AMERICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION
2003 CONFERENCE
MAY 22-25, 2003
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL, CAMBRIDGE

The Eliot Society is sponsoring two sessions at this year's ALA Conference in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

T. S. ELIOT I
Thursday, May 22, 12:30-1:50 p.m.

Chair: Lee Oser
College of the Holy Cross


“Burbank, Bleistein, and Herakleitos: A Close Reading of Eliot's Punctuation,” Debra San, Massachusetts College of Art

“Outside the Ivory Tower: Boston Sources of Eliot's Vision of the Street,” Elizabeth Brewer Redwine, Emory University

T. S. ELIOT II
Friday, May 23, 5:00-6:20 p.m.

Chair: William Harmon
University of North Carolina

“For us, there is only the trying: An Intertextual Reading of Ecclesiastes and Four Quarters,” Kinereth Meyer, Bar-Ilan University


“The T. S. Eliot and Modern Russian Poets,” Olga M. Ouchakova, Tyumen State University

For information on registering for the conference, go to the ALA website: www.calstatela.edu/academic/English/ala2.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 24th Annual Meeting of The T. S. Eliot Society
St. Louis, MO
September 26-28, 2003

The Society invites interested scholars to submit proposals for papers and presentations. Such proposals, dealing with any aspect of Eliot Studies, should be about 500 words in length, and indicate clearly the central direction or aim of the project/paper. These should be forwarded, most preferably in electronic form (MSWord or WordPerfect), to the President, Professor Shyamal Bagchee, Department of English, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada T6G 2E5; email: <shyamal.bagchee@ualberta.ca>. Please include also a brief bio-sketch. To be considered, proposals must be received by July 1, 2003. From among the graduate students and/or new PhDs whose papers are accepted, the Society will select some to receive its annual Fathman Awards. These awards are intended to help the winners by defraying part of the cost of attending the meetings, as well as to act as a professional recognition of their scholarly promise.
Peer Seminar on *The Waste Land*: call for position papers. This session will be limited to twelve participants, who will have submitted in advance position papers dealing with any aspect of *The Waste Land*. The papers should be no longer than five double-spaced pages. Papers by selected participants will be circulated to all members of the group ahead of the Annual Meeting. Participants will discuss, but not read, these papers at the Peer Seminar. Please send such submissions electronically to Professor Shyamal Bagchee <shyamal.bagchee@ualberta.ca> by July 1, 2003. Please include also a brief bio-sketch.

Please note: All presenters at the annual meeting will have to be current members of the Society by conference time; please consult the Treasurer, Professor William Charron <charrowc@slu.edu> for membership details. Society website is at www.arts.ualberta.ca/~e1iotsoc.

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**REVIEW**


Eliot’s run of nearly two decades, in the prime of his career, as editor of the *Criterion* represents a rather esoteric layer in an esoteric period. The shifting and ephemeral nature of periodical work is difficult to penetrate, and the years I spent studying the *Criterion* in graduate school left me sensing that I’d only seen the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Jason Harding has done a great service to modernist studies and revised contributions.” For a reader seeking in Harding’s exposition some clarification and guidance with regard to the accusations hovering around Eliot’s reputation since Anthony Julius’s *T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism and Literary Form* and Kenneth Asher’s *Eliot and Ideology* (both published by Cambridge in the late Nineties), Harding’s work is diffuse. In the end, though, he does offer a fair measure of delayed gratification.

The first two of the three large sections of the book sustain the focus on the journal’s milieu and composition, so that those interested specifically in Eliot’s ideas and maturation must approach from a rather oblique angle. Harding’s first section, “Periodical Networks,” presents four of the other substantial literary journals of the period—the *Adelphi*, the *Calendar*, *Scrutiny*, and *New Verse*—as foils by which to understand the role of the *Criterion*. Actually, the various editors of these journals are the foils for Eliot—and the chapters of this section each trace the intricacies of the editorial positions taken, with a thoroughness both fascinating and a bit muddling. Middleton Murry of the *Adelphi* is seen as an easy rival to give Eliot early polemical fodder in the “Romanticism vs. Classicism” debate of the early Twenties—a sort of willing but lesser sparring partner. Edgell Rickword of the *Calendar of Modern Letters* is cast as a more worthy and dangerous opponent (Harding frequently uses the terminology of warfare to lay out these relationships), battling with Eliot over big-time contributors like D. H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis. Harding uneartns many an intriguing “guerilla raid” between the two periodicals, and suggests that “…the stringency of the *Calendar’s* reviewing of contemporary work gave a salutary jolt to the *Criterion* and set the yardstick by which Eliot measured some of his own editorial standards.”

Harding’s treatment of *Scrutiny* and its editor, F. R. Leavis, is an intricate study of shared principles (and contributors) and sharp tensions between the two chief rivals of London’s literary journalism in the 1930’s. It is a disappointing chapter, since Harding tries to do too much, tracing the powerful influence of Eliot at Cambridge in the Twenties, with Leavis and I. A. Richards as his champions, then attempting to show Leavis’s growing dissatisfaction with Eliot’s journalism. Harding’s conclusions here seem irresolute, and Eliot is quite submerged in the maze of connections. Much more satisfying is the treatment of Geoffrey Grigson and *New Verse*, chiefly for the virile portrayal Harding offers of Grigson as “feared and waspish” and an irresistible attacker of the Sitwells. Eliot does come across as a bit pale when compared to Grigson’s flawed but free-handed style: “Too often assertion stood in place of argument, allied to a sort of reviewing practice closer to the sensationalism of Fleet Street journalism than the leisurely
urbanity of the higher journalism from which the *Criterion* took its cue." Shrewd indeed is Grigson's observation on the demise of the *Criterion*: "Wonderful as it was to be asked to write in the *Criterion*, even at the back end, I can't say that Eliot's review, since he was not that kind of editor or that kind of complete man or complete mind, ever glowed with an infectious healthiness of art." But this ultimately says more about Grigson than Eliot, as the whole first part of Harding's book fills the reader's mind with manifold names, small and great and interwoven, without necessarily providing the clues to Eliot's deeper intellectual self.

Part II of the book, "The Politics of Book Reviewing," presents a set of strengths and weaknesses parallel to Part I, as Harding delves deeply into the significance of four individual contributors to the *Criterion*. The focus on the intricate details of London literary society is, if anything, heightened in Part II, with the continued effect of a fascinating but gossipy tour. But insofar as the four featured writers are treated by Harding as specific variations and extensions of Eliot's own purposes, we do get some important glances at the editor. This is not so much the case with the first two chapters, "Herbert Read: Anarchist Aide-de-Camp" and "Bonamy Dobree: Agreeable Sceptic." Each of these men, who were especially active early in the *Criterion*'s run, is given a thorough "literary biography" by Harding, but their relations to Eliot are ultimately seen as stylistic and ideological in the narrow sense of how to navigate the ideas of the moment. Things begin to expand a bit in the two succeeding chapters, "Montgomery Belgion: Useful Irritant" and "Michael Roberts and Janet Adam Smith: New Signatures," as Harding starts to engage the larger ideological questions looming over Eliot's intellectual reputation. In the first instance, it is Belgion's voice which offers many of the reviews and remarks in the *Criterion* that seem proto-fascist or anti-Semitic. Harding argues that "Belgion continued to be a mainstay of the *Criterion*: an agent provocateur who could be relied upon to stoke up the coals of controversy on carefully selected topics." Apparently, Eliot gave Belgion significant license in this role, especially as the Thirties progressed, and Harding argues of Belgion's callousness toward the persecution of Jews in Germany that "the animus cannot be so easily displaced on to Eliot, still less to a journal as heterogeneous and multivocal as the *Criterion.*" One senses that Harding's intricacies throughout the book have served to undergird such a remark, and to defend Eliot from reductionistic charges. Likewise, the chapter on the husband-wife team of Roberts and Smith is Harding's attempt to show the breadth and favorable complexity of the *Criterion*'s political stance in the Thirties. Harding seeks to point "away from the misleading grand-narratives regarding the 'classicism' of the *Criterion* or the 'Marxism' of the Auden group and to consider instead how a shared sense of the urgent need for social reconstruction could uncover continuities, or at least a partial congruence, between those with affiliations to the Church of England or the Communist Party." The embedded purpose of these expositions starts to emerge, albeit swathed in nuanced relationships and posture: it looks as though Harding wants to defend Eliot, or at least the Eliot at the helm of the *Criterion*, by revealing the liberality of opinions beneath the conservative crust of the journal. Harding's thoroughness is a roundabout slam at those who would quickly reduce the journal and its editor to the most provocative common denominators.

But, ah, just when one's eyes are resigned to only the occasional direct glance at Eliot, and just when the jigsaw puzzle of British literary culture between the wars has all but numbed the brain with the multiplicity of connections, Harding delivers us a gift of clarity. Part III, "Cultural Politics," is an explicit and thoughtful move to the crux of Eliot's reputation, as Harding begins Chapter 9, "A Religio-Political Organ," by proclaiming, "Recent critical commentary has too often assumed that the political ideas formulated and debated in the *Criterion* can be dismissed as predictably conservative, even proto-fascist. On the contrary, a sympathetic consideration of the journal's treatment of political affairs unearths Eliot's editorial determination not to oversimplify difficult and complex areas of politico-cultural exchange." Harding is at pains to show Eliot's constant aim of getting above political and economic questions to the metaphysical questions at stake, a move often confused with narrow-minded reaction. Harding is not a naive defender of Eliot's relevance, though he perhaps overstates his reservations by claiming that the *Criterion* of the Thirties "resembled a ponderous Victorian interloper."

In his final chapter, "Defence of the West," Harding does doubly helpful work. In analyzing the *Criterion*'s complex relations with German intellectuals, Harding sees a consistent witness against Nazism in the formal treatment of German periodicals and reviews of German literature: "Given the *Criterion*'s record on these matters it is remarkable that recent critics have stigmatized the journal by suggesting that Eliot was sympathetic to the aims and methods of Nazism." At the same time, Harding recognizes Eliot's long acquaintance with the German man of letters Ernst Robert Curtius as symbolic of the overwrought self-understanding as "custodians and guardians of the European tradition" that the two shared. The apparent 'Myth of Catastrophe' hovering over Western civilization in the wake of Spengler seems to have forced both men to become "taken up in the cause of a politically
and culturally conservative response to threatened anarchy.” This endeavor is identified by Harding as both admirable and ineffectual; Eliot shared with Germany’s leading humanists “a mission to preserve Europe’s cultural heritage at a time of spiritual aridity, communism, fascism, Nazism, and the spectre of war.” But the myopia of the endeavor is laid bare, at least in Eliot’s case, when Harding points out that “The attempt to mobilize a cohort of European periodicals in the defence of a Virgilian penates, for all the heroic grandeur attached to such a project, seems a curiously misguided undertaking. The Criterion, with its exiguous circulation, elegiac tone, and lack of realpolitik, could never have established the validity of the ‘European idea’ for those beyond the ambit of its Latinate catholica traditio.”

That is a critique that is well-earned and well-measured, and one feels at the end that Harding has crafted his platform through his care and thoroughness. Eliot is left standing, rather solidly it seems, even in the wake of the journal’s demise, and Harding leaves it to the scholars of Eliot’s life and ideas to pick up the mantle. We know the place and purpose, verities and limitations of the Criterion much better as a result of Harding’s work. And I think we know Eliot better as well, or at least have some inviting angles of approach.

Michael R. Stevens
Cornerstone University

DATING MARY TREVELYAN

Erwin Welsch

Mary Trevelyan was Eliot’s friend from the 1930s until his second marriage in 1957. They were communicants at the same church, shared an interest in church affairs, and frequently dined together. She was intelligent and had an outgoing and appealing personality that resulted in her receiving several important posts in the fields of education and Christian social service. She also, as the account by her nephew Humphrey Carpenter relates, had a motherly temperament which she applied to him, to the foreign students who were her frequent dinner guests, and perhaps to Eliot himself. The relationship was sufficiently close that she may, at one time, even have perceived of herself as a likely second Mrs. Eliot. Perhaps because of the comparative paucity of other primary sources about this period, Trevelyan’s unpublished diaries and a memoir about Eliot entitled “The Pope of Russell Square, 1928-1958,” have become standard sources for distinguished biographers such as Lyndall Gordon and Carole Seymour Jones, who both used it extensively.

The survival of Trevelyan’s accounts was largely accidental. After his aunt’s death, Carpenter found a part of the typed manuscript in a heap on the floor of her apartment and salvaged it. In it Trevelyan dates her friendship with Eliot from the summer of 1938, a date widely repeated by biographers, and her love for him from four years later. She also relates many intimate details from the diary that she maintained in the late 1940s and 1950s. Still, as Carpenter notes, her works should be used with caution because Trevelyan was sometimes relating from memory events that had happened a number of years earlier. A recent discovery suggests that Carpenter’s cautions are well observed for a recent discovery shows that she met Eliot in 1936 and not 1938:

Unfortunately the form of inscription does not provide a deeper understanding of Eliot’s relationship to Trevelyan in 1936. Eliot, in contrast to the forbidding picture that is frequently painted of him, was quite willing to sign his books upon request and to give them generously. For example, Eliot sent Carpenter, whom he knew but slightly, an inscribed copy of Old Possum. Eliot also signed for
colleagues, acquaintances, relatives and, it seems, anyone who asked. His choice of inscription varied from, perhaps, the most common form with the author's name lined through on a title page and a simple “T. S. Eliot" written beneath, or "for/ Stephen Spender/ from T.S.E.," to a more expansive personal example, such as one to Mrs. John Carroll Perkins, whose garden slides, according to the Harvard catalog, Eliot had given to the Royal Horticultural Society, "with affectionate good wishes." The pattern of inscriptions suggests that Mary Trevelyan, although not yet a friend, was at least an acquaintance two years before generally attributed in current sources.

Erwin Welsch is emeritus History Librarian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He and his wife, Carol, now reside in Southern California. They have read and collected Eliot for forty years. Dr. Welsch has published articles and books on a wide variety of topics and is currently working on the topic "Eliot and the Censors."

T.S. ELIOT’S REPUTATION IN RUSSIA

Olga M. Ouchakova

The reception of modernist works in Russia in the 20th century is an interesting tale that has not been told. This episode in literary history is closely connected with the political and cultural history of Russia. Many works of Western modernist writers have their own Russian stories. For instance, the history of translation and publication of Joyce's Ulysses reflects all the dramatic events in modern Russian history. The first translator of Ulysses was arrested and died in Stalin's concentration camps. The publication of Joyce's novel became possible only after Perestroika. Ulysses in Russian was published in 1989 in the journal Inostrannaya Literatura (Foreign Literature) with a foreword by a distinguished Russian scholar, D. S. Likhachev. It was not only a cultural event but a sign of liberalization in Russia.

The dynamism of Eliot's reception in Russia was also caused by social and cultural changes. Eliot has his own place in the 20th century intellectual history of Russia. There are several aspects to be considered in this connection: the personal contacts of Eliot with representatives of Russian culture; the influence of Eliot on 20th century Russian literature; the publication of the Russian translations of his works; and the reception of Eliot in Russian literary criticism.

The first translations of Eliot's poems appeared in the 1930's. They were done by M. Zenkevich, a poet close to symbolist circles, and I. Kashkin, one of the founders of the modern Russian school of translation. These translations were included in two anthologies of Western poetry: Anthology of New English Poetry (1937) and Poets of America: The 20th Century (1939). These books were published in a limited print run and are bibliographical rarities. It is interesting that Eliot was acquainted with one of the most influential Soviet critics of modern Western literature of that period, Prince D. Svyatopol-Mirskiy, one of the first Marxist scholars analyzing works by modernists, who lost his life subsequently. In her book Painted Shadow, C. Seymour-Jones describes Svyatopol-Mirskiy's relations with Bloomsbury: "the wrinkled, watchful aristocrat, with crooked yellow teeth, while flirting with Vivienne was also gathering material for a Marxist analysis of Bloomsbury, which would ridicule its members after his return to Russia" (481). Among the first translators of Eliot there was Samuil Marshal, one of the best Russian translators of English poetry (his translations of Shakespeare's Sonnets are still considered unsurpassed); he translated some poems from Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats.

From the 1920's to the 1960's Eliot's works were known only to a quite small group of Russian intellectuals. The greatest Russian poets of this period knew Eliot's art quite well. The first collection of his works in Russian translation was published in 1971, a year which could be seen as the starting point of Eliot's broader reputation in Russia. The book was published by the Moscow publishing house "Progress" and was titled The Waste Land. Andrey Sergeyev, a poet, translator, and friend of Joseph Brodsky, was the translator. The print run of the book was comparatively small for Russia, and most copies were available only at libraries. Sergeyev's translations are still regarded as the best Russian translations of Eliot's poetry, communicating the spirit, thought, imagery and melody of Eliot to a Russian reader. Through this book Eliot was introduced to a wide range of Russian readers in different parts of the country.

Subsequently, there was a gap in publishing Eliot's poetry in Russian. He was not a poet appealing to official tastes, and his poetry could not be included in the social realist canon. The situation changed at the beginning of the 1990's, the post-Perestroika period. Different editions and new translations of Eliot appeared, including Selections (St. Petersburg, 1994), The Rock; Selected Poems (Moscow, 1997), and Murder in The Cathedral (St. Petersburg, 1999). At the turn of the century two new Russian translations of Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats appeared in Moscow and Petersburg, which could be interpreted as a sign that Eliot as a poet for the Russian intellectual elite had been turned into a poet popular even among teenagers who
love Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber’s Cats. One can also find different versions of Russian Eliot on the Internet.

The first translations of Eliot’s criticism appeared in the 1970’s and 1980’s initially as separate articles in anthologies of contemporary British and American criticism. In 1997 a Russian translation of The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism was published. This edition also includes the most important of Eliot’s essays such as “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” “Hamlet,” the first two parts of Dante, and others. So by the beginning of the 21st century most of Eliot’s poetry, two plays (Murder in the Cathedral and The Cocktail Party) and a number of critical essays were translated into Russian.

The first critical essays on Eliot appeared in Russia in the 1930’s and 1940’s and were written in the spirit of what is now called “vulgar sociology,” presenting a sharp criticism of Eliot’s political, social and religious views. Many of these works were published in the newspaper of the Union of Writers of the USSR, Literaturnaya Gazeta. The following are some of the works of this kind:


This bibliography (with my translation of the titles) perhaps gives a sufficient idea of the vituperative treatment of Eliot in the Soviet period. He was introduced as a figure with extremely reactionary views, a singer of the waste land and hollow men and the degradation of the capitalistic system.

The first serious critical articles and some dissertations appeared in the 1970’s. Various aspects of Eliot’s poetry, drama and criticism were analyzed by such scholars as M. Ginsburg, M. Shvidkoy, T. Krasavchenko, A. Zverev and others. There is not enough space here to list these works, but I would be happy to provide the bibliography to any Eliot scholars who are interested.

In recent years, some works of Eliot were included in the list of recommended readings for the course “History of 20th Century Foreign Literature” at some Russian Universities. This meant that Eliot was considered a classic writer of 20th century literature and included in the “Russian” Western Canon. The year 2000 was marked by the publication of the first Russian monograph on Eliot, published by the St. Petersburg University Press. The author is a St. Petersburg scholar, A.A. Astvatsatur’ev, and the title of the book is T. S. Eliot and His Poem “The Waste Land.” Annually a few articles and conference papers concerning various aspects of Eliot’s works are presented in Russia. Graduate and postgraduate students in different Universities are doing research in this field. The author of this paper has delivered a special lecture course “T. S. Eliot and 20th Century Culture” for the students of Tyumen State University. So it can be stated that Eliot studies in Russia are progressing.

There have been some amateur performances of Cats, which is quite popular now in Russia. At the present moment in Moscow there is a run of Murder in the Cathedral: A Rehearsal staged in the theatre U Nikitskih Vorot (“At the Nikitskiye Gates”) by the director Mark Rozovskyi. This performance is based on texts by Eliot, E. Roberts, and M. Rozovskyi. It is called a performance-action and is dedicated to the memory of a priest Alexander Men, one of the most popular Orthodox priests actively preaching in public, who was murdered several years ago. Eliot was one of the modern Christian writers and thinkers to whom he appealed in his works. Some documentary materials connected with the life, death, and mission of Alexander Men are used in the performance.

A fair amount of recent Russian music has been inspired by Eliot (pieces by Sofya Gubaidullina, for example). Quotations from Eliot are frequently used in the titles of newspapers and magazines articles. Many new poets on the web seem to know Eliot and write some variations on the themes of the maestro (for example, a poem by Konstantin Dmitrienko, Metaphysical River Heliosis Sp., has an epigraph from Ash-Wednesday and many allusions to The Waste Land, The Hollow Men, etc.). The film Tom and Viv was shown on...
the national channel with Russian translation. All these facts witness that T. S. Eliot's art has become a significant factor in the Russian cultural setting today.

Dr. Olga M. Ouchakova is Professor of Foreign Literature at Tyumen State University in southwestern Siberia. She has published a number of articles on Eliot in Russian journals, and is a long-standing member of the Eliot Society. She is currently the recipient of a Fulbright Foundation research grant and is studying the interplay between Eliot's writing and Russian culture. Her e-mail address (until July 15) is <ouchako@gvsu.edu>.

MODERNISM/MODERNITY
SPECIAL ISSUE ON ELIOT

The editors of Modernism/Modernity are accepting submissions for a special issue to be entitled "T. S. Eliot in the 21st Century."

Please submit essays (25-30 pp.) by January 31st, 2004. Mail two hard copies along with a disk (with the essay in MS Word or Word Perfect format) to:

Professor Cassandra Laity
Editor, Modernism/Modernity
Department of English
Drew University
Madison, NJ 07960

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Members are invited to nominate individuals for the following positions and awards:

Honorary Membership: The Board of Directors may confer Honorary (non-dues-paying, lifetime) Membership on friends and students of T. S. Eliot, distinguished for service in perpetuating the memory of the poet and knowledge of his work (total not to exceed ten). Board Members may not be nominated during their terms of office. Currently, the Honorary Members are:

Mrs. T. S. Eliot
Robert Giroux
A. D. Moody
Andre Osze
Christopher Ricks
Grover Smith
Marianne Thormählen
Leonard Unger

Distinguished Service Award: The Board of Directors may confer Distinguished Service Awards on members who have rendered the Society notable service of long duration or distinction. Up to two awards may be conferred annually.

Nominations for any of these positions or awards should be sent by June 15 to the Supervisor of Elections:

Dr. Linda Wyman
621-6 Woodlander Dr.
Jefferson City, MD 65101
e-mail: wymanl@lincolnu.edu

To pay dues, inquire about membership, or report a change of address, please contact the Treasurer:

William Charron
709 S. Skinker, #401, St. Louis, MO 63105
Ph: (314) 863-6550;
email: charrowc@slu.edu

Persons having business with the Secretary are advised to contact him directly:

David Huisman
1134 Giddings SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506
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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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