

Time Present

The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society

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www.luc.edu/eliot

Top: Jewel Brooker, Jayme Stayer, Seamus Heaney.
Bottom: Lyndall Gordon, Jennifer Formichelli, Will Gray, Gail McDonald.
Photos courtesy of Jayme Stayer.

Eliot Summer School Calls It a Beginning

Will Gray

They came from a dozen nations and at least three generations, and when the nearly 60 students arrived at the T. S. Eliot International Summer School in London, expectations were already high. It was no wonder, given the magnificent program assembled by Ronald Schuchard, the School's Director. Every colleague he had contacted to join the Summer School's leadership was present. The capable ranks included many of the acknowledged masters of Eliot scholarship—Jewel Spears Brooker, Lyndall Gordon, Christopher Ricks—and other revered scholars (Denis Donoghue, Barbara Hardy, Gail McDonald, A. D. Moody). A few younger stars of Eliot studies were there, too, each of them doing double duty as seminar coordinators and as co-editors of Eliot's upcoming Prose volumes (Anthony Cuda, Jennifer Formichelli, Jason Harding). Growing between these groups were contributors who resembled and did not resemble any other kind of Eliot scholar: the poets. Throughout the week, School attendees were treated to talks and readings from the likes of Robert Crawford, Mark Ford, Seamus Heaney, and Paul Muldoon.

Located at the Institute of English Studies in the University of London, the first Eliot Summer School has set a high mark for the years to come. Plenary sessions featured both bold readings and gentle overlaps among the speakers. Heaney opened the School with a meditation on poetry as creative act and Eliot's "underlife of the ear and the imagination." Crawford, only two days later, considered "Marina's" musical architecture and its imaginative generation of Eliot's daughter, making Heaney's theme unknowing, unknown, his own. Schuchard and Hardy studied and re-studied *The Waste Land*, the former as a heartbroken love poem and the latter as a dust-strewn lyric written by a real man she had encountered once, shyly, in an elevator. Denis Donoghue took up the whole of Eliot's thoughts on Shakespeare in one lecture, while Sir Christopher Ricks confined his penetrating gaze to one page of criticism on *Othello* in another. Gordon and Brooker paused to listen for Eliot's unattended moments, which in his later poetry may also be the ones that resonate with Julian of Norwich. Mark Ford portrayed *Burnt Norton's* Eliot as a gentle archeologist, Gail McDonald pondered *East Coker's* intellectual humility, and other speakers connected Eliot with several of his contexts—language and Englishness (Formichelli), Ezra Pound (Moody), Jacques Maritain (Harding) and the *Athenaeum* (Cuda).

Seminars set a high standard, with topics ranging from an introduction to the poet and his work to studies in a focused era of Eliot's criticism, poetry or drama. Students brought experience just as broad, creating a congenial environment for learning and dialogue.

(continued on p. 8)



“Cows” Published

T. S. Eliot’s “Cows,” a 34-line work of light verse, has appeared in its entirety in the London *Times* (see the Eliot Society’s website, <http://www.luc.edu/eliot> for a link). Eliot wrote “Cows” in 1937 for the children of his friend and colleague Frank Morley. It voices his fear and dislike of the animals, expressed in such quatrains as this:

You may reply, to fear a Cow
Is Cowardice the rustic scorns;
But still your reason must allow
That I am weak, and she has horns.

Further details about the poem’s origin were included in *Arena: T. S. Eliot*, the new documentary broadcast on the BBC in June (see p. 8 in this issue).



Society People

Anderson Araujo has accepted an offer to join the tenure-track faculty in the Department of English at the American University of Sharjah, near Dubai. He is very excited by the new prospects for research and travel that this position promises to open up. Joining him are his wife, Amanda Snyder, and their two cats, Ollie and Zoe. His most recent articles and reviews have appeared in *Canadian Literature*, the *Sunday Times*, and various essay collections.

Will Gray is a PhD student at the University of St Andrews, where he is writing a thesis on T. S. Eliot and the Metaphysical poets. He has just been hired as a Lecturer in the English department at Clemson University, where he will begin teaching in a matter of days.

Balliol College, Oxford, reports that Christopher Ricks “has been awarded the honour of Knight Bachelor in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List, issued on Saturday 13 June 2009. The Knighthood is awarded ‘for services to scholarship.’” [*OED*: “Knight Bachelor, a knight of the lowest but most ancient order; the full title of a gentleman who has been knighted (without belonging to any one of the specially named ‘orders’).”]

Leon Surette’s *The Modern Dilemma: Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot and Humanism* was published by McGill-Queen’s University Press in 2008. He has recently been awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Research Fellowship Travel Stipend to be taken up later this year at the Harry Ransom Center (University of Texas). His project is a book entitled *Dreams of a Totalitarian Utopia: Literary Modernism and Politics*, and its principal subjects are T. S. Eliot, Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound, and Lawrence Dennis.

Public Sightings

“**Wasted Land.**” [Title of Walter Krin’s front-page review of *Methland: The Death and Life of an American Small Town*, by Nick Reding. *New York Times Book Review* 5 July 2009.]

Discussing the first-class amenities he enjoyed while working for the *Wall Street Journal*, Roger Cohen writes: “So began a pleasant interlude involving large dollops of caviar and free-flowing iced vodka aboard Pan Am a mile above the Amazon. Nobody stinted in those days. **Nobody, heeding Prufrock, measured out their life—or the sturgeon eggs—with coffee spoons.** Times have changed in the newspaper business.” [“Pan Am Dies, America Lives.” *New York Times* 17 Dec. 2008.]

“On his way back to Michigan, [Russell Kirk] read [Flannery] O’Connor’s book and was excited enough to recommend her to **T. S. Eliot, his London publisher.** Eliot replied that he had seen a book of her stories while in New York City and was ‘quite horrified by those I read. She certainly has an uncanny talent of a high order but my nerves are just not strong enough to take much of a disturbance.’” [Brad Gooch, *Flannery: A Life of Flannery O’Connor* (New York: Little, 2009): 272.]

“Compared with all the grand things that people have done with poems—justifying the ways of God to men, **shoring fragments against their ruins**—telling one’s life story in more or less factual terms might seem to be a very modest goal. But Lowell was obsessed by the idea that this could be done without sacrificing poetry’s ambition, its power and sweep” (108). [Dan Chiasson on the recently published correspondence between Robert Lowell and Elizabeth Bishop. “Works on Paper,” *New Yorker* 3 Nov. 2008.]

[On the University of Chicago.] “Dead-eyed stares were perhaps the genre for which the university’s environs were best known. People walked down the main drag, 57th Street, with eyes pointed straight ahead, or—depending on the degree of stoop cultivated (or occurring naturally)—at 10 to 30 degrees south of the horizon. It was a given that you would not acknowledge anyone. Ever. Hyde Park sidewalks were patrolled by **Waste Land shades**: I had not thought that death had undone so many, and so many ill dressed. You walked at a swift pace, looking straight ahead, maneuvering around fellow pedestrians, fallen children, or muggings-in-progress with benumbed exactitude.” [Jessica Burstein, “Rudeness Loves Company.” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 7 Nov. 2003]

T. S. Eliot Society
30th Annual Meeting, 25–27 September 2009

Friday, Sept. 25

*Charles H. Duncker Hall,
Washington University*

Board of Directors Meeting

9:00–12:00

Peer Seminar on 10:00–12:00

Mid-Century Eliot

*Chair: Marina MacKay,
Washington Univ.*

No auditors, please

Lunch ad lib.

Session I 1:30–3:00

*Chair: Jewel Spears Brooker,
Eckerd College*

John Morgenstern, Oxford Univ.

“Elephants in Captivity”: Jules
Romains and T. S. Eliot

Patrick Query, U.S. Military Acad.

A Surprising Legacy: Eliot in the
Poetry of Richard Berengarten

Ernesto Livorni, Univ. of Wisconsin

Eugenio Montale, Translator of
Eliot: A Question of Belief

Memorial Lecture 3:30–4:30

*Chair: William Harmon, Univ. of
North Carolina*

Ronald Bush, Oxford Univ.

“Intensity by association”:

Eliot’s Passionate Allusions

Reception 4:30–5:30

Dinner ad lib.

BBC Film Screening and

Open Discussion

8:00–10:00

Chair: David Chinitz, Loyola Univ.

Chicago

Arena: T. S. Eliot

Saturday, Sept. 26

*Saint Louis Woman’s Club,
4600 Lindell Blvd.*

Session II 9:15–10:45

*Chair: Jayme Stayer, John Carroll
Univ.*

Chris Forster, Univ. of Virginia
Sin and Song: Bawdy Folk Music
and *The Cocktail Party*

Erin E. Templeton, Converse College

“Who is the third who walks always
beside you?”: Complexities of
Authorship in *The Waste Land*

Michael Cotsell, Univ. of Delaware
Brothel Mouth: The Language of
Erotics and Disgust in Eliot’s
Poetry

Session IIIA 11:00–12:30

*Chair: Cyrena Pondrom, Univ. of
Wisconsin*

Brigitte N. McCray, Louisiana
State Univ.

The Intolerable Wrestle: Plath’s
Ariel and Eliot’s *Four Quartets*

Edward Moran, Ind. Scholar

Hyam Plutzik’s “For T.S.E.
Only”

Nancy K. Gish, Univ. of Southern
Maine

Beyond “Was There a Scottish
Literature?”: T. S. Eliot in the
National Library of Scotland

Session IIIB 11:00–12:30

*Chair: Benjamin Lockerd, Jr.,
Grand Valley State Univ.*

William Blissett, Univ. of Toronto

Mr. Eliot’s Other List: Faber
Books on Religion

Stefano Maria Casella, IULM
Univ., Milan

“There is no Sight without Fire”:
Eliot’s “The Burnt Dancer”
and the Flight of the Soul

David N. Ben-Mer, Buffalo State
College

“The patient is no longer here”:
The Horizons of Eliot’s Homing

Society Lunch 12:30–1:45

Scholars Seminars 2:30–4:30

*Chairs: Nancy Hargrove, Miss-
issippi State Univ.; and
William Harmon, Univ. of
North Carolina*

No auditors, please

*Home of Melanie and Anthony
Fathman, 4967 Pershing Place*

Society Dinner 6:00

Sunday, Sept. 27

*First Unitarian Church,
5007 Waterman Blvd.*

Session IV 11:00–12:00

*Chair: Frances Dickey, Univ. of
Missouri*

Aaron Bibb, Univ. of Wisconsin

Women and the Absolute in
Eliot’s Early Poetry

Leon Surette, Univ. of Western
Ontario

T. S. Eliot, Philosopher: Josiah
Royce, William James, and
F. H. Bradley

Eliot Aloud 12:15–12:45

Chair: Linda Wyman, Lincoln Univ.

Announcement of Awards

A reduced rate of \$124 is being
offered by:

Parkway Hotel
4550 Forest Park Avenue
St. Louis, MO, 63108
(314) 256-7777 [contact:
Richelle Tirone (314) 256-7728]

For economical transportation to
the hotel, take the MetroLink from
Lambert Airport to the Central
West End station at 410 S. Euclid
Ave. The hotel is just ²/₁₀ mi. from
the station.

Anita Patterson. *Race, American Literature and Transnational Modernisms*. Cambridge UP, 2008.

Reviewed by Paul Jay
Loyola University Chicago

Anita Patterson's new book exemplifies the transnational turn in literary and cultural studies, arguably the most significant development in these fields since the rise of "theory" in the late 1960s, a turn that is dramatically remapping the geography, history, and vocabulary of our work. While this turn has registered in literally every area in the humanities and social sciences, it has been particularly pronounced in modernist studies. In a recent article in *PMLA*, for example, entitled "The New Modernist Studies," Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz present a thorough overview of how modernist studies has expanded to include alternative traditions and to weave those traditions together into an examination of the transnational production and circulation of modernist literature, a literature (especially in the Americas) historically engaged perhaps more than we had realized with the forces of imperialism, racism, colonialism, and hybridization. Patterson's study is an ambitious example of this transnational turn in modernist studies, for it seeks to examine how a "shared history ... of colonial settlement, empire-building, slavery, cultural hybridity and diasporic cosmopolitanism" contributed to "the emergence, and revisionary adaptation, of modernist idioms in the Americas" (1). Her book seeks to expand the geography of U.S. and European modernisms to include the Caribbean, demonstrating how "transnationalism informs our understanding not just of 'black,' 'postcolonial,' or 'ethnic' writers, but of American modernism more generally" (1-2).

While her book makes a major contribution to rethinking modernism as a transnational and New World practice, some caveats about the title are in order. "Modernism" in Patterson's book is treated rather more narrowly than its title would suggest, a fact that ends up qualifying some of its larger claims. While the book announces its engagement with race and transnational modernisms in American "literature," it actually deals exclusively with poetry, even when it treats writers like Poe and Wilson Harris who are well known for their prose fiction. The book has virtually nothing to say about modernism in fiction or drama, and so its examination of the aesthetic craft and subject matter of modernism is relatively limited. A more apt title might have been *Race, American Poetry, and the Transnational Poetics of Modernism*.

This book will be of particular interest to readers of this newsletter given the central role Patterson asserts T. S. Eliot plays in the genealogy of the transnational modernisms she traces. Eliot is everywhere in this book, and the modernism

of the title is largely his, a fact that makes the book an interesting one for Eliot scholars but necessarily limits the range of modernisms it treats. It seeks to update Eliot by insisting that he was all along interested in geographies and a set of issues that have just now moved to the fore in contemporary criticism and theory. Patterson is here trying to do for Eliot and hybridity what David Chinitz did for Eliot and popular culture—that is, to challenge us to rethink Eliot's engagement with questions about national identity, frontier experience, race, and hybridity, to begin to think of Eliot not simply as an "American" or a "British" or even a "modernist" poet but as a "New World poet" (2), one whose work "instantiate[s] his awareness of hybridity, an awareness reflecting his own close knowledge of the frontier" and who was therefore "of signal importance to subsequent generations of black poets in the Americas." (Chapters in the book are devoted to tracing Eliot's influence on Langston Hughes, Wilson Harris, and Derek Walcott.)

Patterson's treatment of Eliot is two-pronged. She argues that if we recognize how Eliot's interest in Poe, both at the levels of craft and subject matter, can be traced to Poe's "cosmopolitanism" and his resistance to national "biases" (41), and how Eliot's interest in Whitman's "tacit acknowledgment of the hybrid cultural legacy of the American prairies" shaped the poet's rendering of frontiers in a poem like "The Dry Salvages," we will see that Eliot was actively engaged with both the production and contradictions of hybridity in the new world.

According to Patterson, Eliot, influenced by what she calls "the frontier poetics" (46) of Laforgue and Whitman, produces poetry in which "the frontier landscape figuratively embodies not only states of mind but also the hidden, regional history of colonial settlement and the hybrid cultural legacy recorded by names of places in the New World" (92). With this new version of Eliot in place, Patterson, using Eliot's influence on Langston Hughes as her pivot point, argues in the rest of the study for the centrality of Eliot and his modernist poetics to a "New World" Caribbean tradition of modernism that runs from Hughes through Jacques Roumain, Wilson Harris, and Derek Walcott. Hughes, Patterson insists, takes Eliot's modernist poetics from Harlem to Haiti (the title of Chapter 3), while Harris in Guyana and Walcott in St. Lucia adapt their studies of Eliot to the production of poetry that tries to balance fidelity to the local with a craft rooted in Eliot's modernist poetics.

All of this is provocative in the best sense of the word, although I often found Patterson's arguments about Eliot's engagement with "New World" hybridity and border experiences unconvincing. She helps us to see how Eliot was at times interested in frontiers and liminal spaces and struck by the diversity of New World populations, but it remains difficult to see how Eliot could be construed as having explored in a sustained way issues now central to writers like Walcott

Patterson's sweeping overview helps to open up whole new areas of research and critical reading.

or Harris or critics associated with the transnational turn in American and modernist studies. However, Patterson's sweeping overview does help to open up whole new areas of research and critical reading. In this sense the book is groundbreaking, for the lines of influence and the range of issues she unearths should be of significant value to scholars interested in following out the implications of the transnational modernist studies Mao and Walkowitz survey.

Patterson is also a wonderfully resourceful scholar and a very careful reader whose attention to craft is particularly strong. She is very good at calling attention to poetic intersections linking European modernism with the emergence of a New World poetics, although sometimes these intersections remain necessarily speculative. Her discussion of Poe's "hostility to nationalist bias in criticism" (11), for example, and how it might have appealed to Eliot's transnationalist bent, contributes to her suggestive linking of the poetry of Poe and St.-John Perse with Eliot's "commingling of French and American influences" (13) in a discussion of the emergence of Francophone Caribbean modernism. Throughout her study, in sections like this, Patterson is particularly attentive to the vexing problem of emphasizing transnational influences at the expense of an engagement with local issues—on the part both of poets and of the critics who study them. There are times, however, where her close readings of particular poems do not seem obviously connected to the larger issues she is exploring, and others when the book seems to lapse into a formulaic kind of influence study. At moments like these the reader can temporarily lose sight of the book's larger arguments. There are conclusions at the end of each chapter that are clearly meant to bring us back to these arguments, but they are very brief and too often seem tacked on. Some readers will also miss a substantive conclusion, for the book ends with a very short "Epilogue" that does not contribute much to what we have already learned. Still, this is an important and innovative study, essential for Eliot scholars and anyone interested in the new transnationalism in modernist studies.



Patricia Chu. *Race, Nationalism and the State in British and American Modernism*. Cambridge UP, 2006.

Reviewed by Paul Robichaud
Albertus Magnus College

In her study of the relationship between race, nationalism, and the state, Patricia Chu focuses on the ways in which modernist writers respond to restrictions placed on the individual by the administrative machinery of modern governments. In her introductory chapter, she argues that modern liberal democracy brought the popular reform movements of the nineteenth century more firmly under the control of state institutions such as courts, schools, and hospitals. In expand-

ing the franchise and granting citizens more personal freedom, the twentieth-century state increasingly relied on highly regulated institutions to exercise its authority. Chu defines her project as an exploration of how "the state's role in creating and sustaining administrative identities and subjectivities" affects "cultural production in the first half of the twentieth century" (14–15). In studying this issue, her work offers a reconsideration of various critical commonplaces in modernist studies.

To crystallize the issues at stake in her discussion, Chu's first chapter considers a 1932 film, *White Zombie* (dir. Victor Halperin), which brings to the fore masculine anxieties over "free will, agency, and authority" (4). In the film, a wealthy white Haitian planter named Beaumont lures a young couple, Madeline and Neil, to his mansion on the pretext of offering Neil a job. Beaumont, however, arranges for Madeline to be kidnapped by the white zombie master, Murder Legendre (played by Bela Lugosi), who employs the undead in his mill. Legendre gradually persuades Beaumont to let him turn Madeline into a zombie. Chu sees the film as a metaphorical representation of Haiti's colonial status, in which a foreigner transforms Haitians into zombies at a time when actual Haitians retained their formal independence but were effectively ruled by the United States. In this instance, Haitian autonomy succumbs to American administrative pressure. The conclusion of *White Zombie* features a wedding between Neil and a recovered Madeline, whose consent replicates that of the citizen to the modern state, a voluntary act of submission that contrasts with Legendre's rule over his zombie workforce. Chu's reading is a nuanced one that involves sustained attention to dialogue and filmic technique, informed by a variety of theorists (including Weber and Marx), and portions of Haiti's penal code.

Readers of Eliot will likely be most interested in the final third of the chapter, in which Chu traces Eliot's changing judgment of Kipling to illustrate his search for a meaningful role for the modern man of letters. Eliot's initial opinion of Kipling's work, in 1919, was that it was the product of historical contingency, lacking the unifying viewpoint of a Joseph Conrad. By 1941, however, Eliot's introductory essay on Kipling praises his verse for giving expression to the "most representative mind" of its historical moment (qtd. in Chu 48). Chu argues that Eliot's shifting critical view of Kipling reveals that he "was beginning to define how the man of letters might claim political authority" (49). This authority involves, among other things, adjudicating between the competing cultural claims of regions and nation-states to help maintain cultural balance. Chu persuasively claims that "Eliot's interest in Kipling's travels in India and in his retreat to explore the mythology of Sussex are consistent with his (and other modernists') interest in the primitive, anthropological and regional as provocative routes to articulating the essence of industrial modernity" (53–54).

Chu's second chapter negotiates its way through the fraught critical arguments about the relationship between modernism and empire, before turning to the fiction of

Katherine Mansfield and Sara Jeanette Duncan. Reading Mansfield's "The Woman at the Store" (1911), Chu skillfully shows how the discourses of imperialism are exposed as inadequate for representing the colonial life of working-class New Zealanders. Duncan, a trans-colonial writer, has been read both as a Canadian and as an Anglo-Indian novelist. Chu suggests that her fiction engages directly with the problem of representation and imperial power. Far from being a naïve realist, Chu claims, Duncan exposes the "excesses" of bureaucratic discourse by exploiting realist conventions.

In the third chapter, one of the strongest in the book, Chu offers a reading of Rebecca West's *Return of the Soldier* (1918), focusing on the problem of national identity as a category that both frees and subjects the individual citizen. As a war novel, *Return of the Soldier* lends itself well to a study of the relationship between citizen and state. For Chu, West's novel "lays bare the way subjectivity is created and gendered by the nation state" (94). By setting the novel alongside the work of Woolf and Wyndham Lewis, Chu shows how West engages with issues of nationality and gender that also decisively shaped the work of her contemporaries. West's exploration of the treason of William Joyce is analyzed as a test of how state categorization can be complicit in identifying treason among its citizens.

Ellen Glasgow's *Barren Ground* (1925) is singled out in the fourth chapter as a work that resists both traditional high modernism and cosmopolitan feminist modernism. Chu sees Glasgow's work as employing realist conventions to narrate the modernization of the South through the experiences of her female protagonist, Dorinda. Marriage and federal agricultural laws are two of the institutions Dorinda must negotiate in her rehabilitation of Old Farm. Chu offers an illuminating reading that contrasts Dorinda's preoccupation with fertility with that of Eliot in *The Waste Land*, while Jean Toomer's *Cane* sheds light on the role of the state in defining gender relations.

Chu returns to Haiti in the final chapter, which begins with an analysis of how D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* fantasizes a white male triumph over the injustices of federal state institutions. This overtly racist film is read alongside Zora Neale Hurston's ethnographic study of Haiti and Jamaica, *Tell My Horse* (1938), which Chu provocatively claims is likewise shaped by "the relation of cultural nationalism to modern forms of government in a newly post-colonial world" (150). Hurston draws attention to the practice of lying in Haitian culture, distinguishing between the varieties of lying practiced by different social classes. Such ethnographic practice obviously serves American imperialism in the Caribbean, but Chu argues that Hurston's reportage also challenges that imperialism by presenting native counter-narratives to official history.

Patricia Chu's focus on the problem of modern agency in relation to state institutions yields some interesting readings, and suggests that modernist style was only one of many

ways writers and filmmakers sought to call state authority into question.



Peter Lowe. *Christian Romanticism: T. S. Eliot's Response to Percy Shelley*. Cambria, 2006.

Barry Spurr. *See the Virgin Blest: The Virgin Mary in English Poetry*. Palgrave, 2007.

Reviewed by Keiji Notani
Kobe University, Japan

Peter Lowe's book has a peculiar fervor, which I think results from the author's deep love for the two poets he discusses. Behind an academic interest I sense a more personal concern of the author to harmonize the two poetic experiences in his mind. I say this not to disparage the work; on the contrary, I believe it is almost meaningless to conduct literary research without some existential encounter between the student/scholar and the author(s). Apparently Lowe studied Shelley in his master's program (indeed, his knowledge of Shelley is remarkable). My impression is that the young Lowe was enchanted by the Romantic poet, and then came upon the more mature poet, whose religion seemed to solve the philosophical problems Shelley and Lowe shared. This book seems the record of Lowe's struggle to salvage Shelley from a Christian standpoint. (Some may recall that C. S. Lewis began his lecture "Shelley, Dryden, and Mr. Eliot" by remarking: "Few poets have suffered more than Shelley from the modern dislike of the Romantics.") It is in a sense natural that there should be no mention of Hulme and Murry, who are crucial figures behind Eliot's attitude towards Romanticism. Rather, Lowe focuses on these two seemingly contradictory poets and tries to reconcile them. Such an approach is necessary for his purpose, and we cannot complain about the narrowness of scope.

Eliot found Shelley's "ideas repellent" and asserted (in one of his Norton Lectures at Harvard) that "the man was humourless, pedantic, self-centred, and sometimes almost a blackguard." We know that Eliot's repulsion for an author almost always hides his sympathy or at least his bewilderment at finding affinity with himself. In fact, he never penned a criticism on a writer to whom he could remain indifferent. His critical theorizing and works were, to borrow his own expression, "epiphenomenal" of his tastes, and sprang "from direct experience of those authors who... profoundly influenced" him. Gregory Jay once described this intriguing trait as "the modernist tropology of self-fashioning." Eliot's critical essays employ "a rhetoric of condensation, displacement, projection, and identification in their accounts of the literary past."

Lowe agrees with the fairly common view that Eliot saw in Shelley a dangerous precursor whom he had to over-

come. He notes that Eliot had to “cure himself of Shelley’s influence.” Eliot’s Harvard “lecture could be seen as an attempt at exorcism.” It was an occasion “to publicly criticize, and distance himself from, the Romantic heritage.” Eliot’s harsh criticism originates in his espousal of the Anglo-Catholic faith. But before making this scathing attack, Lowe maintains, Eliot shared with Shelley a concern with the plight of modern man: the problem of subjectivity imprisoned in self-consciousness. Lowe quotes from the Clark Lectures Eliot’s clever expression: “Mankind suddenly retires inside its several skulls.” Eliot’s Prufrock is a type of modern man incapable of communication and human love.

So far so good. Further, Lowe presents his contention that Eliot eventually accommodated Romantic thought and work into his own work. The author argues that by virtue of faith, which he envisages as “a purgatorial process,” Romanticism became for Eliot “something to be revisited and transcended, not closed off as if it were a hazardous substance that might contaminate Eliot’s new life.” “Christian Romanticism,” the title of the book, signifies “Eliot’s mature relationship with Shelley and the other Romantic poets,” and Lowe claims “we must see the older Eliot as one who subsumes Romanticism into his Christian faith.” Lowe maintains that Shelly, long repudiated as an immature man, was “re-admitted as a fellow pilgrim.” I find this thesis not fully convincing. My copy of *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* carries the preface from the 1964 edition, in which Eliot, just one year before his death, endorses what he wrote more than thirty years before. Eliot avows that “after re-reading them twice” he found the lectures “still valid.”

That said, the book has merits, aside from being a good case study of Eliot’s pattern of self-fashioning. Lowe’s appreciations of “Prufrock” and “Alastor,” for instance, clearly show that the author possesses a keen sensibility, and the elucidation of Dante’s influence on both poets (chapter 4) can stand on its own as a good critical work. I enjoyed Lowe’s occasional observations, like his location of the source of pain “not so much in desire as in memory” for the inhabitants of the Waste Land: “It is the act of looking back on past moments when happiness seemed possible, and their inability to move beyond these reveries that keeps the inhabitants of Eliot’s ‘unreal city’ locked in a personal state of torment.” I also like his attention to Prufrock’s wish to be reduced to a pair of “ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of *silent* seas” (Lowe’s emphasis), and reading in that silence his inability to communicate with other persons and its consequent torment.

Barry Spurr’s book is obviously the outcome of long and wide reading. Although it is primarily a work of criticism, it also serves as a compendium of the presence of the Virgin Mary in English Poetry. The title, which is a borrowing from Milton’s “On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity,” proclaims the author’s intent, which is “to survey and analyze the representations of ‘the most famous woman in his-

tory’ in poetry in English, from the Middle Ages to the present, focusing on how she has been portrayed in theological, historical, cultural, sexual, and aesthetic terms, by men and women, from a range of different perspectives, over a period of some six centuries, in a variety of poetic forms.” This sounds rather daunting, but Spurr performs the task with success and in less than 250 pages, including notes, bibliography, and index. An “Introduction” of some forty pages helps the reader to become familiar with Marian theology, and specifically with the belief that Mary is the second Eve, who functions as Christ’s helper in a new creation. The introduction also traces the history of Marian devotion. It is not a simple history of general decline, as expected from the progress of secularization, but entered a new phase in the Catholic Revival of the 19th century. Marian devotion has survived into our own time, and not only Catholics but also non-Catholic poets have contributed to the tradition. The author even refers to the Beatles’ interest in the Virgin. He includes such major poets as Donne, Crashaw, Herbert, Milton, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, E. B. Browning, Rossetti, Wilde, Hopkins, Yeats, Eliot, and Auden—and this is by no means an exhaustive list! In addition, he introduces less well-known poets. I personally find Nahum Tate’s “Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation” particularly interesting. Following Spurr’s lead, we come to see there are a variety of Marys, from the medieval and theologically orthodox “mediatrix” to the modern Mary, who is addressed by a psychologically troubled or overly self-conscious human petitioner. Mary has become a more familiar, closer figure in the modern imagination.

Eliot criticizes modern man’s loss of transcendental perspective and his psychological preoccupations. Spurr appreciates Eliot’s Marian poems. Yes, Eliot is a Marian poet as well as a Dantean poet. After pointing out that Eliot’s pre-conversion references to women are largely negative, Spurr proceeds to observe in the “Hollow Men” the “possibility of redeemed life,” which is “mediated through a vision of the “the perpetual star / Multifoliate rose.” But the most important Marian poem in Eliot’s oeuvre is, of course, *Ash-Wednesday*, the pivotal work of Eliot’s conversion to Anglo-Catholicism. Here, the image of women is reversed from one of temptation (“the silken girls bringing sherbet”) through the mediation of Mary, which accomplishes his reconciliation with womanhood. Spurr evaluates the poem as “the greatest Marian poem, in English, of the twentieth century.”

I believe that Spurr’s book, encased in beautifully finished and durable covers, will be long used, along with Orby Shipley’s much older anthology, *Carmina Mariana* (1893), which inevitably lacks counterparts to Spurr’s final chapters, “Modernist Mary” and “Mary Today.” Spurr’s aim is to assist, in a highly secular culture, “a reawakening to the significance of one unique woman” who has been inspiring poets through the centuries. I find that ambition admirably fulfilled.

John D. Morgenstern

On 6 June, the BBC program *Arena* aired a new documentary on the life and legacy of T. S. Eliot. Drawing on Mrs. Eliot's private scrapbooks, newly conducted interviews, and the BBC's own extensive film and audio collections, *Arena's* most recent literary biopic offers an unrivaled video portrait of one of the twentieth century's most influential writers. Expertly edited, the film opens with modern-day footage of a red double-decker bus destined for London's Russell Square, advancing to the tune of Bob Dylan's "Desolation Row." As soon as the red bus disappears, it is replaced by a 1920s forerunner continuing the journey across London Bridge in black and white. From the first montage of this visually rich documentary, it is clear that the real journey on which the viewer has embarked will traverse cities and decades without losing sight of the present.

With the reedy voice of Dylan's harmonica still rocking in the background, a film of Eliot rolls in which he asserts his own immortality most vigorously. "It's no more use trying to be traditional," Eliot declares, overpowering Dylan's guitar, "than it is trying to be original. Nobody invents very much, but there is one thing to be said for contemporary poetry that can't be said in favor of any other, and that is that it is written by our contemporaries." When Dylan's lyrics place Eliot with Ezra Pound in the captain's tower of the Titanic, it is apparent that director Adam Low set out to document more than the life of a single man: Low's film takes on the legend Eliot left in his wake, and the ways in which it continues to direct our contemporaries.

In this spirit, a chorus of eminent cultural voices and intimate friends read from Eliot's verse, or assert its continued relevance, throughout the film. Seamus Heaney reads from "The Fire Sermon" to an aerial panorama of the Thames before reciting his own "Stern," a tribute poem to Eliot and Ted Hughes. Here as everywhere, the film offers visual interpretations of Eliot's poems, none of which is more powerful than the *Waste Land* montage of WWI soldiers trudging through the scarred Normandy countryside, spliced with ancient and modern footage of typists and Margate seagulls. These readings are accompanied by testimonies from poets Stephen Spender (filmed in 1971), Craig Raine, Hope Mirrlees (1971), W. H. Auden (1965), Emanuel Litvinoff, and Dannie Abse, all of whom attest to writing in Eliot's shadow. Similarly, writers Jeanette Winterson, Kingsley Amis (1988), Ronald Harwood, and Tom Stoppard (filmed at the dedication ceremony of the T. S. Eliot House at the London Library) reach back to their childhoods to recount seminal encounters with Eliot's work. Critics Sarah Churchwell, Jim McCue, Ronald Schuchard, Sir Frank Kermode, I. A. Richards (1971), Anthony Julius, and Christopher Ricks elucidate Eliot's poetry with clarity and precision, setting the works against the background of Eliot's life and the controversies that have surrounded his reputation in the postmodern era. At the same time, friends and family, including Mrs. Valerie Eliot (partly filmed in 1971), Faber colleagues, Lady Spender, Mrs. Henry Ware Eliot (1971),

the poet's cousin Abigail Eliot (1971), and his Goddaughter Susanna Smithson (née Morley), lend their recollections to a broader profile of Eliot the man.

Perhaps due to the wealth of new material generously provided by Mrs. Eliot, the most poignant aspect of the film is its thorough treatment of the life Eliot shared with his second wife. Shots of Christmas cards, private photographs, yellowed newspaper clippings, menus marked in Eliot's hand, and—in the manner of Jules Laforgue—a sample of wallpaper taken from the Eliots' Kensington flat provide an intimate collage of the last eight years of the poet's life. Concerning the research he conducted for the film, Low commented to *Time Present* that "it was a revelation to see how sprightly and affectionate [Eliot] actually was. He quite obviously relished every moment of his marriage to Valerie, and was greatly surprised by his own happiness. There was something extremely touching," Low observed, "in his need to record every aspect of their life together." An even greater surprise to Low was the number of invitations Eliot saved to remember festive dinners and ballroom fanfare. Eliot could be, at times, Low noted, "a party animal."

There will be a screening of the Arena biopic during this year's annual T. S. Eliot Society meeting in St. Louis.

Eliot Summer School

(continued from p. 1)

The week also included day trips to the three English sites of *Four Quartets*, as well as a spirited walking tour of Eliot's London led by Summer School Co-Director Wim Van Mierlo. Paul Muldoon read his poems and reminisced about his discovery of Eliot, and a special edition of the Josephine Hart Poetry Hour delivered fresh readings of Eliot's early poems as performed by Anna Cartaret, Seamus Heaney, Jeremy Irons, and Dominic West. The highlight of the evening was a reader's theater production of the "Agon" from *Sweeney Agonistes*. It left the audience high-spirited, both seeing and hearing Eliot in new ways. The T. S. Eliot International Summer School is well on its way to doing as much and more for current and new generations of readers, and we at the Eliot Society wish it all the best.



Call for Papers

A one-day conference, "T. S. Eliot's Visions and Revisions," will be held at the University of St. Andrews (Scotland) on Wed., October 24, 2009. The day will offer a panel of distinguished poets reading from and talking about Eliot's work, as well as keynote lectures from Professors Robert Crawford (St. Andrews) and Hugh Haughton (York). Those interested in presenting a paper are invited to send an abstract and brief bio to Will Gray at wg34@st-andrews.ac.uk by August 15.

**American Literature Association
Boston, MA, May 21–24, 2009**

Wilde & Eliot: The Artist as Critic, Revenger, and Thief

Eliot and Wilde appear to be, in deeply determining ways, opposites. Wilde, however, famously claimed at the end of “The Truth of Masks,” that “A truth in art is that whose contradictory is also true.” And, equally famously, Eliot chose as one of the epigraphs for “Burnt Norton” the Heraclitean fragment that can be translated “The way up and down [or forward and back] are one and the same.” With an eye on these compatible statements and on the elements mentioned in the title, the paper moves forward and back to describe the writers’ up and down lives, careers, and fates in literary history in order to bring out similarities, arguing that Wilde has more in common with Eliot than either has with Tennyson or Wordsworth before them.

Although Eliot publicly expressed aversion to important aspects of Wilde’s work and thinking, the influence and affinity are compelling and revealing. This is particularly the case with regard to the role of artist as critic, the place of the revenge tradition (the Gothic), the dialogue form (as well as other dialogical elements), and borrowing (as overtly central to aesthetic processes) in the work of both writers. The paper’s goals include reinterpreting Wilde’s place in our understanding of literary modernism’s development and contributing to our sense of Eliot’s relation to nineteenth-century precursors. There is brief attention to Beckett as a third figure whose surprising relation to language helps to bring out a resemblance in the tendencies of both Wilde and Eliot.

J. P. Riquelme
Boston University



The Russian Revolution and the Literary Public Sphere in Eliot’s *Criterion*

During the long period of his editorship at the *Criterion*, Eliot’s views on communism developed markedly. As he came to think of it as a major antagonist, Eliot employed a subtle strategy for contending with communism in the literary public sphere. Believing that literature and the arts no longer had an absolute public priority, but that both art and God transcended the contingencies of political life, Eliot tackled communism via an editorial policy which combined different points of view, including strident anti-communism such as that of Henri Massis, but also the more restrained approach of his reviewer of Russian Periodicals, John Cournot. Eliot himself was aware of the glamour and intellectual prowess of Leon Trotsky, whom he discusses directly in some of his most interesting statements in the journal. This paper assesses the deftness and sophistication of Eliot’s attempt to create, inhabit and influence a literary public sphere

in historical circumstances which were evidently overwhelming.

David Ayers
University of Kent



T. S. Eliot and Empathy

My presentation argues that Eliot suffered not from a lack of empathy, as some commentators have maintained, but rather from a heightened readiness for empathy, which made him extraordinarily attuned to the requirements, the perils, and the drama of empathy. There is much evidence to suggest that Eliot was familiar with the growing body of thought on empathy in both aesthetics and psychology. His early poetry testifies to his interest in psychological processes several years before he embarked upon his dissertation. Eliot was also familiar with the studies of empathy in aesthetics—in particular those of Theodor Lipps, the German philosopher and founder of the School of Psychology in Munich, who in 1897 introduced the term *Einfühlung* (to feel yourself into someone or something) to describe what happens in the process of aesthetic appreciation. Eliot, who would have been able to read Lipps in German, discussed Lipps’ work in psychology in his dissertation. In addition, Lipps’ thinking about *Einfühlung* was influential for art historian Wilhelm Worringer’s *Abstraction and Empathy* (first published in 1908 as *Abstraktion und Einfuehlung*), which Eliot encountered in the writing of T.E. Hulme, who used Worringer’s tract to bolster his own aesthetic preference for a modernist classicism. Taking note of the many periods in the history of art that produced geometric, or what he calls abstract art, Worringer stipulated the existence of two defining aesthetic urges: the urge toward empathy, analyzed by Theodor Lipps, and the urge toward abstraction. Moreover, speculating on the reasons for the predominance of one impulse over another, he proposed, in Jewel Brooker’s apt summary, that periods with settled epistemology produce representational art controlled by the impulse to identify with, and delight in, one’s object, while periods of uncertain epistemology tended to produce art controlled by the impulse toward abstraction.

I argue that Eliot’s poems engage the psychological and aesthetic meanings of empathy as deeply interrelated processes and capacities. Despite his commitment to a modernist aesthetic of abstraction and impersonality, Eliot never lost sight of the centrality of empathy both in human relationships and in the aesthetic experience of art. Thus in his decidedly modernist poetry, abstraction, rather than opposing empathy—as Worringer’s model suggests—serves to complicate it, foregrounding its limits and liabilities while upholding it as a central artistic and human value. While rejecting an emphasis exclusively based on feeling—the sort of empathy that Hulme associated with Romanticism and that Eliot debunked, to a certain extent, in “Portrait of a Lady”—

Eliot endorsed an empathy based on kinesthetic mirroring and immediate, often startling sensory experience. The point of artistic empathy, for Eliot, was to reach, as he wrote in “The Metaphysical Poets,” not the heart—the author’s, a character’s, or the reader’s—but “the cerebral cortex, the nervous systems, and the digestive tracts” (66). I conclude with a close reading of “Preludes” as an example of a poem that both compels and complicates the reader’s empathy with a city and its alienated, automatized inhabitants.

Elisabeth Däumer
Eastern Michigan University



“Such a civilized rebel”: Eliot, Tradition, and Revision

This paper examines T. S. Eliot’s commitment to revision, which he took to be a means to remake himself, his texts, and literary history itself, in order *not* to deny their substantiality but to test their vitality through a constant process of reinvention. Eliot’s early prose makes a profound and ambitious argument for revision’s connection to cultural, personal, and textual identity, and he put this argument into practice in *The Waste Land*. I historicize this commitment to revision by placing it within three contexts: the transformation of print culture in the early twentieth century, the development of what Pascale Casanova calls the “world republic of letters” in her book of the same name, and the structure of an economy based on the pursuit of positional goods and other forms of symbolic capital (e.g., avant-garde status). When Eliot arrived in London, he was intent on securing a position within both the avant-garde and English literary history, opposed as those two institutions might seem to be. This challenge was complicated by his émigré status. He reconfigured the criteria by which inclusion in both spheres would be determined, so that the ability to revise literary tradition became the surest indication of avant-garde credentials. His investment in revision should be seen not only as a personal philosophy, but also as a product, in part, of the increased ability of modernist writers to revise their work and of the need for distinction in the literary marketplace.

James Stephen Murphy
Harvard University



Sweeney and Philomela: T. S. Eliot’s Odd Couple

Two radically different figures emerge as significant forces in T. S. Eliot’s poetry at precisely the same time: Sweeney, the vivid, physical, perhaps brutal Irishman whom many of Eliot’s readers have loved to hate; and Philomela, the brutalized maiden of Greek legend whose story is a key part of the mythic scaffolding that underlies the poem “Sweeney Among the Nightingales.” The implied connection between the two continues in *The Waste Land*, when

Sweeney’s visit to Mrs. Porter prompts a recurrence of Philomela’s strangled attempt at speech: “Twit twit twit / Jug jug jug jug jug jug / So rudely forc’d. / Tereu.” The association concludes in the verse drama *Sweeney Agonistes*, which once again places Sweeney in the company of “nightingales” (this time named Doris and Dusty) but shows him claiming the poetic voice for himself (“I’ve gotta use words when I talk to you”) while fixating on the murder of a woman—suggesting, perhaps, a violent reclamation of the tools of articulation that Philomela had threatened to co-opt.

In this paper I propose to explore the unlikely connection between these two figures, to discuss why I believe they emerged in Eliot’s work at the same time, and to show how they worked together to allow the poet to overcome a specific problem pertaining to the link between suffering and artistic production.

Denell Downum
Suffolk University



Now, Here, and Nowhere: The “intersection of the timeless moment” in *Four Quartets*

“Here, the intersection of the timeless moment / Is England and nowhere.” In a slight stutter of “nowhere,” we might hear “now” “here”—the presence of a lyrical nowhere that the speaker of *Four Quartets* cannot ever seem to grasp. Caught between the timeless and time, the poem is noticeably concerned with the performance of its own discursive moment, its own now and here. Yet such a moment always seems to be filtered through that paradoxical pattern of time, which insists we understand the now through the eternal, but only gives us access to the eternal now. The opening of the poem presents a present that isn’t present: “Time present and time past / Are both perhaps present in time future.” The present is a gift-wrapped illusion of a unified now and here, where what we have are actually two distinct presents—one temporal and the other spatial. It is this problematic here and now and the failed possibility of the lyric subject existing within it that Eliot’s poem addresses.

Most critics understand the final union of rose and fire as a mythic harmony of time and timelessness, of meaning and experience. But the ending is not about theological or epistemological truth—it is still about a lyric speaker repeating his lost words: “...no other sound was / Between three districts whence the *smoke arose*” (emphasis added). What happens when the fire and the rose are one? Eliot provides the answer: “burnt roses.” Rather than finding an ultimate unity in the difference between particular histories and eternal times, I argue that the poem necessarily circles around the continual failures of the timeless and its own inability to capture the present, especially as these two anxieties coincide in a ghostly lyric voice that continually meets itself.

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If you are aware of any 2008 citations that do not appear here, please contact Jayme at jayme.stayer@gmail.com. Omissions will be rectified in the 2009 listing.

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