christmas catalog as one of "Four Titbits for Christmas" alongside texts by Walter de la Mare, Stephen Spender, and Ezra Pound. In addition to the curious publication of advance material by a publisher not slated to publish the complete book, the timeline of events raises questions about Walpole's and Eliot's dealings with publication permissions. This is especially pertinent in light of today's increased attention, after the release of Eliot's letters to Emily Hale, paid to permissions regarding his unpublished writings. From the letters exchanged between Walpole, Eliot, and Macmillan, it appears that Walpole sent his manuscript to Eliot before receiving permission from Macmillan to distribute materials and after receiving his £800 advance.

Both established writers have intimate and longstanding connections with the business of publishing. Together, Walpole and Eliot present an interesting publishing case study that further breaks down the constructed division between "highbrow"and "middlebrow" publishing networks as Helen Southworth and others have shown. Drawing upon archival sources, Nicola Wilson's research on Walpole's relationship with publishers as chair of

the Book Society, and Jason Harding's and John Xiros Cooper's research on Eliot as editor, this paper investigates Walpole and Eliot's professional network in the publishing world.

Parker T. Gordon
U of St Andrews

"Thrill is the intrinsic value": Moral Apprehension in *Marina* and *Four Quartets*

In 1915, Eliot delivered a paper to the Moral Sciences Club at the University of Cambridge, entitled "The Relativity of Moral Judgment." Growing out of Eliot's increasing dissatisfaction with philosophical study and his commitment to the "relativism" proposed by his friend at Harvard, Norbert Wiener, it describes moral value as arising from "strong and immediate feeling," something like the "sort of thrill" one has in response to works of art. Whereas F. H. Bradley, in Eliot's own reading, had tended to emphasize the elusive "Absolute" concealed within such states of feeling, Eliot's paper offers more flexible possibilities, suggesting an engaged, moral attachment to the world as we understand it through the senses, and most of all to the "intuitive apprehension," as he puts it, of artistic and literary judgment.

I want to take Eliot's paper as a prompt to think harder not only about Eliot's decision to turn from philosophy to poetry, but also to consider his later verse form as returning to the "thrill" he had spoken about years earlier. Attending closely to sound and rhythm in *Marina*, I will tease out the connection between that poem's distinctive sensoriness and its underlying moral apprehension, anticipating as it does the more explicitly Christian vision of *Four Quartets*. What does our pleasure in the poetry, I will ask, have to do with its moral and metaphysical reach? Turning specifically to *The Dry Salvages*, moreover, I will propose that the variability of the *Quartets*' verse-sounds—often underappreciated as it is—points us toward its thoroughgoing ethical work, negotiating between worldly and divine investments. My hunch is that Eliot's "summer beyond sense" does not entirely repudiate its own sensoriness, and that Eliot understood his religious apprehensions as uncomfortably committed to their fallen, material status.

Michael Rizq
U of Cambridge

Eliot Now and Eliot Later

Although Eliot studies is thriving at present, and Eliot's reputation as a major poet and critic remains secure, there is reason to be concerned about the future of both. That a writer's works should become progressively less readable to the public as language and culture change is a truism. Only a specialist today can read *Beowulf* or *The Canterbury Tales*, and the satire and humor of "The Rape of the Lock" are lost on a reader who is—as is increasingly common—not thoroughly familiar with the conventions of classical epic. As their cultural context recedes in time, even the works of the long 19th century have become rather foreign to today's students, as the bourgeois culture interrogated by writers from Jane Austen to Bernard Shaw grows increasingly remote.

Accelerating the process of estrangement, many scholars in the Humanities now argue that the story Western Civilization tells itself about its descent from the fetishized cultures of Greece and Rome developed to justify and reinforce white supremacy—indeed, that it still does. There is a movement even in classical studies departments either to dissolve or to redefine themselves as focusing on "Ancient Mediterranean Studies," in which Greek and Roman culture are treated not as "Classical civilizations" but as two cultures among many of their time. In English Departments, this drive to decenter what Eliot called "the Tradition" takes the form of a movement away from a curriculum built around historical periods of English and American literature (medieval, Victorian, modern American, etc.) toward a focus on the literature of the present, regardless of where it is written. Rather than entering into debate over these developments, my paper asks what Eliot's place will be in the future toward which these tendencies are taking us.

David E. Chinitz
Loyola University Chicago

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TIME PRESENT AND TIME FUTURE

The editors of *Time Present* want to announce that this is the last issue of the Society's newsletter that will appear in this form. We will be keeping the features of *Time Present* (including its title!) that you've come to expect from your Society—News and Notes, Public Sightings, CFPs, our Annual Meeting program, abstracts, and after-conference reports, short essays and reviews—and we're likely to be adding some new features as well. But we'll be moving from thrice-yearly print- or pdf-based issues to a publication that lives on the Society's new website (coming in time for summer). It will be more frequently updated (and more easily kept up to date), and it will be more accessible to members and to others interested in the study of T. S. Eliot.

Farewell: after nine years of editing, guest-editing, ghost-editing, and layout design of *Time Present*, Associate Editor **Frances Dickey** is retiring from the newsletter to devote her editorial efforts to the *T. S. Eliot Studies Annual*. She's happy to leave the new iteration of *Time Present* in the capable hands of Vice President Patrick Query and under the benevolent guidance (and eagle eye) of President John Whittier-Ferguson.

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To submit papers for any conference session sponsored by the Society, please send your abstract to tseliotsociety@gmail.com, or to the specific individual named in the call for papers.

Time Present

For matters having to do with *Time Present: The Newsletter of the International T. S. Eliot Society*, please contact the vice president, Patrick Query, at patrick.query@westpoint.edu

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