

T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

In spite of considerable difficulties in travel following the unhappy events of September 11, nearly forty members participated in the Annual Meeting in St. Louis. We were particularly happy to welcome international participants from four countries, and a large proportion of new members. Professor Geoffrey Hill's Memorial Lecture, "Word Value in F.H. Bradley and T.S. Eliot," was richly suggestive and complex, and yet admirably lucid. (I understand that our resourceful and persuasive Vice President has once again succeeded in receiving permission to print the Memorial Lecture, which will go out to all members as a special supplement to the *Newsletter*.) As usual, there were three very strong academic sessions—including a healthy level of participation by scholars in the early stages of their career—as well as many spontaneous deeply-felt readings from the poet's works during the "Eliot Aloud Allowed" hour on Sunday morning. It is a pleasure to report that this year's Fathman Awards went to three young colleagues: Tom Day (University of Warwick), Yisrael Levin (Tel Aviv University) and Henry Laufenberg (Cascadia Community College). Everyone at St. Louis this year missed the warm and wise presence of Rev. Earl Holt III, long-time Minister of the First Unitarian Church in St. Louis, now presiding over the historic King's Chapel in Boston. (Earl, we want to see Marilyn and you back with us at our gathering next year. Not wishing to scare you I won't spell out what this is, but this is not merely a gentle request!) Despite Rev. Holt's absence, the First Unitarian Church once again hosted our Sunday session, and we are very grateful for this hospitality.

After the meeting, a number of friends who attended for the first time wrote to say how pleased they were to discover the unusual combination of cordiality and scholarship at St. Louis. I can assure them that this is the usual tenor of all our meetings, and we hope that they will return again, and again. Of course, a large measure of the hard work that needs to be done to make the annual meeting successful is carried out prior to our arrival in St. Louis—by our local friends and volunteers, especially the Charrons and the Fathmans. I need hardly add that we benefit no less from their generosity and kindness during the three days we are in town. So, thanks much, Donna and Melanie, Tony and Bill. My thanks also to the Officers—Ben, David, Linda (and Bill, again)—and to all other members of the

Board; without their support, suggestions and enthusiasm a lot more than my voice would have decamped.

Shyamal Bagchee

LETTER FROM ITALY

9/25/01

Dear President, Vice-President and all Friends of the T.S. Eliot Society,

A brief message to greet you all, and to wish success to this year's Annual Meeting. I am sorry, but I can not attend it because this summer I was at the XIXth Ezra Pound International Conference in Paris-Sorbonne, and I can not afford two Conferences a year But above all I wish to tell you all that I deeply sympathize, suffer, and mourn with you because of the most painful loss which has tragically struck not only America, but all men of good will who believe in mutual respect, tolerance, and dialogue to build a better human society and brotherhood.

Several times I have read and reread with tears in my eyes Eliot's lines "What is that sound high in the air / Murmur of maternal lamentation / Who are those hooded hordes swarming / Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth / Ringed by the flat horizon only / What is the city over the mountains / Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air / Falling towers / Jerusalem Athens Alexandria / Vienna London . . ."—and now the poetic vision has become prophetic, and we are unwillingly forced to add with anguish "New York" to the list. Or, as Eliot's other vision: "The dove descending breaks the air / With flames of incandescent terror . . ."—yet those were not doves but demons.

We all live darkest days of fear and despair; we all hope that wisdom, foresight, and forbearance prevail, and that further and more terrible tragedies be spared to this poor suffering mankind, everywhere.

I join to your prayers of next Sunday at the First Unitarian Church, and embrace you all with my deepest friendship.

I remain, still more sincerely yours,
Stefano Maria Casella

LETTER FROM SAMBALPUR

Station:
Sambalpur University Guest House
23 September 2001

Dear Eliot Society Colleagues:

I have just returned to my room from a series of lectures on *The Waste Land* at a Refresher Course here. Towards my last session I couldn't help wondering whether I had unwittingly conducted my audience, all teachers of English like me, to the precincts of a certain territory lying far outside our mandated jaunts. The terms of my address that day somehow seemed riveted to those passages in *The Waste Land* that continue to toll politically reminiscent bells. For, the "stony rubbish" of Eliot's poem, its broken columns and textual fragments, made terrible sense to us at once, thanks to the American TV channels relaying the heap and spread of the New York rubble, visually, minute by minute. While the initial reactions pouring in from the corners of the world ranged from sheer dismay to utter shock and disbelief, a week or so later it seemed to us that nothing less catastrophic would indeed have called forth theories of anticipated terror, premonitions, prophecies: the controversial "clash of civilizations" by Samuel Huntington, the Quatrains of Michel de Nostradamus, and perhaps some of those recent disaster television serials, comics, and films which seemed in hindsight to have virtually "predicted" this tragedy. Among these last, we are told, is a sequel to a film called *Men in Black* in which a huge evil alien was shown to destroy the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

Missing, however, from these popular media narratives of one time prognostication was *The Waste Land*. We did not find this strange at all. The media seldom draw upon the research library. It was worthwhile recalling nonetheless that Eliot, then a young American in England, had "foresuffered" it all between 1920 and '22. He was writing under the shadow of the First World War, when, literally and figuratively, the western towers of civilizational pride were tottering. Half way through our discussion, it seemed to many of us that Eliot had indeed anticipated in 1922 the chaos, destruction, and refugee movement of such magnitude as the media have been so assiduously capturing for us through the week: the mountains and plains, the massive exodus, the seemingly endless caravans of careworn people, the convoy of cattle, goods, manual and mechanized engines of displacement. Was not the CNN footage after all a "replay", if one recalled this scene in *The Waste Land*:

What is that sound high in the air
Murmur of maternal lamentation
Who are those hooded hordes swarming
Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth

Ringed by the flat horizon only
What is the city over the mountains
Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
Falling towers
Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal

There was, it seemed, no doubt *where* those "endless plains" were. At that point I remembered Eliot's early commentators who have had difficulty in locating this landscape precisely. Here, for example, is Grover Smith: "The geographic location of this journey is not specified; it is partly in Palestine and partly in the foothills of the Himalaya" We, reading the poem in India now, seemed to know only too well what was going on and where.

What about the "falling towers"? Of course *The Waste Land* poet was speaking in general terms, for the particular has no language in an apocalypse: the towers *will* fall; indeed, those that fall *will* represent the pinnacles of Western cultural, intellectual, economic, and military power. *And so they did*. The most curious thing about Eliot's prognostication, however, is the threat emanating from the East it had perceived to be both serious and imminent. The "hooded hordes", according to the commentaries that follow the poet's allusive lead to Hermann Hesse's *Blick ins Chaos*, were rising and moving from the East: the unregenerate crowd of Eastern Europe, probably of communist Russia; the uncivilized tribes inhabiting Central Asia, certainly heathen, possibly Islamic. I commented, further, on *hordes*. Eliot wasn't making a mistake. The word descends from the Turki variants *orda*, *ordu*, *urdu*, further descended from the name of the tribe that spoke that language, viz., *horda*, *hord*, *hordia*, *hoord*—basically, "a tribe or group of Tartar or kindred Asiatic nomads dwelling in tents and wagons, and migrating from place to place... for war or plunder" (*OED*).

We agreed that *The Waste Land* is still a great poem to read amid "the immense panorama of futility and anarchy that is contemporary history". I couldn't, at any rate, have harnessed a richer "crisis narrative" to meaningfully sustain a Refresher Course debate than this good old poem, now nearing its eightieth year, annotated from annotation by annotation. The persistence of terror, sadly, validates both the persistence of such cognitive maps and of the interpretive labour we must share with students.

Sincerely,
K. Narayana Chandran

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE 2001 SOCIETY MEETING

Brad Bucknell, *University of Alberta*

"He Do Eliot in Visual Voices: Martin Rowson's Re-Make of *The Waste Land*"

Martin Rowson's comic book version of Eliot's *The Waste Land* seems a typical enough postmodern parodic re-reading of its high modernist source. It replaces or displaces Eliot's rich literary allusiveness and difficult montage with popular (and not so popular), and largely visual fragments and allusions—from films, nineteenth- and twentieth-century paintings, and popular magazine and poster culture. But to "get" Rowson's apparent transposition of high-art Eliot into "low" cultural graphic detective novel, the competent (if not expert) reader/viewer must in a sense "master" not only Eliot's technique and more than a few of his allusions, but also that of the predominantly visual/popular cultural references of the later twentieth century. Rowson's text requires then as much knowledge of Eliot—of his concerns and techniques—and of the moderns generally, at least as cultural figures who attempted to cast very long shadows across their own time, as it does of the post-modern historical period and its historical and aesthetic concerns.

My question is, however, does Rowson's book fulfill Frederic Jameson's sense that postmodern parody is pastiche, or parody without depth, without any sense that there is something truer which the exaggerated style of parody points toward? Or does it repeat and replicate Eliot's anxiety about culture and its jeopardized hierarchies in ways which now include the aesthetic productions of late capitalism itself? If so, is it parody at all, or some more elaborate historical statement on a postmodern moment which has already passed—a kind of echo of modernism within the apparent confines of a verbal/visual re-make of Eliot in a fragmented (Raymond) Chandler-ese picture speak? Is Rowson's *Waste Land* a premonitory precursor of the now common-place hyper-reality of the corporate cyber-parallel universe? (Rowson's book came out in 1990, just before the explosion—or implosion—of images on the internet.)

David Chinitz, *Loyola University, Chicago*
"Mr. Eliot and the Cheese"

In a 1958 essay, Edmund Wilson suggested that there were two persons contained in the mind and body of T. S. Eliot. One was "the author of *The Sacred Wood*, *The Waste Land*, *The Cocktail Party*, and other excellent things." The other, whom Wilson dubbed "Mr. Eliot," was "the public figure, the pillar of British culture, and the remote inscrutable deity who presides over the American academic guild of what its members like to call criticism."

For an ever-expanding, less and less exclusive public from about 1933 until the poet's death, it was this persona

who became the familiar, the instantly recognizable figure associated with the name of T. S. Eliot. Solemn, cerebral, recondite, decorous, and punctilious, Eliot in this aspect was the quintessential highbrow, to such an extent that the imaginary highbrow intellectual began to wear Eliot's face. His portrayal of this character was overdone; crucially, though, it was overdone with a wink. "Mr. Eliot" knew, and let you know he knew, that he carried his seriousness to the point of absurdity. In this way Eliot turned himself, as the human incarnation of high culture, into a species of popular culture.

In this paper I read Eliot's widely publicized devotion to cheese as illustrating both his construction of his public persona and the public's consumption of that persona. All of the cheese anecdotes recounted by Eliot's acquaintances—not to mention Eliot's own 1935 dissertation on Stilton—highlight his tone of ostentatious gravity. His deadpan, paradoxically, is the one unmistakable sign of his facetiousness. It is a form of highbrow wit that Eliot manages exceptionally well, and that seems to confirm him as the very model of the eccentric learned gentleman.

I discuss, too, the important consequences Eliot's assumption of this role produced both during and after his lifetime. The "Mr. Eliot" persona has always had, and continues to have, a large and somewhat troubling influence on the way Eliot is read and received. In the middle of the twentieth century, I argue, public acceptance of "Mr. Eliot" and his lore smoothed the poet's path toward literary canonization and international celebrity. Yet the very qualities of seriousness, formality, irony, and measured control that once made Eliot the "perfect icon of high culture" for the New Critics and their generation later helped to make him an antipathetic character for many critics—"a large and inviting target," as Gail McDonald has put it, "for assaults on the axiology of high culture." Eliot's exceedingly "proper" public persona buttressed readings of his poems that foregrounded their traditionalism, structural unity, classicism and erudition, downplaying their formal instability, psychological tension, linguistic experimentation, and daring transgression of cultural, political, and sexual boundaries.

One specific casualty of "Mr. Eliot's" peculiar combination of sobriety and irony, so far as critical perception is concerned, is his productive relationship with popular culture. As I have argued elsewhere, popular culture is an indispensable presence in Eliot's art and critical thought. That most critics since the 1930s have neglected this element—indeed, have assumed that Eliot was an implacable enemy of the popular arts—may be partly understood as a historical byproduct of Eliot's highbrow image. Perceived as a facet of the "Mr. Eliot" persona, Eliot's attachment to various popular forms was easily reduced by his contemporaries to whimsy—a requisite eccentricity of the part he was playing. Detective fiction, music hall, even play-writing, could be taken no more seriously than Stilton cheese. Later readers have received the pure highbrow Eliot from their predecessors and have loved or hated him as such. By learning to

see "Mr. Eliot" for what he is—one of Eliot's creations rather than the "true," essential Eliot—we will come to see much of his prose and verse in a new light.

Tom Day, *University of Warwick*

"Geoffrey Hill: Atonement, Betrayal and the Criticism of *Four Quartets*"

My paper interrogates the question of poetic influence between Geoffrey Hill and the T.S. Eliot of *Four Quartets*, situating this relationship within the doctrine of Original Sin where the inherent faultiness of a fallen language compels the poet to 'invite correction' from another.

I closely examine Geoffrey Hill's judgement of *Four Quartets* as expressed in an article entitled 'Dividing Legacies' that appeared in the British journal *Agenda* in 1996. Hill, in his characteristically tricky and 'poetic' critical idiom, speaks here of a fault in the way Eliot's 'Little Gidding' communicates by 'tone' as distinct from 'pitch', this fault stemming, says Hill, from 'Eliot's failure to take rightly the measure of [Richard] Hooker'. Hill's objections to the tone of Eliot's poem position him in firm opposition to the tenets of *Four Quartets* as a paradigm of 'penitential literature', leading him to question, polemically, the 'sincerity of Eliot's Anglo-Catholic devotion' and the quality of Eliot's atonement, in order to bolster his own penitential credentials.

However, Hill's criticism is itself (self-consciously) faulty, turning on a series of tautologies and misreadings that amount to Hill's failure to take rightly the measure of Eliot. In particular, I examine the paradoxical non-sufficiency of pitch and tone and the collusions of tone that are the sins of pitch in another mode. The mistakes in Hill's reading of *Four Quartets* exemplify his understanding, adumbrated elsewhere in his criticism, of the relation between atonement and the 'empirical guilty conscience', an understanding that allows him to resist the attractions of rhetorical mastery and make atonement, and to backhandedly endorse Eliot's poetic atonement, so tacitly acknowledging Eliot's precedence. Through a misreading of *Four Quartets*, or what Harold Bloom might recognise as poetic 'misprision', Hill engages in a 'heretic' dissension from the devotional tenets of *Four Quartets* in order to fully absorb the (religious) significance of a poetry in which 'Sin is Behovely'. For Hill, whose faith in poetic language lies in its ability to register, mimetically, 'deep shocks of recognition', the deepest shock of recognition comes from finding the poetry of *Four Quartets*, to which he thought he owed nothing, immeasurably engrained in his own.

Leonore Gerstein, *Eastern Michigan University*

"Allusion in Theory and Practice: The Hebrew Bible, Eliot, and the Israeli Modernists"

While allusions to Hebrew scripture are scattered among other allusions in Eliot's poetry and are common in the works of Israeli poets, there are significant cultural differences between the ways in which Eliot and the Israelis handle biblical text. Because they command both biblical and modern Hebrew, Israelis can exploit the dissonance between these two layers of language to express their ambivalence toward their tradition, as well as other conflicts. In their displays of mastery over the biblical text, the Israelis use their tradition for purposes Eliot had neither anticipated in his prescriptive essays, nor put into practice in his poetry. Modernist Israelis use irony to establish distance from an overwhelming tradition, whereas Eliot's biblical allusions cement the connection between current culture and its sources. Yehuda Amichai called the Israeli allusive strategy "making the low high and the high low," a strategy exemplified in many of his poems, including these lines, which allude to Psalm 121 ("I lift my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come?"): "I lift my eyes to the mountains. Now I understand/ What it means to lift eyes, what a heavy load/ It is...." Although less frequent, subtler uses of biblical text for ironic, deflating effect can be found in the poetry of Natan Zach.

In his biblical allusions, Eliot creates coherent wholes out of emblematic images scattered throughout the Hebrew Bible, reconfiguring them in his skillful inter-weavings. In *Asb-Wednesday* II, lines 48-51, for example, he creates an amalgam of three allusions in as many lines. This occurs in numerous passages in that poem as well as *The Waste Land*, in ways which encourage the reader to call to mind the entire biblical context in which his brief quotations are embedded. His attitude toward the biblical text is always reverential; in a spirit of pious acceptance, he affirms the sense of the original. Even though the Israelis saw Eliot as a model for new poetic practices, they could not share his reverential handling of the text whose message they so energetically challenged.

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Henry Laufenberg, *Cascadia Community College*
"Changes in Eliot's Mytho-poetics from *The Waste Land* to
Four Quartets"

The evolution of Eliot's mytho-poetics over the course of his career is the spine of my recent dissertation, *Visions and Revisions: A Study of Myth in Late Modern American Poetry*, and the talk I gave at this year's annual meeting established that *The Waste Land* employs and revises myths and archetypes in different ways than *Four Quartets*. *The Waste Land* adheres to a traditional, or "high" modernist, mytho-poetics largely of Eliot's invention. *Four Quartets*, by contrast, essentializes a more radical "late" modernist mytho-poetics.

In general, the high modern Eliot is characterized as viewing myth as a stable form and using it to: approach epistemological questions; invoke isolated characters mired in self-awareness and in conflict with their environment; create narratives stressing singular recurrence or perpetual reduction; champion objective concepts of time; lay stock mythical plots and figures over a degraded contemporary scene, thus creating irony; retrogressively and nostalgically latch onto past social structures, as expressed in mythical ideals, as a means of coping with what is bleak in the present and with the limits of creative vision. Myth in *The Waste Land* is foremost an ordering device and interpretive tool, and Eliot's greater conception of myth, his implicitly and explicitly expressed mytho-poetics, reflects the notion that cyclical rejuvenation, both cultural and spiritual, is either not possible (a latter-day Christian, linear mytho-poetic), or that the cycles expressed in the Fisher King/ Vegetable god types of mythologies occur on such a grand scale that an individual cannot perceive them as being cyclic or recurrent.

The late modernist Eliot, by contrast, approaches myth not as a device to order what and/or how one knows, but as a means to create realities, and so: addresses ontological questions; establishes communities united in belief and in accord with their surroundings; opens the possibility of continual recurrence; sees time as malleable and ultimately subjective; creates synthetic or relatively highly mutated plots and characters; progressively promotes new social orders to cope with bleakness in the present and to transcend the limitations of poetic vision. Myth in *Four Quartets* is not an ordering device but a means to creation, a creative tool. In *Four Quartets* Eliot's mytho-poetics mimic those of the primitive myth-maker, wherein the sensitive, artistic individual might not just forecast emerging recurrence, but through his or her remaking of worn-out mythologies also influence change and create culture.

Eliot's adoption of later modern mytho-poetic techniques, born in the radical and proto-feminist poetry of

the 1930's, flies in the face of reductive characterizations of Eliot as being perpetually retrogressive and culturally conservative.

Yisrael Levin, *Tel Aviv University*
"Revisiting Eliot and Swinburne"

For more than half a century now, Swinburne scholarship has regarded T. S. Eliot as occupying the role of the villain. Many Swinburneans find Eliot's "Swinburne as Poet" in his *The Sacred Wood*, one of the most harmful critical works ever to be written on Swinburne. In this short essay, they claim, Eliot completely destroyed Swinburne's reputation as a poet, and sent him to the critical oblivion in which he presently languishes.

As a result of Eliot's great critical influence at the beginning of the twentieth-century, most Swinburne scholars agree that what Eliot had found as Swinburne's 'diffuseness' of poetry and emptiness of imagery had made it almost impossible to treat Swinburne's poetry with the seriousness that it deserved. The Modernists' attempt to renounce their Victorian ancestors, so it appears, is nowhere as aggressive as in the case of Eliot and Swinburne. Throughout the last century, therefore, the two poets were treated as antithetical. Instances of possible influence which the one might have had upon the other, were seen either in Bloomian Oedipal terms, or as a manifestation of Eliot's ambivalent treatment of literary history.

However, as one examines the later poetry of both Swinburne and Eliot, what seemed to be an unbridgeable gap of difference, turns out to be quite the opposite. By 'later poetry' I refer to poems that appeared in Eliot's *Four Quartets* and Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads, Second Series*, exemplified by Eliot's "East Coker" and Swinburne's "A Forsaken Garden." My intention is not to show how Eliot's denial of Swinburne is, in fact, an attempt to deny the great influence Swinburne had upon him. Others have done that before. Rather, my intention is to show how these two poets, who have always been seen as completely unrelated, do eventually reach the same poetic conclusions. They do so in a manner stemming from the nature of their own poetic language, thus exceeding any structuralist or psychological analysis of their poetry.

These conclusions, generally speaking, relate to the failure of poetic language, and the poets' disbelief in the validity of poetic representation. By the use of a self-negating language, that is, a language which points out its own inability to maintain meaning or capture a definitiveness of reference, both poets achieve an almost identical effect.

Cyrena Pondrom, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*
"Unexpected Synonyms: *The Waste Land* and *Marriage*"

Although at least one critic has noticed the ways in which Marianne Moore's *Marriage* (published in 1923 in *Manikin 3*) is indebted to *The Waste Land*—in length, in form, even in the absence then presence of notes to the poem—no one that I am aware of has noted the ways in which the two poems reflect similar evaluations with respect to the implications of marriage and gender. Indeed that same critic describes Eliot as "a prime example of a man transmitting his culture's misogyny" (Keller 237, 238) and positions Moore as his antithesis in nearly every ideological way. Such a characterization misreads Eliot, I believe, and may misread Moore, but more comprehensively, such a reading structures a narrative of modernism which fails to identify the common concerns about gender that form an important part of its core.

A comparative examination of *The Waste Land* and *Marriage* demonstrates that both Moore and Eliot are profoundly concerned with the way gender role or performance, and hence identity itself, is inscribed within traditional social and cultural expectations. Both see those social expectations as coercive and as actually or potentially damaging to the self who speaks. While neither would see marriage as the sole occasion for the performance of gender, both figure this institution—or its evasions and substitutes—as the most comprehensive and ubiquitous expression of its social construction.

For Eliot the failure of marriage is one of the reasons the land is waste. For Moore it is the site "of circular traditions and impostures, . . . requiring all one's criminal ingenuity to avoid!" (CP 62). For both, failure in marriage or its refusal places one outside the accepted boundaries of the social—for Moore as "criminal" and for Eliot metaphorically as "dead men," incumbents of "rats' alley" (CPP 40). Yet, paradoxically, neither is willing to give up on the importance of marriage and the love it *should* enact, in both cases because the poet sees marriage as symbolic of a metaphysical principle with religious significance.

The points of congruence between the two poems offer us a kind of skeleton of the principal concerns of modernism with respect to the nature of identity, the character of gender, and the legitimacy of the authority of the social—precisely *because* these two poems have so often in the past been read, improperly, as antitheses.

Ronald Schuchard, *Emory University*
"Did Eliot Know Hulme? Final Answer"

When T.S. Eliot reviewed the posthumous publication of T.E. Hulme's *Speculations* in the *Criterion* of April 1924, he declared the book a harbinger of the new classical age. In succeeding years, Eliot was openly and repeatedly to champion Hulme's intellectual conservatism and embrace the "religious attitude" of his humanism. Such was his enthusiasm that by the early 1930s Eliot's first critics naturally began to wonder if he had known and been influenced by Hulme in London during the war years. When Eliot went to Harvard in 1932 for an academic year as Norton lecturer, he was interviewed by F.O. Matthiessen, who reported authoritatively in *The Achievement of T.S. Eliot* (1935) that "Eliot had not known Hulme personally, though he had heard much about him from Pound; and he had not read any of Hulme's essays before they were published, by which time Eliot's own theory had already matured." The similarity of their ideas, he concluded should be attributed to "an emerging general state of mind."

There was no further pursuit of the question for the next twenty years, until Samuel Hynes felt obliged to write to Eliot about Hulme while preparing his edition of Hulme's *Further Speculations* (1955). Eliot wrote in response to a series of questions from Hynes that he never met or corresponded with Hulme and that he did not remember reading any of Hulme's essays. The first work he read of Hulme's, he said, was *Speculations*. In an afterthought, without regard to date, he recalled having read the introduction to Hulme's edition of George Sorel's *Reflections on Violence*. Hynes thus dropped any mention of an Eliot-Hulme relationship in his introductory material.

Three years later, in the letters page of *TLS* (2 August 1957), Eliot emphatically reaffirmed that he never met Hulme. Further, Ashley Dukes, who had been Hulme's suitemate and a member of his literary salon at the time, declared dogmatically on the same letters page that Hulme knew nothing of Eliot in his lifetime and that Eliot knew nothing of Hulme's work until the publication of *Speculations*. Thus, when Herbert Howarth published *Notes On Some Figures Behind T.S. Eliot* (1964), he made no mention of Hulme.

The Eliot-Hulme question was reopened in the 1970s when it was revealed that in 1916-17 Eliot had not only taught Hulme's poems and his translations of Bergson and Sorel in Extension courses, but that in his review of Sorel's *Reflections on Violence* he had identified Hulme as "a contemporary" and strongly recommended his introduction and notes to the volume. When the first volume of Eliot's *Letters* appeared in 1988, Eliot's mentions of Hulme in letters to friends in 1915 and 1916 made the mystery of friend-

ship all the more tantalizing. The actual proof of friendship would not come, however, and I was forced to conclude in *Eliot's Dark Angel* (1999) that ultimately "we must accept Eliot's word, forty years on, that he never met Hulme during their very close encounters." Recently, however, new material has come to light.

In the mid-1930s Eliot commissioned his friend Michael Roberts, editor of *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, to write a critical book on Hulme, and the correspondence related to the writing of *T.E. Hulme* (1938) has become available. While Roberts was researching the book, Ashley Dukes, who had become a well-known director and a close friend of Roberts, came back into Eliot's life. Dukes, a founding member of the Group Theatre, would produce *Sweeney Agonistes* in 1935 and *Murder in the Cathedral* in 1936. Working closely together, the two became good friends. Roberts, clearly interested in the Eliot-Hulme relationship, had evidently mentioned the matter to Dukes. Dukes, who was preparing to take *Murder in the Cathedral* on its second American tour, dined with Eliot on the eve of departure and subsequently wrote to Roberts, too late for inclusion in the book, that Eliot admitted that he knew Hulme "slightly" and admired him. Eliot also wrote to Roberts after the dinner, informing him that Dukes had acquired Jacob Epstein's 1916 bust of Hulme, the bust that Herbert Read photographed and used for the frontispiece of *Speculations*. Eliot conveyed his amazement that certain angles in Epstein's bust threw more light on Hulme's character than the photograph itself could reveal.

Eliot forgot and denied having known several people, including D.H. Lawrence, whose acquaintances have since been proved. In the case of Hulme, the facts are that Eliot knew Hulme, however slightly, taught his poetry and philosophy, reviewed his edition of Sorel, and praised him in his early critical writings. Eliot's description of Hulme as "the forerunner of a new attitude of mind" in his review of *Speculations* came as the renewal of his earlier enthusiasm for Hulme's work. Thereafter, Eliot became an open disciple of Hulme's religious humanism and theory of gaps, confessing to Allen Tate in 1929 that Hulme had influenced him enormously.

Leon Surette, *University of Western Ontario*
"T.S. Eliot, Sydney Schiff, Herbert Read and *The Criterion*"

Eliot's early friendship (1919-23) with Sidney Schiff has received little attention from Eliot scholars. In some way that neglect is justified, since their relationship cooled—or, at least the correspondence dwindled—after 1922, and Schiff himself has sunk into obscurity. Though the relationship was close for only about three years, it is worthy

of attention if only because it was one in which Mrs. Schiff (Violet Beddington) and Vivien Eliot were included.

Schiff was also a friend of Marcel Proust, and finished the Scott Moncrieff translation of *A la recherche du temps perdu* after Moncrieff died in 1930. He wrote a series of autobiographical and Proustian novels under the pseudonym Stephen Hudson—two of which, *Richard Kurt* and *Elinor Colhouse*, Eliot read and commented upon (judiciously, it is true).

His second wife, Violet Beddington, was sickly like Vivien, but unlike her was a wealthy, London literary hostess. It was at his home that Eliot met Lady Rothermere, leading to *The Criterion*, which Eliot thought of as a successor to *Art and Letters*, a journal bankrolled by Schiff.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Early T.S. Eliot and Western Philosophy, by M.A.R. Habib. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

In this book, M.A.R. Habib examines the ways in which western philosophies influenced T.S. Eliot's writings from 1911-1922, when Eliot chose, and then chose not, to become a professional philosopher. Training for that career taught him how to identify, approach, and survive interactions with perennially-recurring problems in philosophy. Along with poetry and aesthetics, Eliot's training in philosophy made clear to him that philosophical prose could not adequately address the issues in philosophy, or elsewhere, that it revealed. Habib's book shows that this inadequacy, which Eliot approached in a Platonist and then a Christian philosophical manner honed in response to the writings of Kant, Bergson, and Bradley, turned him from philosophy to poetry and criticism.

The Early T.S. Eliot and Western Philosophy offers sensitive readings of philosophy, including Eliot's, but is less convincing in its treatments of Eliot's poetry. Early in the book, Habib states that 'Eliot's ideological opposition to liberal thought, his philosophical views and his aesthetics cannot be adequately understood in isolation from one another' (3). Yet he studies all of these by placing philosophy in a privileged position with respect to poetry and aesthetics, in defiance of his intention. Despite this flaw, and despite Habib's trivializing reliance on 'irony' and 'the problem of the One and the Many' as major categories of analysis and structure, this book is a valuable treatment of Eliot's philosophical heritage and his relation to it. It reveals reasons why Eliot was successful when most reticent, and least given to accepting resolution of a problem of knowledge or a feature of experience, in his poetry.

Habib concentrates on Eliot's response to three philosophers: Kant, Bergson, and F.H. Bradley. He argues that Kant taught Eliot that the philosophical subject and object could not be considered only united, or only divided, illusory, or irreducibly multiple, and yet that they seemed, and could not but seem, to be necessary and whole. Later, as a Christian, Eliot lamented that Kant's foundational epistemology and its noumenization of God reduced the divine mystery to an unknowable cipher, as products of an early-modern divorce of philosophy from theology. The lament was based on Eliot's initial, Platonist response to Kant's relegating of Aristotelian substance into a category of the perceiving subject. This, in turn, enabled Eliot to historicize Kant's and Aristotle's universal claims in order to reveal their eternal, and enabling, conditions. Through his dealing with Kant, Eliot's union of epistemological skepticism with substance metaphysics became Platonist and incarnational long before Eliot realized it.

Key to realizing it was how Eliot rejected Bergson. Habib argues that Eliot found Bergson's philosophy to depend upon three flawed judgments: that consciousness and matter were essentially different, that time was prior to space and extension and hence denied reality to the concept of eternity, and that realism and idealism were indistinct. Eliot denied all three. In doing so, he adopted Bergson's impulse to make contradictions cohere, fixing it as a skeptical posture before the claims of reason, faith, and nihilism alike. Doing so enabled him to confront modern darkness, ignorance, fears, vanities and lusts with revived classical and Christian ideals. Articulating what was missing in Bergson revealed to Eliot that skepticism, like honor and wisdom, was a classical virtue whose maintenance and revival were integral to the philosophy and literature of his time.

As Eliot moved away from Kant and Bergson, Habib argues, Bradley led him into a philosophy 'which is a secular theology, an infinite system of contextualising human finitude without God' (133). Its infinity is made known through the concept, and primal unity, of experience. This is the idea, which is first the unarticulated feeling, of 'experience itself as a harmony of thought, feeling and sensation', unified in itself prior to any experience of relation or of categories and names (133). We come to realize this, according to Bradley, by first noticing that 'the identity or content of a thing "slides beyond" (in Bradley's language) the limits of its existence', seeking to be reunited with all else that is, and from which each particular is substantially indistinct (130).

In all this, Bradley led Eliot to treat classical problems of philosophy with a quest for an adequate foundation for philosophical activity whose primary expressions were not philosophical. That foundation is, as Eliot learned from Schopenhauer through Laforgue, the will each thing, expe-

rience, notion, and individual has to act towards cohesion with, and self-completion amidst, all else that is. Insofar as these conflict, the will to live is a will to make them not do so.

The will to live is a will to live fully and beyond the cessation of identity and distinctions. Eliot eventually found that this will completed itself in Thomistic theology, Anglican Christianity, and in societies which were able to accept, and mature through, the most eloquent users of their language(s). His choice of poetry over philosophy to address philosophical problems and their foundation expresses this will to cohesion and completion. Habib's very cogent book helps to explain why.

Christopher Wilkins

T.S. Eliot and Our Turning World. Edited by Jewel Spears Brooker. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001.

Anyone nourishing even the slightest doubt about the continuing relevance and renewed vitality of Eliot studies in the new century will find such doubt dispelled upon reading this collection of fifteen critical essays edited by Jewel Spears Brooker. The collection, which is based on conference papers delivered at the University of London in 1996, brings together the work of an eclectic group of scholars, some whose life work has been dedicated to Eliot, others who could be described as relative newcomers, many from the United States and Great Britain, some from Sweden, Germany, Spain, and Japan. The internationalism, the varying academic backgrounds of the contributors, as well as the open-ended quality of many of the essays, would have pleased T. S. Eliot who, as this collection in so many ways reiterates, was more impish than authoritarian and more attuned to difference, relativism, collaboration, and children than the standard portrayal of Eliot as an aloof and elitist poet would have us believe. The authors united in the book arrive at this new Eliot through what, from the perspective of high theory, might seem rather mundane methods: by looking at previously sequestered, uncollected, or simply ignored material; by re-examining texts in light of current intellectual concerns or abiding personal preoccupations with aspects of Eliot's work; finally, and equally fruitfully, by placing Eliot's writing in relation to other texts and other arts—whether popular culture, mass media, or music. In their unaffected, jargon-free, and unapologetic attention to the subtleties of Eliot's prose and poetry, these essays mark a new attitude, not only in Eliot studies but, one senses, in literary studies in general. Some might call it a post-theoretical attitude if it were not equally apparent

that the tenets of post-modernist theory have been so thoroughly digested in many of the contributions as to make any explicit attention to them appear redundant.

Some of the strongest pieces in the collection open new dimensions to the study of T. S. Eliot. "T.S. Eliot's Theory of Opposites: Kant and the Subversion of Epistemology"—co-authored by Brooker and William Charron—deepens our understanding of Eliot's philosophical reflections and their reverberations in his poetry. Examining so far unpublished reports written by Eliot for a 1913 Harvard graduate seminar in Kantian philosophy, Brooker and Charron conclude that "Eliot advances pieces of a provocative and sophisticated theory of opposites, more radical in its relativistic implications than anything found in Bradley or in many present day proponents." David Chinitz and Michael Coyle's contributions do much to prompt a reappraisal of Eliot's relationship to modernism and mass culture. In "The Problem of Dullness: T. S. Eliot and the 'Lively Arts' in the 1920s," Chinitz emphasizes Eliot's appreciation for popular culture. Quoting from a number of lesser-known essays by Eliot, some of them uncollected, Chinitz argues that "far from upholding the need for an uncontaminated elite art, as critics routinely allege, Eliot seems determined, rather, to render the boundaries between the high and the low more fluid, to affirm the value of popular culture, and to consider the possibilities of crossover works." Michael Coyle's "T.S. Eliot on the Air: 'Culture' and the Challenges of Mass Communication" investigates a neglected chapter of Eliot's career—his activities as a radio broadcaster. Coyle makes a convincing case that the eighty-one radiobroadcasts Eliot delivered for the BBC, many of them during World War II, reflect his effort to "recast" radio, which "he respected ... as a kind of pre-modern medium, an essentially *oral* medium, capable of phatic and even fatidic speech—that is, as commanding a solidarity-building and oratic authority." Chinitz's and Coyle's pieces are productively complemented by Richard Badenhausen's "Rethinking 'Great Tom': T. S. Eliot and the Collaborative Impulse," which further challenges the notorious portrait of Eliot as uncompromising, solitary elitist by demonstrating that "collaborative activity was a necessary condition for Eliot to create: a central feature of his aesthetic."

Unfortunately, it is impossible for me to do justice to the many compelling essays in this collection and their distinct contributions to the ongoing re-evaluation of Eliot. I cannot conclude this brief review, however, without commenting on two very different pieces—Rudolf Germer's illuminating "'Journey of the Magi' in the Context of T. S. Eliot's Religious Development and Sensibility" and David Thompson's timely and rewarding essay, "T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism and the Weight of Apologia." Germer's essay makes apparent that there is much about Eliot's "individual

religious sensibility" and its impact on his poetry that is shrouded by misconceptions. Many critics have wondered why Eliot converted to the Church of England—"the conservative party at prayer," as Graham Greene dubbed it—rather than the Church of Rome. Insisting that as a Christian Eliot was as much his own person as in other realms of his life, Germer explains that the poet's choice of the Anglican Church was dictated by neither conservative conventionality nor an inclination toward absolutism, but by his desire for a "via media," "a middle ground between the undogmatic, ethical Unitarianism" of Eliot's childhood and "dogmatic Roman Catholicism." The catalyst for Thompson's essay is the 1995 publication of Anthony Julius's *T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism, and Literary Form*. In response to Julius' accusations, Thompson succeeds at resituating the debate over T. S. Eliot's anti-Semitism from apologia to an exploration of "the issues" that underlie Eliot's interest in Jews (an interest that Thompson describes as "very real," but that this reviewer would define as limited, at best) and of the poet's own complex sense of the constitution of identity—his attentiveness to the "facades" and "flux" of identities, and to the "discrepancies between conscious identifications and the disorderly realities [of nationality, geography, race, and belief] they are meant to describe."

Elisabeth Däumer

T.S. Eliot. *The Waste Land*. Michael North, editor. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001. A Norton Critical Edition Paperback. \$10.

Forty years ago, the editors of Harcourt Brace conceived the admirable idea of publishing a "critical" edition of *The Waste Land* in the form of a source book. The plan was to augment Eliot's own Notes with the complete citations attributed to them, and to accompany them with some seminal studies on the poem, all introduced by a scholar of the caliber of Cleanth Brooks, or even by Eliot, himself. No thought appears to have been given to producing a definitive version of the text. Alas, the idea was firmly put to rest by *The Waste Land's* author. Its still-birth became part of the legendary and sometimes uneven preferences Eliot exercised over the publication of the poem. However, the patience of Eliot scholars is now rewarded with Michael North's fine new edition of the poem published this year by W.W. Norton. Both those interested in the problems of the text and those in pursuit of the poem's critical heritage are well served.

North does not claim to be definitive in his treatment of either the textual or interpretative issues but his editing and compilation are efficient starting points for further

exploration of both these areas. The task of choosing the most representative writings about *The Waste Land* is not inconsiderable. North defines his critical agenda through the broad categories of "Composition and Publication," "Reviews and First Reactions," "The New Criticism," and, finally, "Reconsiderations and New Readings." The economy of the edition mandates that many important and familiar studies, from R.P. Blackmur (1928) to some offerings by present members of the Society, are acknowledged only as entries in the editor's excellent bibliography. In addition, North has annotated both the poetic text and the Notes through footnotes that inform many of the allusions and historical details that abound throughout the work.

Similarly, it is not possible for an edition so dedicated to treat the full range of the poem's textual issues. An editor of *The Waste Land* is largely left to his own devices to choose from the almost limitless number of cruxes that can be invoked. North has taken the 1922 Boni & Liveright edition as his base text or, in a more orthodox situation, what would be called a "copy text," were the rules of copy-text editing to apply. However, *The Waste Land* suspends clear distinctions between "substantive" and "accidental" or "formal" variants and expands the latter to problems of format and typography.

In his preface, "A Note on the Text," North records a short set of emendations (pages xii-xiii) in recognition that an apparatus with a comprehensive Historical Collation is beyond the scope of this edition. The emended readings to the poetic lines (although not to the Notes) are drawn eclectically from a few of the poem's more prominent authoritative versions. Although the resulting version does not entirely follow the Boni & Liveright base text in all aspects it is more than adequate for the purposes of this edition and underscores the point that *The Waste Land* is a reader's poem that authorizes the reader/editor to bring to the poem what he will.

Several editors have made much of the "extra line" (following line 136) that Eliot restored to the poem in his 1960 autograph London Library manuscript (arguably a published form of the poem). Few go so far as to claim canonized status for it, but the line is hardly inconsequential in the history of the poem. Although the manuscript presents a gray area, as North remarks, wherein Eliot's intentions "seem as muddled as the texts themselves," perhaps a reader-friendly editorial compromise could be achieved by citing the line through a footnote at the place in the text where it is implicated.

Two notable variants in the Notes also deserve attention: the reference to "Quebec County" that in 1962 was revised to read "Quebec Province" (Note to line 357) is not emended here; and, Eliot's 1932 emendation to the final Note, line 433 (434), appears here in its revised form, "our

equivalent to," but without any note indicating the change. A footnote addresses the problematic "carriage and insurance free" phrase (Note to line 210).

Each edition of the poem bears the responsibility of cultivating its own visual theater. Typographical strategies can have considerable influence on the way the poem is read. For example, the ostensible function of the line enumerations is to connect the poem with the Notes in a practical way without being obtrusive. North's decision to enumerate every fifth line rather than to follow the base text's enumeration in decades is a decided convenience to readers. However, had Boni & Liveright's typographical plan been exactly followed, these extra guideposts might have proven busy and distracting, as several anthologies have proven. In Boni & Liveright's original rough-hewn typography the enumerations were visually integrated with the wordings by dint of that edition's type count that often pushed the poetic lines out to or near the extremity of the right margin (with many line turn-overs). In some places the enumerations, for lack of space, were squeezed out, and registered on either the prior or the following lines, numbered accordingly. On the other hand, the relationship of the Notes to the poetry can be diminished when the enumerations, in whatever quantity, retreat to the far right margins, leaving a wide space between the numerals and the words, as is the case here and in many other editions. North also alludes to the critique of the line count raised by other editors. Since little in *The Waste Land* can be reduced to hard and fast definitions, this edition has been wise to leave the line count as Boni & Liveright (or Eliot) originally miscalculated it, although since 1952 it has become a standard feature of the American versions of the poem to raise the count to 434.

Another typographical issue is the editor's replacing Boni & Liveright's capital letters in the Part headings with upper- and lower-case lettering. The running titles, although wholly capitalized, also are printed in two sizes so that even there, like the headings, they suggest some sort of intonational emphasis that the reader should account for.

North introduces *The Waste Land's* intellectual tradition with Virginia Woolf's diary entry reporting Eliot's reading the poem aloud. Eliot himself advised readers seeking an understanding of the poem not to approach it intellectually but to assimilate its verbal qualities first through hearing it read. The burden falls upon the poem's typographic design to transmit the text to the reader as transparently as possible, and the modernist trick is to accomplish this without graphic distractions to the reader's visual "breathing." Accordingly, the present edition departs from the clutter of all the line turn-overs that were part of Boni & Liveright's solution to increasing the number of pages. It commendably prints the poetic text (no one has suggested reading

the Notes aloud) with no line turn-overs, at all, a feature that emulates Eliot's own typescripts. In general, the typography of this edition has been thoughtfully considered in serving the edition's diverse purposes.

It's of great interest that North provides a section of Eliot's post-publication reflections on his own poem. Few critical editions are in a position to illuminate this dimension of an author's work. The selected readings enforce the point, useful to literary and textual scholars alike, that Eliot, the poet, also served in the capacity of a lifetime reader of his own poem. A section of Eliot's own essays illuminates his literary and aesthetic advocacy that formed the milieu in which the poem was incubated. In these and other matters, North's critical universe is more comprehending of the complexities of *The Waste Land* than would have been possible forty years ago. Good ideas do improve with age, as this edition attests.

Joseph C. Baillargeon

**CALL FOR PAPERS
ALA ANNUAL MEETING, 2002**

As in other years, the Society will hold two multi-paper sessions at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Literature Association, to be held from May 30 to June 2 at Long Beach, California. Members wishing to read papers or make "innovative" presentations of interest to Eliot scholars, are invited to send usefully detailed abstracts or proposals to the President. Electronic submissions are preferred, and should reach him at <shyamal.bagchee@ualberta.ca> no later than 18 January, 2002. Individual presentation time is limited to twenty minutes. General information about the conference is available at the ALA website: www.calstatela.edu/academic/english/ala2/2002conf.html.

WEBSITE

It appears that I circulated an incorrect URL at the Annual Meeting. The correct Internet location is www.arts.ualberta.ca/~eliot soc. Apologies. Please visit the site, and let us know what you think of it.

Shyamal Bagchee

WASTE LAND COPY AUCTIONED

A copy of *The Waste Land* (Hogarth Press, 1923) sold at Sotheby's London on Tuesday, November 6, 2001 for what appears to be the record price for a copy of any Eliot title, £ 91,200 (approximately US \$134,000). This particular copy, owned by the Frederick B. Adams, Jr. estate, was inscribed by Eliot at the time of publication to Richard Aldington, his friend and sometimes critic. In addition to the inscription, it bears two inked Eliot emendations, that of "over" in lieu of "under" (line 62) and "carven" in place of "coloured," the generally accepted reading (line 85). These corrections can also be found in other Hogarth copies held by several United States research libraries. Although the Hogarth edition does not contain the line enumerations, someone, but probably not Eliot, also penciled in line numbers for half a dozen lines of the poem by way of quick identification with Eliot's elucidating Notes. Unfortunately, these non-authorial annotations also can be found in some of the copies held in the United States.

Joseph C. Baillargeon

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

At the annual meeting in September, the Board of Directors voted to grant Distinguished Service Awards to two members of the Society, Dr. Jewel Spears Brooker and Dr. Anthony Fathman. These awards will be formally conferred at next year's meeting.

For all matters regarding the content of the T.S. Eliot Society Newsletter, please contact the Vice-President and editor of the Newsletter:

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