

Time Present

The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society

NUMBER 84

FALL 2014

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Mark your calendar for
our next Annual Meeting,
September 25–27, 2015

The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot, Vol. 1: Three Views

Time Present is pleased to present a new series of short “views” responding to essays in *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition*, whose first two volumes appeared this summer. We asked Robert Crawford, Timothy Materer, and Barry Spurr to write about one or two prose pieces of their choice by way of guiding readers into the first volume (*Apprentice Years: 1905–1918*, edited by Ronald Schuchard and Jewel Spears Brooker). Next issue: Marjorie Perloff on Eliot’s three “Reflections on Contemporary Poetry.”

“The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual”

By Robert Crawford

As is well known to Eliot scholars, during the second part of the Harvard academic year 1913–14 the poet worked hard as a graduate student of philosophy while he was courting Emily Hale. Outside the classroom, he attended a succession of concerts and operas; he danced and skated. Inside the classroom he studied ethics in Philosophy 20d with William James’s former student, Professor Ralph Barton Perry; and for the whole year he participated in Philosophy 20c, a seminary in logic overseen by Josiah Royce, who had chosen as the topic for that session a comparative study of various types of scientific method. Royce had appointed as “recording secretary” for the seminar Harry Todd Costello, whose PhD Royce and Perry had examined and whom Eliot knew from Harvard’s Philosophical Club. Costello was a recent holder of a Frederick Sheldon Fellowship, which provided money for educational travel to Europe; on 31 March 1914 the President and Fellows of Harvard appointed Eliot as a Sheldon Fellow in Philosophy. So Royce’s seminar schooled Eliot in several ways for his future work.

Of the many philosophical papers he wrote during this last year of his studies at Harvard, one in particular stands out for readers of his later poetry. Its importance has been recognized for decades, and some parts of it were published by the late Piers Gray in his 1982 monograph, *T. S. Eliot’s Intellectual and Poetic Development, 1909–1922*. Guided by Gray’s work, I published further extracts in my book *The Savage and the City in the Work of T. S. Eliot* (1987), and I have drawn on the manuscript paper and Eliot’s other unpublished writings in my 2015 biography, *Young Eliot*. However, the number of people who have read this paper has remained small, because (like most of Eliot’s student essays) it was never published in its entirety. Now, thanks to the ongoing publication of Eliot’s *Complete Prose: The Critical Edition*, and thanks to the admirably judicious editing carried out by Ronald Schuchard and Jewel Spears Brooker, we can read this paper on our

computers: in fact, we can come to appreciate aspects of it that earlier readers may have missed in the archives, and (as a result of meticulous scholarly footnoting) we can understand its background to a degree that may rival—or even, on occasion surpass—the scholarship of its twenty-five-year-old author.

Eliot's paper was written for discussion in Royce's seminar on scientific method, and dealt with the interpretation of primitive ritual. *The Complete Prose* makes available this paper along with several related shorter pieces from this course. In a seminar that included researchers from several backgrounds, discussing everything from "protoplasm" to Einstein's "relativity" and its "new analysis of physical space and time and their relation" with regard to "simultaneity," Eliot on 9 December 1913 read a paper asking the question, "On what terms is a science of religion possible?" Beyond that, he wondered, "Can it be treated wholly according to the methods of sociology?" (106). Drawing on Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl, he brought to bear also his reading in psychology and anthropology. As the generous yet precise new editorial footnotes elucidate, works such as E. B. Tylor's Victorian classic *Primitive Culture* and other anthropological tomes are alluded to; but Eliot critiques these, arguing that "What seemed to one generation fact is from the point of view of the next a rejected interpretation" (109).

He sees the roots of religion as ultimately inscrutable. It may be possible to reconstruct an "external order in ritual and creed and in artistic and literary expression," but only approximately, and examination of the elements of that order moves us immediately from unstable "fact" into interpretation. "The actual *ritual*" is part of "a complex which includes [the] previous stage's interpretations of the ritual of the preceding stage, and so on back indefinitely" (113). Here, I think, the editors have changed very slightly what Eliot wrote; in manuscript this reads (with no definite article) "previous stages' interpretations of the ritual," but the editorial intervention may be seen as clarificatory. Though Eliot's interest here was in the way "fact" melts into interpretation, and interpretation into metaphysics," later this sense of ritual, artistic expression, and religious forms being layered one on top of another in a possible order that went "back indefinitely" would be part of the underpinning of *The Waste Land*, and of other poems (113).

By 1913 Eliot had been reading parts of anthropologist J. G. Frazer's vast "comparative work," *The Golden Bough*. He was in awe of it, but critical of how it imposed interpretations on its data:

I have not the smallest competence to criticise Dr. Frazer's erudition, and his ability to manipulate this erudition I can only admire. But I cannot subscribe—for instance to the *interpretation* with which he ends his volume on *The Dying God*. He is accounting for the magical rites of spring festivals: (114)

At this point he seems to have read to the seminar group some of Frazer's words from the opening of his section "The Magic Spring." Cleverly, in presenting Eliot's paper, the new edition supplies from Frazer's text the passage that in manuscript Eliot indicates only by the note, "P. 266." This means that, whereas earlier readers in the archives had to break off to look up the passage, now readers of the online prose can have an experience that is much closer to that of sitting listening to Eliot in his seminar. After supplying accounts of various vegetation ceremonies, including Indian ones involving Siva and Parvati and European ones featuring "the May Bride, Bridegroom of the May, and so forth," Frazer (on his page 266) opines,

The general explanation which we have been led to adopt of these and many similar ceremonies is that they are, or were in their origin, magical rites intended to ensure the revival of nature in spring. The means by which they were supposed to effect this end were imitation and sympathy. Led astray by his ignorance of the true causes of things, primitive man believed that in order to produce the great phenomena of nature on which his life depended he had only to imitate them. . .

Convinced such speculations are unjustified in terms of philosophical method, Eliot exclaimed pointedly to his 1913 seminar group that "This volume appeared as recently as 1911!" (118, n. 25). The editors (whose annotation helpfully includes lines which Eliot deleted from his paper) include this exclamation only in their footnote, with the result that readers of the main text may miss a little of the flavour of Eliot's original delivery. Yet we do hear the graduate student arguing, too, that other thinkers such as Durkheim, more methodologically up to date, also blur lines between fact and interpretation, and between individual and group consciousness, in ways that are untenable. A science of religion is impossible, however much craved: "I do not think that any definition of religious behavior can be satisfactory, and yet you must assume, if you are to make a start at all, that all these phenomena have a common meaning; you must postulate your own attitude and interpret your so-called facts into it, and how can this be science?" (115).

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The 35th Annual Eliot Society Meeting

By Roderick Overaa

The Society held its 2014 meeting from 19 to 21 September in St. Louis, where members gathered to share their scholarship, discuss the poet's life and work, and socialize with friends old and new. Seminars and panels were held in the august Collegiate Gothic buildings of Washington University, the sumptuously appointed St. Louis Woman's Club, and the historic First Unitarian Church. Of particular note this year were Ronald Schuchard's poignant reflection on Valerie Eliot's legacy, updates on the project to assemble Eliot's complete prose works, and Sarah Cole's Memorial Lecture.

The conference opened on Friday morning with three seminars, including a peer seminar on Eliot and History led by T. Austin Graham of Columbia University. After lunch, conference participants assembled in Washington University's Duncker Hall for the opening lecture, "The Legacy of Valerie Eliot and the Future of Eliot Studies."



Giuliana Ferreccio, Jewel Spears Brooker, Tony Cuda, and Anita Patterson

Schuchard began by discussing how Valerie Eliot achieved her "schoolgirl dream" of becoming Eliot's secretary, which eventually led to their marriage in 1957. At the heart of the address was an assessment of Mrs. Eliot's role as the poet's literary executrix, with especial emphasis upon how she tactfully managed to honor her deceased husband's wishes while working tirelessly to assemble his writings—including a wealth of new material—for the benefit of scholars. On a related note, on Saturday Jewel Spears Brooker and Anthony Cuda updated members on the first two volumes of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot*, which can now be accessed online in the

Project Muse database. Under the general editorship of Professor Schuchard, the series will eventually comprise eight volumes containing the entirety of Eliot's collected, uncollected, and unpublished prose.

On Friday afternoon Sarah Cole delivered her keynote lecture, "In the Cave, in the Valley, in the Cathedral, in the Body: Scales of History in Eliot and Modernism." Professor Cole of Columbia University has written extensively on Eliot and modernism, including a reading of *The Waste Land* in the context of World War I in



Memorial Lecturer Sarah Cole

her recent book *At the Violet Hour: Modernism and Violence in England and Ireland*. Cole used Eliot's debate with H. G. Wells over the role of history to foreground a larger discussion of the varying modes of history in both Eliot's work and in modernism more generally.

On Saturday, after a day of rigorous presentations by scholars ranging from our newest members to our past president David Chinitz, Melanie and Tony Fathman once again graciously welcomed members to their home for a garden party and homemade taco dinner. The Fathman Prize (awarded each year to a graduate student or recent PhD for exceptional work) was announced just after dinner, and for the second consecutive year the Board decided to split the prize, this time between Mary Kim for her paper "I Don't Hear Any Voices: The Changing Allusions of T. S. Eliot," and Ria Banerjee for "Dismantled Modernity: Built Spaces in the Onstage Eliot and Beyond." The evening wrapped up with a spirited sing-along around the Fathman piano. On Sunday at the First Unitarian Church, the weekend concluded with the traditional reading aloud of the poet's works.



Ria Banerjee and Matt Seybold

Crawford continued from page 2

In Royce's seminar such an exasperated question may have been received as an astute demolition of Frazer's philosophical assumptions, but to the Eliot who went on to return to these ideas in his 1923 piece, "The Beating of a Drum," the importance of interrogating apparent fundamentals of religious behavior would bear fruit in some of his greatest poetry, particularly in *The Waste Land*. Now, as a result of painstaking editorial labors, any readers with access to Eliot's online prose can piece together just how it was that the student Eliot worked out some of the ideas and lines of investigation that would help undergird some of his most astonishing verse.

The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition is an enormous boon to scholars. So long as you have access to it online, you can download individual essays. Present and future generations will owe great debts to Spears Brooker and Schuchard for their shrewdness, tenacity, and sheer, generous scholarship. Yet I do hope that the online "volumes" will appear as published books since this will make for a far more enjoyable reading experience for those of us who want to spend a long time perusing Eliot's prose, and who want to leaf through the oeuvre, rather than simply heading for individual pieces. This online edition is great to share with students in teaching, but the twentieth century's greatest poet-publisher deserves paper publication as well as this invaluable digital resource.

Eliot's Seminar Reports on Immanuel Kant, 1913

By Timothy Materer

Students of Eliot have seen the graduate student papers collected in Volume I of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot* only through excerpts cited by such scholars as Jeffrey Perl (*Skepticism and Modern Enmity*) and Rafey Habib (*The Early Eliot*). The full texts of these papers are now available in Eliot's *Apprentice Years, 1905–1918* with thorough annotations by Ronald Schuchard and Jewel Spears Booker. The editors are right to believe that the new volumes will have a "transformative effect" on Eliot studies. In my case, the first graduate student papers in the volume, written when Eliot was a twenty-four-year-old Harvard graduate student, gave me a renewed appreciation of the continuity of Eliot's thought.

These papers are the reports Eliot wrote on Immanuel Kant in March, April, and May of 1913 for a seminar from Charles M. Bakewell, a visiting professor from Yale University. They reveal Eliot's philosophical beliefs in their formative stages. In treating the traditional problem of appearances and reality, he concludes not only that no clear distinction between them can be made but also that the attempt to do so merely leads to confusing speculations. In "The Relation of Kant's Criticism to Agnosticism," Eliot accepts Kant's distinction between phenomena, or appearances, and noumena, the thing-in-itself that constitutes reality. However, the "nucleus of empirical reality" appears less stable to Eliot than to Kant, and Eliot insists, "we have no claim to any absolute starting-point, for each possible starting point is made possible only by previous hypothesis" (46). Throughout his academic papers, Eliot constantly repeats his conviction that any description of reality is actually an interpretation.

In 1940 Eliot will write in "East Coker" that every attempt in "Trying to use words . . . Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure." In 1913 Eliot argues that the "thing-in-itself" as we conceive of it "dissolves upon analysis into a term with relations; and each term, and each relation, is further soluble into a new term with relations" ("Report on the Ethics of Kant's Critique of Practical Reason," 49). Any perception we have, whether of a thing or an idea, comes to us as interpreted by our mind and then related to the perceptions of others. Moreover, analysis of these relations necessarily changes the nature of the relations. Eliot's eventual alienation from the "inevitable circularity of metaphysical reasoning" ("Report on the Kantian Categories," 34–35) is seen in the poem he sent to Conrad Aiken on 25 July 1914:

Appearances appearances he said
I have searched the world through dialectic ways
I have questioned restless nights and torpid days
And followed every by-way where it lead
And always find the same unvaried
Interminable intolerable maze. (*Letters*, I, 50)

Yet Eliot's early papers also show how he found his way within the maze. In discussing "The Relation of Kant's Criticism to Agnosticism," Eliot looks for grounds to take rational positions on the nature of our experience. He asks provocatively what distinction

we can find between “God and a table” since they are “both hypotheses, in themselves (as noumena) neither true nor false.” The answer is that hypotheses, although they must remain tentative, may be considered true or false in relation to “the particular complex of our social experience” (45). His criterion for the validity of a line of reasoning is whether it makes a position “more consistent, and give[s] it more meaning for us” (“Kant’s Ethics,” 50). If, however, experience is inherently illusive, how can we make a start on understanding it? Although we cannot on the basis of individual experience, he argues, sounding more like an editorial writer than a young student:

It is only in a social life that we do become conscious of a body of experience, that is to say, of experience in which are found persistence and order. Experience is in relation to practical interest, and this interest is a much more stable and definable thing in the experience of the group than in the experience of the individual (“Report on the Relation of Kant’s Criticism to Agnosticism,” 44).

Although Eliot at twenty-four is a long way from his conversion, his essay on Kant and Agnosticism reveals the line of thought that led to his statement in 1927 that “doubt and uncertainty are merely a variety of belief” (“A Note on Poetry and Belief”). In 1913 the future author of *The Waste Land* wrote: “But the germ of scepticism is quickened always by the soil of system

(rich in contradictions). As the system decomposes, the doubts push through; and the decay is so general and fructifying that we are no longer sure enough of anything to draw the line between knowledge and ignorance” (“Kant’s Agnosticism,” 41–42). Eliot notes that in F. H. Bradley the fruit of this uncertainty is the supposition of an Absolute that unifies our experience. Eliot dismisses Bradley’s Absolute because it represents merely “the pathetic primitive human Credo in ultimate explanation and ultimate reality which haunts us like the prayers of childhood” (42). Yet we know Eliot himself was haunted by this shadowy reality. Despite his skepticism, a Kantian type that always “questions the question” (46), he believes we need acts of faith to find our way in the maze of speculation. In “The Ethics of Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason” he holds that “it is obvious that the thing is merely an object of faith, but faith of such a sort as to be practically unavoidable” (51). In the report on Kant and agnosticism, he concludes, “in order to know we must begin with *faith* [Eliot’s underscore], that is to say . . . a real which is ‘outside of ourselves’” (44). To be sure, he’s merely referring to a faith in the world of “Gegenstände” (objects, or things). Yet Eliot’s many references in these essays to faith, doubt, and ultimate reality show him beginning the spiritual explorations later revealed in his poetry.

REPORTS

T. S. Eliot Boot Camp

By Nora Alfaiz

The sixth annual T. S. Eliot International Summer School started not with a whimper but a bang. At the opening ceremonials in the University of London’s Institute of English Studies, located at the Senate House, participants from eleven countries assembled to meet their new director Gail MacDonald, associate director Wim Van Mierlo, and each other. This year the school attracted forty-three students from Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, the UK, and the US. Van Mierlo announced the year’s bursary donors amidst laughter at the titles given to each bursary, such as Mr. Mistoffelees and the Hyacinth Girl, and applause for their donors (the late

Mrs. Valerie Eliot and the Estate of T. S. Eliot, Dr. Julius Cruse, Durham University, Joe and Joan McBreen, Johns Hopkins University Press, Professor Ronald Schuchard, Royal Holloway at the University of London, Mark Storey, and Roger Thompson). MacDonald then officially welcomed the participants and introduced the lecturers, first observing, “Here is the opportunity to see your footnotes come to life.” Mark Ford’s opening address, “Withered Stumps and Strangled Details: Dithering with T. S. Eliot,” told the story of his relationship with Eliot’s work and concluded with some of his own poetry including a witty acrostic poem, “Dithering,” with Eliotic allusions.

The convenient location of Senate House meant that each day, we passed by the blue plaque indicating the spot where T. S. Eliot worked in the former Faber and Faber offices located in Russell Square. Morning lectures

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explored a variety of topics in Eliot studies ranging from metrics to ecocriticism, from drama to decadence. Among others, Jewel Spears Brooker discussed Eliot's Bergsonism and the problem of an intractable dualism in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night." Responding to this year's World War I centennial, David Chinitz examined Eliot's views on political and social themes of responsibility in World War II through six pieces written between 1940 and 1946. Tony Cuda entertainingly presented the story of Eliot's association with the Phoenix Theatre, and Gail McDonald gave the provocatively titled lecture, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Sex: A Survey of Eliot's Critics." One morning, Brooker, Chinitz, and Cuda shared their experiences editing Eliot's complete prose. The panel celebrated the official release of the first two volumes of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition* and honored Valerie Eliot's wish to bring all of Eliot's work together. Next summer's program will hopefully witness the release of volumes three and four, covering the years 1927 to 1933. We also heard from Hannah Sullivan, Gabriel McIntyre, Tony Sharpe, and Jahan Ramazani, who concluded the lecture series by exploring "Modernist Inflections, Postcolonial Directions." In the afternoons, students attended small seminars, choosing among such topics as Dante, popular culture, the metaphysical poets, the death of God, the idea of the global, and literary decadence.

The week included many extracurricular events taking advantage of London's literary and cultural offerings. Along with appreciating the numerous literary plaques



Linda Gregerson reads at the London Library and busts surrounding Senate House, Summer School participants could enjoy two different walking tours led by Mark Storey and Carey Karmel, who guided us through central and west London, from the river Thames

of the Unreal City to Eliot's last flat in Kensington Court Gardens. A special exhibit on Virginia Woolf at the National Portrait Gallery included a first edition of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. For students who felt like



Guided tour with Mark Storey

relaxing after a long day, our guidebook advised a brief walk to The Lamb pub to "sit for half an hour and drink our bocks" while socializing with other students and professors. At the London Library, where Eliot was once President, Linda Gregerson gave a poetry reading against a backdrop of historic books, followed by a reception generously provided by Mark Storey, private tours by the staff, and conversations with colleagues.

The Summer School also ventured beyond London, taking students to three of the sites of *Four Quartets*. At Little Gidding in Cambridgeshire, the Friends of Little Gidding and the T. S. Eliot Society of the UK presented their annual T. S. Eliot Festival, which began with a musical and dramatic performance of *Vivienne*, followed by lunch, a reading of *Little Gidding* by Peter Cochrane and Jenny Sargent, a lecture on Eliot and music by Frances Dickey, and finally evensong at the church "where prayer has been valid." The next trip took travelers to the timeless Burnt Norton where we looked "down into the drained pool" just as Eliot did. The trip also included a picnic on the grounds, Linda Gregerson's reading of *Burnt Norton*, and a lecture by Lyndall Gordon. Our final destination was East Coker, the village that is also the resting place for the Eliots. Participants dined at the fifteenth-century Heylar Arms Inn, listened to a reading of *East Coker*, heard a brief lecture on *The Rock*, and enjoyed a performance of Choruses from *The Rock* by fellow students. At the end, new and old friends dispersed carrying rich memories and knowledge away from the lovingly nicknamed "T. S. Eliot Boot Camp."

Hannah Sullivan, *The Work of Revision*. Harvard University Press, 2013.

Reviewed by Wim Van Mierlo

The vibrant field of genetic criticism has received recent momentum from the growing interest in book history and, particularly, the rising number of digital archive projects, finally pushing aside some old critical dogmas and taboos, such as the intentional fallacy and the death of the author. An astute contribution to the study of manuscripts and composition histories of modernist writers, *The Work of Revision* focuses on post-compositional change, claiming that second thoughts are as important and creative as original inspiration.

Sullivan's book explores the link between "a text's thematic or formal concerns" and its genesis (5). As Sullivan makes clear, the form of a work does not determine its method of composition and revision. Eliot's composition of *The Waste Land*, for instance, was not fragmentary because the poem itself is fragmented; nor is the poem fragmented because the writing was disorganized and unstructured. In that sense, the thematic and formal concerns of the work do not depend on its genesis. James Joyce's revise-and-expand technique of lifting words and phrases from his notebooks and adding them to his text was very deliberate, systematic, and linear, and therefore stands in contrast to his radical forms of experimentation. Moreover, his technique didn't change with the increasingly complex linguistic pyrotechnics of his later writings. The composition of *Dubliners* and *Stephen Hero* show vestiges of having been written in the same manner. Yet Sullivan rightly states that different modes of revision produce different effects, and she examines those effects with clarity and insight.

Concentrating on a practice that by its very nature "fall[s] short of a theorizable routine," she sets out to provide "a historically attentive, comparative reading of manuscript materials" (10). In essence, Sullivan considers three modes of revision: the first represented by Henry James, who mostly revised by substituting new writing for old; the second by James Joyce, who swelled his texts by endlessly embroidering his sentences and weaving in new ideas; and the third by T. S. Eliot and Marianne Moore, who refined their texts by chipping away excess words and phrases to create something crisper. In adumbrating these modes, Sullivan skilfully analyses the revision practices of numerous twentieth-

century writers, including W. H. Auden, Allen Ginsberg, Ernest Hemingway, and Virginia Woolf, and concludes by considering revision in the digital age. Her impressive range serves the book's comparative purpose; even where substantial ground has already been covered by previous scholars—as is the case with James, Woolf, and Joyce—Sullivan still has lots to say that is original and of interest.

The most interesting part of Sullivan's book, and the most intelligent discussion of that topic so far, is her discussion of *The Waste Land* drafts. Sullivan treats the manuscripts and typescripts as evidence of the poem's gestation, not as a somehow failed poem or (as it is often erroneously called) the "1921 text." The materials that survive are not a single text, not even a single document, but a set of papers produced over a period of time that at some point were bundled together and passed on to posterity. Sullivan rightly observes that in Valerie Eliot's facsimile this historical differentiation between documents is barely visible. I would add that the original documents now at the Berg are already a construct insofar as Eliot chose to preserve but to exclude (or discard) other draft materials.

Sullivan takes a fresh, detailed look at Eliot's "retentive practice" (125), by which she means Eliot's habit of assembling previously written poetic material into new poems. This form of creative assemblage kept the borders of *The Waste Land* fluid and contributed to its fragmented state. An essential part of this process was the decision, discussed at length with Ezra Pound, about what should go in and what should be left out. Should he cut Phlebas? Could he add "Gerontion" as a preamble? Whatever was left over might be recycled and put to use for a later work. These considerations lead Sullivan to comment on the dynamic between Eliot and Pound, the tension between Pound's cancellations and Eliot's "two-stage process of production by accretion and substitution," which she likens aptly to "watching someone sculpt wet papier-mâché" (128). Most valuably, Sullivan addresses the vexed notion of how Pound allegedly saved *The Waste Land* from mediocrity. She asks: "Why have critics been so confident that the final version of the poem is best?" (121). She observes that Pound did not so much intuit as ignore the aesthetic principles of the early drafts, preferring the poem's lyrical aspects over the narrative ones. In that respect, Pound's hand contributed to the poem's iconic form. She reverses the received opinion, however, that gives Pound responsibility for bringing out themes and symbolism only latently present in the drafts. Sullivan instead argues that Eliot's revising of the poem's aural

and musical qualities complemented Pound's attempts to purge the poem. The overall process played itself out along a "compositional counterpoint" between "excision and accretion, economy and synthesis" (11, 145).

I do find myself disagreeing with the book's claim to identify a particularly modernist mode of revision. Sullivan maintains correctly that the tools authors use affect how they write and revise, and specifically that the widespread use of the typewriter as well as the often extravagant supply of page proofs influenced the process of revision. The typed or printed text offers psychologically a more "stable" text than a handwritten text, but the time-consuming job of copying a long text out by hand will limit the desire to produce multiple versions. In my view these changes in the way literary texts are produced did not by themselves produce a specifically modernist form of revision. For one, Sullivan does not fully test the changes she describes against the earlier periods from which they allegedly differ. It is manifestly untrue, for instance, that Dickens and Tennyson "worked in manuscript until the 'bon à tirer'" (8). Obsessive, elaborate revisers in their own right, they relied heavily on proofs to get their work into shape. Similarly, printing history doesn't support her argument that economic factors made (mostly noncommercial) publishers more open to providing successive runs of proofs and accepting late and extensive revisions. Changes to text already set up in type were ordinarily costed by number, so someone had to foot the bill for those multiple proofs. Lastly, Sullivan posits that the typed page and page proof provided a "better spur to rewriting," resulting in greater textual fluidity and thus stylistic and aesthetic modernity (8). But the opportunity and means for revision are separate from effects that the author introduces during revision. Here Sullivan not only reads the finished product (and certain a priori expectations of what modernism is) back into the process, but also goes against her own subtler position elsewhere in the book. Aesthetics and the material means of revision constitute a single process that hinges on authorial agency, but the link between them is idiosyncratic rather than deterministic.

These objections aside, Sullivan deserves praise for introducing the material and economic conditions of book history into the discussion of literary genesis; too often our focus on text ignores the circumstances and conditions of production. An outstanding piece of scholarship, *The Work of Revision* valuably offers broad, comparative treatment, fascination with the complex process of revision, and rich, detailed analysis

of manuscripts and versions. Sullivan has a knack for elucidating intricate matter, without ever losing the bigger picture or getting lost in overwhelming detail.

T. Austin Graham, *The Great American Songbooks: Musical Texts, Modernism, and the Value of Popular Culture*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

Reviewed by Michelle Witen

The title of T. Austin Graham's *The Great American Songbooks* suggests several interpretations. "The Great American Songbook of the jazz era" is a musical term designating a standard repertoire of music, leading one to think that Graham will discuss titles canonized by the Songbook; or that he is discussing pieces that ought to be standards and questioning the canon; or that one can hear musical standards in literary texts; or perhaps, given his initial emphasis on the jazz era, that his focus will be on standard jazz repertoire; or that the literary texts discussed could be considered part of a Great American Songbook tradition, crossing the boundary between literature and music. Ultimately, Graham does a little of all of these things, where the readers of his "literary Songbook" are expected to develop and rely on "common musical knowledge" and how it can be brought "to bear on a poem, novel, or story" (7). His goal is for readers to hear figuratively the music of the time, and to discern the "brainworms" (63) that haunted writers such as Walt Whitman, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes, John Dos Passos, and Theodore Dreiser, and to detect them inching and wriggling their way through modernist poetry and prose.

Beginning with Walter Pater's famous dictum, "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music," Graham situates his criticism in what he designates as the curious and contradictory rejection of Paterian musical aspirations by American modernist authors such as Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, T. S. Eliot, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Graham questions these supposed dismissals: "the authors discussed here ask their readers

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Eliot on Pound and James

by Barry Spurr

What is most striking in reading a selection of these essays from the newly-published first volume of Eliot's *Complete Prose*, so carefully and informatively edited by Jewel Spears Brooker and Ronald Schuchard, is the extent to which we recognize that Eliot—in the course of discussing a range of writers and aspects of their work—is talking about himself. I also experienced (as I believe both new readers and those returning to familiar essays will, too) a keen appreciation of Eliot's mastery of the essay form. Reading him in the past, primarily for the content of what he was saying, I imperfectly attended to how well written and organized his essays are. He was a master essayist, as well as a poet. That aspect of his literary artistry (even in short, occasional pieces, such as brief reviews), and the evolution of his work in this undervalued form of prose deserve concentrated study themselves. Thirdly, the detail of the chronological ordering of the pieces enables us to discern not only the development of Eliot's interests in a variety of subjects, but to compare his prose with what he was doing at the same time in poetry and, indeed, what was happening in his personal life. In this way, it will be instructive to read these volumes, as they appear, in tandem with those of the letters, of which five volumes have already been published.

In *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (to take one example), published in 1917, we have the original essay restored to us with the "substantial editorial alterations and editorial slips" of the version in *To Criticize the Critic* (1965) corrected. Writing about it in 1933, sixteen years after its composition, Eliot reflected that "Ezra was then known only to a few and I was so completely unknown that it seemed more decent that the pamphlet should appear anonymously" (*The Cantos of Ezra Pound: Some Testimonies*, 16). Nonetheless—but perhaps its anonymity boosted the tyro commentator's confidence—the essay is notable for the maturity of its analysis and the confidence of its original judgments, as well as being a testament to the coterie aspect of modernism, so marked in the collaboration of Pound and Eliot in these years.

When Eliot notes that "Pound came to London a complete stranger, without either literary patronage or financial means" (627) and that his fellow-American had left the promise of an academic career behind—"he deserted the thesis of Lope de Vega and the Ph.D. and the professorial chair, and elected to remain in Europe" (629)—the similarities with Eliot's own biography are

clear, as is the account of the challenge of bringing about the revolution in poetics which Eliot, as well as Pound, was desiring and accomplishing. Then, telling phrases (part of the skilful essayist's stock-in-trade) succinctly capture his subject's interests and character: Pound was "supersaturated in Provence" (629), for instance; and apt quotations from Pound's poetry not only illustrate what Eliot is arguing about the virtues of free verse (in the course of which he acknowledges that there is "bad free verse"), but serve the purpose of exposing his readers, in 1917, to this new voice and style, which is also his own. 1917 was the very year in which *Prufrock and Other Observations* appeared. So in commending Pound, Eliot is also helping to create the taste by which he himself would be enjoyed.

For all his accomplishment already, Eliot is still finding his complete confidence as a literary-critical essayist, as we see in this essay by how much he quotes from other critics who have reviewed Pound negatively (see p. 618). As Eliot developed and his anonymity was discarded, and his authority as a commentator and assessor of poetry and other literature became assured (due substantially to the growing recognition of his own achievements as a poet), the need for detailed repudiation of other literary critics waned. Yet already, here, there are moments when the authoritative, even omniscient voice of "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919) exercises itself with formidable confidence:

who is responsible for the bad free verse is a question of no importance, inasmuch as its authors would have written bad verse in any form (630).

Then the dismissive but memorable mot: "the mossiness of Mallarmé" (633) anticipates other such quotable characterisations in later essays.

In the course of ample selections from Pound's poetry, we find the phrase "See, they return" (from "The Return"), which Eliot was to echo decades later in the last section of "Little Gidding," "See, they return, and bring us with them. . ." and much discernment in close reading of his friend's practice of "discipline and form," classical qualities which Eliot was to commend in a range of aspects of his life, not only in literature (638).

Most importantly of all, Eliot shows here, remarkably, given that he is only twenty-nine himself, the wisdom he is already acquiring with regard to his own development as a writer, as he impersonally observes it in his friend:

Any poet, if he is to survive as a writer beyond his twenty-fifth year, must alter: he must seek new literary influences; he will have different emotions to express (639).

ESSAYS

The essay on another American, “In Memory of Henry James,” which appeared in 1918, is a masterpiece of ambiguity of assessment, as Eliot at his most feline moves between gestures tending to praise and the withholding of them, or the locution that we take as a commendation until, on second thought, we realize that what has sounded positive has a disabling subtext of negativity. The essay’s laconic opening sentence, following immediately from the title’s apparent intention to memorialize, is a masterstroke, setting this ambiguity in motion: “Henry James has been dead for some time” (648). And, again, writing about The Master and his characterizations, Eliot is (to a degree) writing about himself:

It is the final perfection, the consummation of an American to become, not an Englishman, but a European—something which no born European, no person of any European nationality, can become (648).

The quintessence of the brilliance here is that it is also a parody of the style of the author under consideration.

The essay is not merely entertaining, although it is always witty. Eliot demonstrates the skill with which he can move from the particular, careful observation of a text to the generalization about not only letters but life. His formulations always stimulate us to further thought:

Mr. Chesterton’s brain swarms with ideas: I see no evidence that it thinks. James in his novels is like the best French critics in maintaining a point of view, a viewpoint untouched by the parasite idea. He is the most intelligent man of his generation (650).

And all of this under the sway of the unforgettable provocation at the beginning of that paragraph:

He had a mind so fine that no idea could violate it.

Schuchard, Spears Brooker, and Johns Hopkins are to be congratulated on the appearance of the initial volumes of this new edition of these works, which remind us of T. S. Eliot’s genius as a prose writer and make them readily available to a new generation of readers.

REVIEWS

Review of Graham, continued from page 8

to sing poems, to imagine fiction being accompanied by well-known melodies, to occupy unfamiliar roles and assume new perspectives through musical performance, and to inflect literary meaning with the techniques and associations of an admired sister art.” This interpretation disengages from Pater’s initial evaluation of what makes music the most consummate of all arts—namely its “perfect identification of matter and form”; Graham takes “condition” to mean authorial circumstance rather than aesthetic requirement. Nevertheless, Graham’s introduction raises some thought-provoking questions about the influence of quoted music on the literary work where it appears and how readers receive such quotations. He also proposes an everyday popular culture that is neither high nor low but rather “nobrow” (Graham, quoting Peter Swirsky, 32), such as, numbers from the Ziegfeld Follies; arias from Romantic operas, whose appeal he demonstrates as being more “nobrow” than usually assumed; Broadway standards; and products of the Tin Pan Alley. He usefully frames his discussion of specific words within a broader understanding of the musical culture of jazz, blues, musical theater, and the effects of nineteenth- and twentieth-century musical technology such as the phonograph.

In the chapters that follow, Graham provides a

musical soundscape for works written before 1930. In his second chapter, he examines the echo of Italian arias in Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* (particularly “Proud Music of the Storm,” “Song of Myself,” and “Italian Music in Dakota”) alongside T. S. Eliot’s use of popular music in *Inventions of the March Hare* (“First Debate between the Body and Soul” as well as mentions of “Suite Clownesque” and “Goldfish”), “Portrait of a Lady,” and *The Waste Land*. His analysis is grounded in Eliot’s “concerns over recording technology and mechanical methods of distributing music” (58) and how this affects “the listening reader” (71). For his analysis of “First Debate,” he focuses on the significance of the street piano in urban life as it plays a musical number including the presumed song lyric, “Make the best of your position.” Graham situates Eliot’s earliest references to music in relation to American recording developments and their presence in the urban sonic environment of the St. Louis of his youth. He then examines “Portrait of a Lady” as the intersection between highbrow and lowbrow musical tastes, recorded through a “motley musical accompaniment” (60) from Chopin to street music. His discussion of *The Waste Land* applies a Benjaminian reading of “the recording of music [as] a process of artistic decontextualization, reification,

and commodification” to the “Shakespearean Rag” reference in “A Game of Chess.” In his analysis of the “Fire Sermon,” he hones in on the significance of the “canned music” (66) of the typist’s gramophone as a numbing and distracting force of increasingly worrying “passive consumption” (67).

Subsequent chapters include the mapping of a “literary soundtrack” on to F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paris*, *The Beautiful and the Damned*, and *The Great Gatsby*, which variously reference Broadway hits, and on to works of the Harlem Renaissance, specifically Jean Toomer’s *Cane* (which adapts snippets of “Deep River,” “My Lord, What a Mornin’,” and “Swing Low Sweet Chariot”) and Langston Hughes’s *The Weary Blues* (“Trouble in Mind,” “Nigger Blues,” and “The Weary Blues”). Graham argues that these latter works are “suffused with the urban blues” and reliant on “musical forms that were very much audible and in wide demand during the 1920s, available on the mass market to black and white listeners alike” (113). This points to the heart of Graham’s argument about the role of the audience in reading these musical references: “Each poet asks readers to sing his poetry and deploys musical form to expedite its performance, and each does so in part to transcend the racial categories that his chosen music highlights” (114). But what does “musical form” mean? Used metaphorically and without elaboration, such musical terms can lead to much confusion. Similarly, Graham describes *The Waste Land* as a “dynamic poem,” “often a kind of freestyle improvisation in its musical moment,” where even “if the unfolding lines do not obey a narrative logic[,] they still have a musical congruity” and a “musical process of association” (70). These terms are fired in quick succession with no explanation of their meaning and the assumption is that the reader is meant to feel these associations rather than develop a musicological understanding of Eliot’s text.

The final two chapters take a fresh, historical route. The fifth chapter explores the life of chorus girls, both as “wage earners and capital” (164), where the characters that populate Theodore Dreiser’s sordid *Sister Carrie* and John Dos Passos’s oppressive *Manhattan Transfer* become precursors for Ropes’s well-known *42nd Street*. The conclusion provides suggestions for similar applications of musical allusion in literature after 1930, briefly spotlighting Baldwin, Pynchon, Murakami, Hornby, and Dyer (among others).

Problems with terminology aside, Graham’s *Great American Songbooks* displays impressive research in the fields of American modernism and musicology.

The addition of sound clips, effectively providing a “booktrack” (8) similar to the one lauded by Graham in his brief mention of Pynchon’s *Inherent Vice*, adds to the overall effectiveness of his musical allusions. Although his analyses of the individual authors are like sound bites (any of his chapters could have been developed into full-length studies), veering more toward musical allusion and context over extended musical or literary analysis, he nevertheless provides a vivid cultural soundscape of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America. His historical background and depiction of the cultural inheritance of the above-mentioned authors certainly provides invaluable groundwork for those interested in deeper study of the relationship between music and literature.

Paul Stasi, *Modernism, Imperialism, and the Historical Sense*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Reviewed by Adam Fajardo

Whether warranted or not, one of the criticisms sometimes leveled against the “transnational turn” in modernist studies is that it jeopardizes the specificity of the field. If modernism could happen anywhere on the globe—or, even more troublingly, at disparate times in history, as some scholars have argued—then how can we demarcate modernism as a coherent area of study? Has the field become too unwieldy? David James and Urmila Seshagiri articulate this problem well in the January 2014 issue of *PMLA*, warning that “We dull modernism’s particular brilliance when we dissolve it into a collective of techniques comparable with what other writers have practiced at other points in history.”

Paul Stasi’s *Modernism, Imperialism, and the Historical Sense* demonstrates that it is possible to do transnational modernism within the traditional canon of modernist literature. With chapters focused on T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf, Stasi’s version of literary modernism looks quite familiar. But Stasi’s intervention, and the reason I see this book as a valuable contribution to modernist studies’ transnational turn, lies in his analysis of modernism’s relationship with imperialism, capitalism, and the rise

of international finance. In his account, modernist literary form emerges from imperialism, specifically from the material conditions it creates (like porous national borders, globe-trotting commodities, trade routes, and increased cultural contact zones). But while Stasi argues that “the characteristic devices of aesthetic modernism depend on the accumulation that only occurs at the centers of capitalist production” (4) and that imperialism accounts for modernism’s “tendency to articulate a desire for novelty through references to work from the cultural past” (6), his nuanced account also demonstrates that modernism nevertheless worked to resist capitalism’s flattening subjectivity and oppressive power structures. Indeed, Stasi convincingly argues that modernism’s rootedness in imperialism is what gives it the ability to critique imperialism through its experimental aesthetics.

T. S. Eliot is a central figure in this account. In addition to a chapter devoted to *The Waste Land*, Stasi draws material from Eliot’s poetry, essays, and dissertation throughout the book. As the book’s title suggests, Eliot’s concept of the “historical sense” is of particular interest for Stasi, for he sees this dialectical interweaving of past and present as a defining move for capitalist modernity. In a similar vein, he also uses Eliot’s conception of tradition to advance one of the book’s principle arguments: that tradition is not a reactionary clinging to the past but rather the space in which culture uses its given material conditions to advance historical change. In the second chapter, “*The Waste Land* and the Unreal Center of Capitalist Modernity,” Stasi reads *The Waste Land* as a formal response to the conditions of modern British imperialism. Though the poem is not directly “about” empire, and though it does not ultimately offer an aesthetic solution to the problems of imperialism, its structure and range of allusions nevertheless function as a process for thinking about imperialism’s objective conditions. In this way, Eliot provides a sort of antidote to Frederic Jameson’s claim in “Modernism and Imperialism” that imperialism precludes an observer from gaining a sense of the totality of this economic system. While Stasi’s careful historicization is compelling and nuanced, some of this chapter’s literary readings are not quite as convincing. Concluding that *The Waste Land* represents a “process, the subjective attempt to give coherence to a history that is without telos” (59), for example, is not that far off from resuscitating the standard story of modernism as an aesthetic solution to the existential crisis brought on by the death of God, Darwin, and World War I. Additionally, the

claim that Eliot rejects primitivism ought to be more qualified (Michael North’s *The Dialect of Modernism*, for one, has shown that Eliot was not immune to racial ventriloquism). On the whole, though, the chapter’s careful contextualization of *The Waste Land*, especially the discussion of Eliot’s conception of the “real” and “unreal” vis-à-vis his dissertation, usefully situates the poem in a concrete moment in economic history and thus opens a new avenue for thinking about its politics.

The following chapter revises Pound’s position as a fascist and anti-Semite. While Stasi by no means excuses or ignores the problematic aspects of Pound’s legacy, he nevertheless shows how the *Cantos* can thus be read as a positive cosmopolitan text, an example of what Stasi terms “multicultural poetics,” that both preserves cultural difference and resists nationalist assimilation. The fourth chapter further develops the radical possibilities of cosmopolitanism through a reading of *Ulysses*, which Stasi sees as an example of Jameson’s “archaeology of the future.” The novel weaves cosmopolitanism into the fabric of Irish identity, and in doing so also rewrites Irish history. Eliot returns in the final chapter, where Stasi argues that Woolf, like Eliot, sought a way of making an “unreal” future into a real one. Porous borders, like those he found in *The Waste Land*, return as well, only in Woolf it is the British national subject who is psychically stretched around the globe. This subject, which Stasi names the “free trade subject,” reveals how, in *The Voyage Out* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, subjectivity is interconnected with geographic location.

This last chapter on Woolf, the only woman writer included in the book, raises the question of how the analysis would deepen if it took gender (or race, or sexuality) into account. How would authors like Djuna Barnes, Jean Rhys, or Jean Toomer (to name just a few) complicate Stasi’s compelling argument about modernism’s simultaneous dependence on and resistance to imperialism? In fairness, this line of inquiry is outside the scope of what Stasi set out to do, which was to provide an account of canonical modernism. This is not so much a criticism as it is an acknowledgment of Stasi’s insightful argument—this slim study lays the groundwork for further investigation. *Modernism, Imperialism, and the Historical Sense* will be of interest to modernist scholars concerned with the intersection of politics, commodity culture, and literary form, and postgraduate students can learn from his deft navigation of nuanced theoretical debates.

Compiled by David Chinitz

O City city. Artist Bartholomew Beal's summer 2014 exhibit at the Fine Art Society in London was titled "A Heap of Broken Images." Meanwhile, in Copenhagen, Runo Lagomarsino called his own exhibit at the Nils Stærk Gallery "Against My Ruins."

Redeem the time. Recently published by Fledermaus, *The Waste Land: Eliot's Quest* lets players control a character named King Zylon who kills an unusual beast while hunting. As Brian Taylor explains in a review, "After you kill the animal, everything goes bad and Tiresias . . . explains in detail its symbolic nature and how Zylon's actions have doomed the world and he had better go save it." Taylor, who rates the game 6/10, notes that it is "not a direct adaptation" of Eliot's poem and lacks its historical context, though it is packed with allusions and allows players to explore a "fallen world" (pastemagazine.com 3 November 2014).

Smokefall. The title of Noah Haidle's 2013 surrealist play comes from *Burnt Norton*. One reviewer, Paul Kuritz, speculates on his own website that the title "is an offer by the playwright to explore his play as a response to T. S. Eliot's great poem." Both texts, he notes, are "organized around recurring images, phrases, and actions. And as with *Burnt Norton*, *Smokefall* has a literal, a moral, and a mystical meaning." Writing for *Variety*, Robert Hofler expresses the rather different view that "Haidle's play bears no resemblance to anything written by [Eliot], stoned or sober" (*Variety* 9 April 2013).

Between Two Waves. Ian Meadows's play takes its title from *Little Gidding* but apparently draws inspiration from more than one of the *Quartets*. "You get to the gate and realize you are back where you started, or something," the protagonist of this 2012 Australian drama remarks.

Three memorable letters. In the *New York Times* Sunday crossword puzzle for 19 October 2014, the clue for 64 Down was "J. Alfred Prufrock creator's inits."

And in the 1 November 2014 issue of *American Way*, the American Airlines magazine, the clue for 36 Down was "Cats monogram."

She knew he was trouble. Readers of *Time Present* may be interested in Jennifer Schaffer's online quiz (on buzzfeed.com), "Who Said It: Taylor Swift or T. S. Eliot?" Those who dare are challenged to identify such fragmentary quotations as "I am glad you have a cat," "Hold tight, hold tight," and "This love is silent" as the work of either TS or TSE.

Withered leaves. In the first frame of Jef Mallett's comic strip *Frazz* for 13 September 2014, we see three views of a single leaf drifting to the ground, and the text above each reads "This is the way the summer ends." In the second frame, young Caulfield completes the stanza: "Not with a bagful; a whisper." After which *Frazz* comments, "You don't hear that many T. S. Eliot rip-offs that good."



Eliot Society "Freshmen" from left to right: Aakanksha Virkar-Yates, Alex Ruggieri, Annarose Fitzgerald, Caleb Agnew, Nancy Kim, Cassidy Lichnowsky, Lynette Ballard, Ben Hagen, Grace Lillard, Michael Sanders, Michael Rizzo, and Adam Cotton

Eliot News and Society Notes

Eliot Summer School 2015: The Institute of English Studies will host the seventh annual T. S. Eliot International Summer School from 11 to 19 July, 2015. Poetry lovers and Eliot enthusiasts are invited to this week-long celebration of the life and writing of one of the greatest modern English poets. For enquiries, registration, and programme information: <http://ies.sas.ac.uk>.

Republication of Eliot's Ariel Poems: This Christmas, Faber is bringing out the six poems that Eliot wrote for the "Ariel" series, along with the artwork that originally accompanied them. See www.faber.co.uk.

New Books by Members:

Didac Llorens-Cubedo, *T. S. Eliot and Salvador Espriu: Converging Poetic Imaginations*. Publications of the University of Valencia, 2013

David Chinitz and Gail McDonald, ed., *A Companion to Modernist Poetry*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2014

Benjamin Lockerd, *T. S. Eliot and Christian Tradition*. Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2014

Vincent Sherry, *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence*. Cambridge UP, 2014

Jayne Stayer, *Think About It: Critical Skills for Academic Writing*. John Mauk, Karen Mauk, co-authors. Wadsworth/Cengage, 2013

John Tamilio III, *The Practice and Understanding of the Eucharist in the United Church of Christ: A Practical Theological Study*. Scholars' Press, 2014

John Whittier-Ferguson, *Mortality and Form in Late Modernist Literature*. Cambridge UP, 2014

Congratulations to Society Historian and Book Reviews editor **John Morgenstern** for his appointment as Managing Editor of the newly expanded Clemson University Press. CUP has partnered with Liverpool University Press to increase the number of titles it publishes each year and will continue to commission titles in areas such as Modernist Literature, 20th/21st century British, Irish, and American Literature, and Virginia Woolf.

Jewel Spears Brooker is a Senior Research Scholar at Merton College, Oxford, this term, exactly 100 years after Eliot. In November she gave the Eliot Lecture at Cambridge, "T. S. Eliot and the Ecstasy of Assent," and a lecture at Merton College on the Prose project; in De-

ember, she will speak on "Eliot and American Literature" at Leipzig, and on the fiftieth anniversary of his death in January she will discuss Eliot's spirituality in the BBC program "Beyond Belief."

Patrick Query presented a paper, "T.S. Eliot, David Jones, and the Arts of Peace," at the WWI centenary conference Literature, Memory, and the First World War hosted by the United States Military Academy. One of the conference keynote speakers was **Vincent Sherry**.

Conferences

Modern Language Association 2015, Vancouver

T. S. Eliot and the Fin de Siècle

Organized by Vincent Sherry

- "From the Nineties to the Twenties: A Poetics of Decadence in *Poems* (1920)," Vincent Sherry, Washington U in St. Louis
- "'Small Theories': Eliot's Atomism," Jeffrey Blevins, U of California, Berkeley
- "Eliot's Wild(e)ness: Artists as Critics in Dark Dialogue," John Paul Riquelme, Boston U

Louisville Conference on Literature after 1900

T. S. Eliot's *Inventions*

Organized by John Morgenstern (Clemson University)

- "Averted Gazes: Class and Social Space in the Early Poetry of T. S. Eliot," Julia Daniel, West Virginia U
- "Scattered Thoughts: The Denouement of Eliot's Notebook," Jayme Stayer, John Carroll U
- "Eliot and Caricature," Frances Dickey, U of Missouri

Call for Papers

The T. S. Eliot Society will sponsor two sessions at the 2015 annual conference of the American Literature Association, 21–24 May 2015, at The Westin Copley Place in Boston. Please send proposals (up to 250 words), along with a brief biography or curriculum vitae, to Professor Nancy K. Gish (ngish@usm.maine.edu). Submissions must be received no later than 10 January 2015.

For information on the ALA and its 2015 meeting, please see the ALA website at www.americanliteratureassociation.org.

T. S. Eliot Society Annual Meeting in St. Louis, September 2014

The Legacy of Valerie Eliot and the Future of Eliot Studies

This address to open the 35th annual meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society in St. Louis began by tracing the sequence of events that followed Valerie Eliot's schoolgirl dream—after hearing John Gielgud's recording of *Ash-Wednesday*—of making her way to Eliot and becoming his secretary, a dream realized in 1949, when she was twenty-two. Their formal working relationship over the next eight years evolved into Eliot's proposal and their marriage in 1957, when he was sixty-eight. "There was a human love he needed to complete his life," Valerie wrote after his death in 1965. "I felt he'd gone through a great spiritual crisis and had been purged of human love to do the work he did, and finally he was to have it." Before his death they had serious

discussions about his will and her role as executrix. He had declared that he wanted her "neither to facilitate nor countenance any biography," telling her that he thought a poet's life is not so important as his poetry. Nor did he want any editions of his letters or uncollected writings, believing

that he had preserved what he wanted in the collections published during his lifetime. When she pleaded with him not to place a burden of exclusion on her, telling him that the world would eventually expect access to all his writings, he finally relented—on condition that she would edit the volumes herself and keep the materials private in the process.

She made that vow, and for the next forty-five years she devoted herself to assembling his archive and taking on the tasks of editing his letters and editing the facsimile edition of *The Waste Land*. During those



years requests for permissions came pouring in and waves of scholars came knocking hard; she absorbed harsh criticism for restricting the material and was accused of hiding information that would damage Eliot's reputation. She believed, however, that it was against her charge and vow to dole out pieces prematurely or indiscriminately for use and possible abuse. After she commissioned *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry* (1993) and *Inventions of the March Hare* (1994), the editors suggested that she create an editorial board to assist her with the work. She explained that she had commissioned the two works because she knew she could not handle them herself, but that she would be responsible for the rest. The editors did not expect to be invited to do any further editorial work for her.

In the summer of 2004 the Eliot Society held its annual meeting in London; no one who was there

will ever forget her gracious presence at the reception. She was becoming painfully aware, however, that time and declining health were overtaking her in the task of collecting, preserving, transcribing, and editing her husband's work alone. "It's time to pull all of Tom together," she said, feeling that she had successfully fulfilled her life's

work of constructing a near-complete archive for unrestricted study and scholarship. She thus set about commissioning the Eliot Editorial Project, turning over to others in 2006 the responsibility and privilege of editing his complete prose, letters, poetry, and plays, all of which are now underway and have begun to appear.

In the long run, her course of action—which provided a necessary critical distance from Eliot's life—was, to this observer, the right one. Thanks to her steadfast loyalty to her husband's wishes and to

her commitment to the totality of his papers, we will soon have all his work on the shelf and online for new generations of students and scholars. The future of Eliot studies is immense. There has never been a richer time to be a student of Eliot and modernism, and the wealth of new material to come makes all of us students anew. That is the legacy of Valerie Eliot.

Ronald Schuchard
Emory University

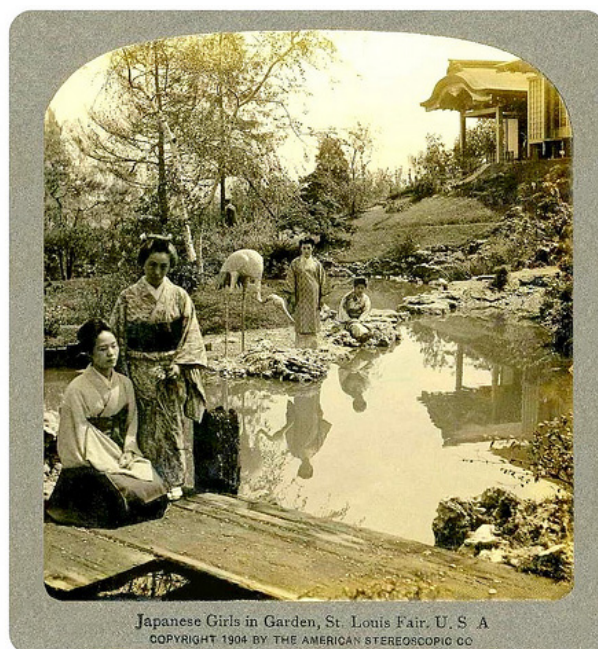
T. S. Eliot and Impressionism

Eliot's copy of Arthur Symons's *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, the book that introduced him to French Symbolism and to his vocation as a poet, bears a single marginal annotation. In the passage marked by Eliot, Symons explains Laforgue's literary aesthetic in terms of impressionist painting: "The old cadences, the old eloquence, the ingenuous seriousness of poetry, are all banished, on a theory as self denying as that which permitted Degas to dispense with recognizable beauty in his figures." Eliot's initial connection with Laforgue may have been through painting, for he later reminisced that Manet and Monet were among his great "discoveries" of 1907-08. Though Eliot's debt to Laforgue for images of cosmopolitan decadence and strategies of ironic detachment is well known, an examination of their shared "impressionism" is long overdue. As a research assistant of Charles Ephrussi, an editor of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* and an early supporter of impressionism, Laforgue met most of the impressionist painters and came to regard his own poetry as the pen-and-ink equivalent of their visual aesthetic. Laforgue elaborated his theory of visual and literary impressionism in a review of an exhibition of paintings by Manet, Monet, and Pissarro at the Gurlitt Gallery in Berlin. For Laforgue, the impressionists' over-analysis of the "most sensitive gradations and decompositions" of a single form of sensation (sight) made their painting a paradigm of late nineteenth-century decadence. In his poetry, Laforgue correspondingly rehearses the act of seeing as a means of analyzing the very psychology of self-perception. In this paper, I read Eliot's use of Laforguean imagery through the lens of the French poet's little-known art criticism, in particular focusing on Eliot's association of sight with self-analysis in such poems as "First Debate between the Body and Soul" and "Mandarins."

John Morgenstern
Clemson University

"The Lotus Rose, Quietly": Eliot, Asia, and the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis

It has been axiomatic in T. S. Eliot scholarship that the poet's abiding interest in Eastern religion, philosophy, and culture was awakened during his graduate years at Harvard. Yet in recent decades it has become clear that the poet's interest in the East actually has its origins in his childhood reading, particularly of Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*, Edward FitzGerald's *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*. Additionally, Tatsushi Narita's work demonstrates persuasively that Eliot attended the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition and World's Fair in St. Louis, emphasizing in particular the influence that the Philippine Exhibition may have had on Eliot's cross-cultural sensibility. Building upon this work, this paper examines the broader influences of the Fair on Eliot's interest in the East, i.e., beyond the connections Narita draws between the Philippine Exhibition and Eliot's primitive/modern dialectic. The author extends this inquiry by taking into consideration other aspects of the 1904 World's Fair that the adolescent Eliot would have encountered, and which no doubt spurred his developing curiosity about the East and its diverse cultures. The paper first addresses the valuable yet rather narrow scholarly emphasis on the Fair's Philippine Exhibition and its possible influence on Eliot. It then considers other



Japanese Girls in Garden, St. Louis Fair, U. S. A
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positive correlations, with particular regard to the probable influence of the Fair on Eliot's *Japonisme* and certain imagery in *The Waste Land*. The paper thus seeks to draw sharper attention to this formative (yet largely unacknowledged) event in the young life of Eliot and to broaden the discussion surrounding its significance. While his time at Harvard certainly formalized these studies, Eliot by no means needed to travel to Cambridge, Massachusetts to acquire this interest, for in 1904 the World's Fair—quite literally—brought “the East” to St. Louis.

Roderick B. Overaa
University of Tampa

Astride *The Dark Horse*: T. S. Eliot and the Lloyds Bank Intelligence Department

In his official resignation from Lloyds Bank in December, 1925, Eliot expressed to his employer one genuine regret, “I should have liked to see the Intelligence Section a reality—it has never been more than an aspiration of a few persons, including myself.” It was the promise of the Intelligence Section, initially envisioned as its own department, which Lloyds used to persuade Eliot to remain a banker three years earlier, during one of his many flirtations with more overtly literary employment. The promise was, essentially, to give him his own press. The foremost duty of the Intelligence Department was the production and distribution of Lloyds growing stable of internal publications.

I would like to use this presentation to introduce and analyze a subset of these publications, some of which Eliot contributed to directly, writing the “Foreign Exchanges” column for *Lloyd's Bank Monthly* and compiling the daily *Extracts From the Foreign Press*. But I would also attend to another periodical, *The Dark Horse*, a staff magazine previously unmentioned in Eliot scholarship, but which was integrated into the department he managed. Using examples pulled from the archives of The British Library, I would like to discuss how these publications offer an explanation for why Eliot remained with Lloyds against the wishes of his peers and patrons, but also for the dissatisfaction with the mechanisms of modernist banking that eventually secured his resignation.

Matt Seybold
University of Alabama

About Time: T. S. Eliot and Walter Benjamin

In “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” Eliot helped sever tradition from historicism, the grand liberal narration of the nineteenth century, as did many European historians and intellectuals of the 1910s and 1920s in the wake of Nietzsche's attacks on the damages of historical thinking. Recent criticism has emphasized the systemic thinking by which Eliot developed his concept of tradition (Assmann 2007). Others have found connections with Walter Benjamin's “Theses on the Concept of History” (1940) with its central image of the Angelus Novus (Neilson 2007) to characterize Eliot's dynamic concept of tradition. In spite of their quite incompatible political affiliations there are subtle common issues in both authors, which I previously worked on, concentrating on “Sweeney Agonistes” and Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (*Trauerspiel*). I would now like to use Benjamin's dialectical image to read *Murder in the Cathedral's* modernistic medieval pageantry.

Giuliana Ferreccio
University of Turin, Italy

Eliot and Melomania

Eliot's early poetry reflects his active participation in the music-listening culture of Boston and Cambridge in 1909 and 1910 and his involvement in contemporary debates about the relative merits of various composers—chiefly Wagner and Chopin—and the moral and psychological effects of music. Arthur Symons, James Huneker, Irving Babbitt, and Henri Bergson were among the contemporary critics and thinkers who contributed to Eliot's understanding of music and its influence. This debate continued the nineteenth-century controversies raised by the operas of Wagner and Nietzsche's defense of Wagner in *The Birth of Tragedy*, which first appeared in English translation in 1909, nine years after his death. Nietzsche's distinction between the Apollonian and the Dionysian impulses in music—rational and formal, on the one hand; irrational, emotional, chaotic, on the other—may be discerned in Eliot's conflicted responses to music, especially Wagner's operas. But the debate over music's influence had become more the realm of psychology than philosophy by the time Eliot was in college. Both

Huneker and Babbitt refer to “melomania,” a turn-of-the-century diagnosis of irrational enthusiasm for music. James Huneker’s book of short stories titled *Melomaniacs* most likely came to Eliot’s attention when he reviewed Huneker’s *Egoists* in 1909 and shares many features with *Inventions*. Whether called Dionysian ecstasy or melomania, this state seems both the object of fear and desire in Eliot’s notebook; moreover, the highly charged nature of the debate corresponds with his anxious indecisiveness about how to respond to music.

Frances Dickey
University of Missouri

Absolute Music: Schopenhauer, Beethoven and Eliot’s *Four Quartets*

It is well known that Eliot’s *Four Quartets* was inspired by the absolute music of Beethoven’s late string quartets. Yet, as John Xiros Cooper points out, most studies that suggest the analogy don’t do very much with it. What has been neglected is the key place of Schopenhauer in this picture. In *The World as Will and Representation* (1818), Schopenhauer presents music, above all arts, as uniquely expressing or copying the will as thing in itself, thus revealing the inner essence of the world. For Schopenhauer, music that affords such insight is specifically Classical or Romantic, non-programmatic music, without narrative or text—what was termed in the late nineteenth century, “absolute music.” By 1870, Carl Dahlhaus wrote, Beethoven’s quartets are “the paradigm of the idea of absolute music. . . the idea that music is a revelation of the absolute, specifically because it “dissolves” itself from the sensual, and finally even from the affective sphere.”

This paper suggests that the influence of Schopenhauer on Eliot’s *Quartets* is importantly mediated by Wagner’s 1870 “Beethoven” essay. An account of the expressive potential of instrumental music, this is the only public context in which Wagner directly refers to Schopenhauer’s ideas on music. For the philosopher, music portrays universal or abstract emotion; conversely, the experience of music implies a loss of individuality. In Wagner’s essay, music is similarly described as the exalted means by which “the will feels *one* forthwith, above all bounds of individuality.” Notably, Wagner understands music through Schopenhauer’s category of the sublime, drawing on the latter’s conception of an “exaltation” above the will. In *Burnt Norton*, Eliot too invokes

the “exaltation” of Schopenhauer’s sublime. *Four Quartets* will be seen to be greatly concerned with Schopenhauer’s dialectics: the renunciation of the individual will and simultaneous contemplation of the universal will, as music. By way of Schopenhauer’s aesthetics, the *Quartets* are read as an exercise in impersonality, a poetry which aspires to the condition of absolute music.

Aakanksha Virkar-Yates
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Integrity and Ideology in *Murder in the Cathedral*

One of the classic problems arising in discussions of integrity is its troubling resemblance to other, less virtuous traits. Focusing on *Murder in the Cathedral*, this paper takes up the problematic distinction between the person of integrity and the ideologue, both characterized by a tenacious unwillingness to compromise their principles. In *Integrity: A Philosophical Inquiry*, the ethicist Mark Halfon proposes that for persons of integrity, the principles that drive their actions are always open to reevaluation. Ideologues, by contrast, are unreasonable, in the sense that they “will not modify their principles or reassess their ideals under any condition or for any reason” (67). This is not to say that a person of integrity is *required* to compromise or to alter a principle simply because reasons to do so have been offered. As Halfon writes: “If the reasons for the criticism or conflict are ‘bad’ reasons, then it is reasonable to refuse to make any concessions and to reject the path of compromise” (69). Of course the goodness and badness of reasons are not always readily decidable, with the result that, in practice, we attribute integrity to uncompromising people we agree with, while those who cling to ideologies we ourselves reject are, naturally, mere ideologues.

My paper shows how *Murder in the Cathedral* may be seen to turn on exactly this philosophical difficulty, inviting the audience to join the characters on stage in their efforts to categorize the protagonist, Thomas Becket, as he walks the line between ethical integrity and ideological inflexibility. The play responds indirectly to the political crisis of the 1930s, reflecting and interrogating Eliot’s own determined yet hopeless effort to escape the prison of ideology.

David E. Chinitz
Loyola University, Chicago

American Literature Association, Washington, D.C., May 2014

T. S. Eliot and Lyric Answerability

In his 1932 introduction to *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, Eliot placed the poem's existence "somewhere between the writer and the reader" (30). Although he never defined the nature of this "somewhere," Eliot's later prose and poetry suggest that he saw it as a place of encounter, or meeting, between writer and reader, both of whom become "answerable" for the poem. The poet takes responsibility for the poetic utterance, and the reader is called upon to respond with what Bakhtin called an "active understanding" (*Speech Genres*). In this bi-directional way, the poem itself can be said to require, or initiate, an ethical stance (Scanlon 15). When we talk about ethics in literature, we are referring not to ethical content, or to moral imperatives, but rather to a built-in structure of dialogue and responsibility that inheres in the act of writing and of reading. Eliot's late poetry is exemplary for how lyric poetry acts out the ways in which we "take literature to heart" in our personal lives.

Eliot's dramatization of the encounter with the other in *Little Gidding*, his emphasis on "that

pointed scrutiny with which we challenge/ The first-met stranger in the waning dusk," is an allegory that problematizes, but at the same time humanizes, *Four Quartets*. To reach out to the *text as other* is both an ethical and an interpretive act. Only in an ethics of reading can the text be transformed from a frozen object into a living utterance, "calling" to another person. For the reader to hear this other voice implies an acceptance of responsibility or answerability. The other will retain its otherness, remaining to be interpreted on future occasions. Reading the poem again and again becomes an ethical act. In this light, even reader frustration can be seen as a dynamic, productive, and even desirable response, rather than as a sign of defeat. As Gadamer noted, the experience of "being pulled up short by the text" (*Truth and Method*) contributes to interpretation and inquiry; instead of considering the opacity of the language as analogous to human inadequacy, we might see it as the very factor that generates further interpretation. The poem will continue to exist "somewhere between the writer and the reader," awaiting the next encounter.

Kinereth Meyer
Bar-Ilan University

NOTES

Letter from George T. Wright:

Grover Smith and I, besides our having both written about Eliot, had been classmates at Columbia, although after our Columbia years it took us decades to reconnect at meetings of the Eliot Society. As it happens, I've just published a personal memoir, *Starting from Staten Island*, which includes some paragraphs about Grover:

One example [of classmates who were better prepared for Columbia than I was at 15] was Grover Smith, whom I met in Latin classes that year. I thought my Latin was pretty good after four years under Miss Benning, but I found Horace and Catullus much trickier in the small classes Grover and I took with Dr. John Richards, a quiet scholarly Englishman, who sometimes invited our class of two to meet in his nearby apartment. My attempts at Latin prose composition were passable but never very secure,

and the assignments in Livy, Pliny, and others in the wonderfully suave and learned Scotsman Gilbert Higher's more free-wheeling Latin literature classes were twice as long as Miss Benning had ever given us and took me hours to prepare. Grover, however, a tall and in those days, I thought, a sometimes grumpy yet friendly young man, was clearly equal to it all.

I enjoyed these classes and others I took with Grover, including smaller ones. . . and through our Columbia years had many agreeable conversations with him, either on campus or in the Gold Rail, the bar a few blocks down Broadway where students liked to hang out. Later on, Grover became a very fine scholar, a major authority on T. S. Eliot's poetry, and, more than that, a perceptive close reader of Eliot's writing and personality.

George T. Wright, *Starting from Staten Island* (Tucson: Wheatmark, 2014).

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Supervisor of Elections seeks nominations for three positions on the Board—those presently held by Cyrena Pondrom and Nancy Gish, and another created by the Board's recent approval of an amendment to the Society's bylaws (see <http://www.luc.edu/eliot/who.htm>). The terms will run from 1 July 2015: three years for the two candidates who receive the most votes, and two years for the third successful candidate. This scheme will preserve an even staggering of terms on the Board.

Elected members are expected to attend the annual conference of the Society, at which the Board

meeting is held, and to take on other tasks in service to the Society.

Nominations and self-nominations should be sent to the Supervisor of Elections, David Chinitz (dchinit@luc.edu) by 31 January 2015. Candidates with five or more nominations will appear on the ballot.

Members may also make nominations for honorary membership and for distinguished service awards. These nominations should be made to the President, Michael Coyle (mcoyle@colgate.edu), by 25 July 2015.

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Society Meetings To submit papers for any conference session sponsored by the Society, or to make suggestions or inquiries regarding the annual meeting or other Society activities, please contact the *President*.

Time Present and Membership For matters having to do with *Time Present: The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society*, or to pay dues, inquire about membership, or report a change of address please contact the *Vice President*.

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Time Present is edited and published on behalf of the T. S. Eliot Society by Frances Dickey with the generous support of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Missouri.

Book Review Editor: John Morgenstern

Layout by Christina Bramon

Printed in the US