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6. Poetry 1900-1945

a.) General

b.) T.S. Eliot

The largest contribution to T.S. Eliot studies during 2016 was the sixth volume in the ongoing edition of the poet's letters, edited and annotated in copious scholarly detail by John Haffenden. Reviewers have noted plaintively that previous volumes in this series consist largely of workaday material from Eliot's career as an editor and publisher, but this volume covers the years 1932 and 1933, during which Eliot instigated a separation from his first wife, Vivienne. He took this dramatic step whilst making an extended stay in America, where he held the Charles Eliot Norton professorship in Poetry at Harvard. This personal drama plays out amongst the polite rejection letters to would-be poets and notes to his secretary, commissioning reviews for the *Criterion*. The volume supplies letters from Vivienne too, which become increasingly fraught as her husband's plans become clear. As with other volumes in this series, Eliot sheds relatively little light upon his craft within his correspondence, but there is a strong biographical interest here. Haffenden's notes supplement this with detailed ancillary material about, for example, Eliot's withdrawal to the countryside in order to avoid Vivienne upon his return to England and some of the legal arrangements and negotiations.

Given how many of Eliot's letters are taken up with the business of commissioning and rejecting books and articles, it may be surprising that the new edition of his correspondence features very little in Nicola Wilson's *The Book World*, an edited collection of essays on the publication, sale and distribution of books during the first half of the twentieth century. Perhaps the scholarship of Haffenden and others in this area has yet to percolate through to the work of book historians. Eliot's presence in Wilson's volume is limited to Lisa Jaillant's essay about the introductions written by Eliot and Virginia Woolf to editions of Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* and Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* respectively, within the Oxford World's Classics series (pp. 52-82). Jaillant locates these prefatory writings in larger history of the World's Classics; she connects them to series editor, Humphrey Milford's understanding of the advertising value of the names of these Modernist writers for a middle-class audience. Eliot's activities as both a poet and an editor feature in passing in Eric Bulson's *Little Magazine, World Form* which offers a reassessment of Eliot's

negotiations regarding the first publication of *The Waste Land* with two periodicals on either side of the Atlantic, the *Criterion* and the *Dial* (pp. 92-102). Bulson connects the resulting differences of text, punctuation and typography between these two publications to a broader argument about the developing nature of transatlantic periodical networks and 'form'.

2016 was a year rich in edited collections of essays on Eliot. Edited by Frances Dickey and John Morgenstern, *The Edinburgh Companion to T.S. Eliot and the Arts* is a lengthy and substantial contribution to the field. The editors have divided the volume into three thematic sections, each accompanied by a short editorial overview of the topic and the essays therein. But it opens with a preface from Ron Schuchard which surveys Eliot's encounter with the visual arts through various patrons and patronesses (Isabella Gardner in Boston; Ottoline Morrell at Garsington), before considering his experience of artistic censorship.

In the first section on visual arts, Frances Dickey explores Eliot's introduction to *japonisme* at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston when he was an undergraduate at Harvard. Dickey's essay thoughtfully connects this to the early poem sequence, 'Mandarins', setting out the possibility of seeing this poem ekphrastically as a progress through a museum. Nancy Hargrove seeks to expand our understanding of Eliot's exposure to Asian philosophical and spiritual ideas beyond his graduate studies under Josiah Royce. Her contribution lays out Eastern holdings at ethnographic exhibitions in the Louvre and British Museum that Eliot may have encountered during his visit to Europe in 1910. Focussed on another early poem, 'Afternoon', Michael Coyle's essay supplies historical and contextual information about the rise of the British Museum and especially its holdings from Assyria. In this way, Coyle connects Eliot's poetic of treatment of women visiting these works with a specific historical moment in museum culture and the archaeology of knowledge.

John Morgenstern's contribution traces the influence of the art historian, Matthew Stewart Prichard on Eliot's early aesthetics, arguing that Prichard's Bergsonian appreciations of Matisse shaped early poems such as 'Bacchus and Ariadne: 2nd Debate between the Body and Soul'. He concludes, however, by indicating some of the ways that 'multiple layers of ekphrasis' in the opening sections of 'A Game of Chess' (p. 65) surpass Prichard's theories. Anne Stillman's essay on Italian painting is less closely focussed on particular biographical or historical contexts than other contributions to this section, but it is more sharply focussed on the poems themselves and all the more insightful for this. Stillman draws particular attention to the unsettling effects evoked by Eliot's practice of allusion in relation to visual sources.

Joshua Mabie's essay on London's church architecture revisits old arguments about Eliot's attitude towards the past, by considering his view of attempts to restore or destroy city churches, such as St Magnus Martyr and St Mary Woolnoth. As a young man Eliot viewed these churches as 'stable artifacts that maintain a link to a less corrupt, more beautiful past' (p. 76), but Mabie shows that he arrived at a different view in the 1950s. Later in life, Eliot came to see that restoration might involve change and adaptation too.

The second section of the collection treats Eliot's interest in music – a more obvious preoccupation from his early poetry to *Four Quartets*. Frances Dickey's essay sets the proliferation of musical references in the *Inventions* notebook (including the title) against the rich musical culture of Boston during the period of Eliot's studies at Harvard. Dickey explores the ambivalence or mixed feelings about music in these early poems and traces the influence here of Eliot's tutor, Irving Babbitt and the writer and critic James Hunecker. The latter's collection of short stories, *Melomania* [1902], Dickey argues, constitutes 'an important context for and analogue to' Eliot's early poetry' (p. 113). Adrian Paterson's contribution examines 'the receptions and paratexts through which Wagner enters *The Waste Land*' (p. 122), ranging from the German composer's reception in France during the nineteenth century to Modernist responses to Wagner in London before and during the publication of Eliot's poem in the 1920s. As well as drawing out these contexts, Paterson also deftly delineates the ways the sounds of Wagner's vocal music register within the fabric of *The Waste Land* itself. Katherine Hobbs examines Wagner's influence on Eliot too, but adopts a highly specific approach: she identifies the role played by the character of Kundry in *Parsifal* as central to *The Waste Land* and to Eliot's creation of a central, multi-faceted female figure. Some of the connections Hobbs cites are more attenuated than others, but many of her arguments are plausible.

Turning to Stravinsky, T. Austin Graham argues that Eliot was ahead of his contemporaries in his appreciation of works such as *The Rite of Spring*. Graham then explores affinities and connections between the Russian composer's most famous work and *The Waste Land*, before concluding that the two artists shared an understanding of the relation between sound and history. Moving away from Western classical music, Steven Tracey considers jazz, drawing connections and comparisons between Eliot, Louis Armstrong and Ralph Ellison. A detailed account of Armstrong's playing is compared to the 'dazzling, dizzying, seemingly improvisatory weaving of [Eliot's] material [in *The Waste Land*] into a seemingly impossible, always surprising whole' (p. 165). In contrast with Tracey, Aakanksha Virkar-Yates turns back to Wagner, in order to explore his influence on the later poetry of

Eliot's *Four Quartets* through the presence of a Schopenhauerian aesthetics of music. Drawing heavily on Wagner too, Michelle Witen's contribution explores Eliot's creation of 'musical patterning' in *Four Quartets* (p. 204), placing this in context with the rise of 'absolute music' during the nineteenth century and the capacities for increased dynamic range fostered by technological developments in the manufacture of various musical instruments. Witen concludes with a reading of repetition and pattern in 'East Coker'.

Barry Faulk's essay examines Eliot's interest in music hall as a means of exploring the value of comedy in his work and the ways in which comedy relates to Modernism more generally. Faulk ranges widely, taking in theories of the comic by Freud, Bergson, Baudelaire and Wyndham Lewis, as well as music hall performance by Marie Lloyd and Walter Benjamin's contemporary interest in surrealism. 'Eliot's dialectical notion of modern comedy', Faulk argues, 'was shared by the European avant-garde of his day' (p.190).

Anthony Cuda provides an account of the private theatrical company, the Phoenix Society and its chequered history of attempts to revive various seventeenth-century works from Webster to Dryden during the 1920s. Eliot wrote commentary on their efforts in the *Dial* and elsewhere, as Cuda records, and their dramaturgical practice may have informed his own thinking about the relation between theatre and verse in *Sweeney Agonistes*. Susan Jones's contribution examines the influence of dance upon Eliot, using it as a 'provocative thread' (p. 227) that links: the prosody of early poems, such as 'La Figlia che Piange'; Mallarmé's transformative vision of poetic subjectivity, inspired by the performances of Loie Fuller; the music of Stravinsky and choreography of Massine in the Russian Ballets; and the paradoxical 'still point of the turning world' in *Four Quartets*.

A third section in the volume, devoted to Eliot and Media, begins with David Trotter's fascinating account of 'media' as a concept. Starting from Hegel, Trotter explores 'how far our own association of the term "medium" with communications technologies is from the associations developed in literary and philosophical discourse at the time when Eliot began to frame *The Waste Land*' (p. 256). He then picks his way deftly and with assurance through Eliot's youthful studies in Bergson towards a growing self-consciousness about 'media' in the cinematography of Cecil B. De Mille. The director's fascination with scenes of feminine toilette offers Trotter a point of entry to a speculative reading of the scene of Fresca's toilette in discarded drafting from *The Waste Land*.

Eliot's poetry was shaped, Malobika Sarkar claims, by 'the inescapable reality of the phonograph's influence' (p. 262). Sarkar's contribution offers a history of the phonograph and its transformative effect upon our appreciation of sound, before exploring allusions to the

gramophone in Eliot's poetry and criticism. This concludes with a reading of the rhythmic soundscape of *The Waste Land* as transformed by Eliot's sensitivity to the gramophone. With a collection of such length, there are bound to be points of overlap and moments that sparkle less than others, but *The Edinburgh Companion to T.S. Eliot and the Arts* contains much that is new and insightful and will no doubt inspire further research across the areas it delineates.

Renewing or revising a standard critical anthology such as the *Cambridge Companion* series offers a chance to assess what has changed in the intervening period. Edited by A. David Moody, the previous *Cambridge Companion to T.S. Eliot* was published in 1994, but the *New Cambridge Companion to T.S. Eliot*, edited by Jason Harding only really contains one essay that rises to this challenge: Gail McDonald's contribution on 'Gender and Sexuality' begins by pointing out the absence of her topic from the previous collection and emphasising the influence of the New Modernist Studies upon our understanding of Eliot. In fact, whilst McDonald touches upon Eliot's life and work, her essay is more strongly a reflection upon the changing critical scene, one which considers responses to Eliot's poetry more than the work itself. Happily, the other essays in volume are more solidly engaged with his writings and, as a whole, these approaches complement each other. The collection may not break much new ground, but it is a highly useful critical resource for students of Eliot's work and a strong successor to the previous volume.

The editor, Jason Harding offers an overview of Eliot's life and biography. Michael O'Neill provides an account of 'allusion and form' across the poetry, which credits the 'mingling of attitudes' (p. 27) resulting from Eliot's allusive practices, charts the dramatic value of Eliot's rhythm and lays out the uncertainties he generated through rhyme. O'Neill's approach in terms of allusion provides the volume with a thematic core and many of the essays probe one or more of Eliot's sources. Ann Stillman's fine-tuned contribution on *Prufrock and other Observations* locates cross-connections between the poems in Eliot's first collection through a common vocabulary of words and situations. Rick de Villiers' essay on the quatrain poems finds them as 'driven by a desire for seriousness' (p. 65), whereas Lawrence Rainey traces different structures of voice in *The Waste Land*, focussing upon the influence of the typist novel as a genre upon Eliot's presentation of the tensions between the 'automatic' activity of work and self identity or self respect. Sarah Kennedy reads *Ash Wednesday* as caught between an impulse towards 'poetic self-construction' and 'spiritual self-absorption' (p. 95), whilst Steven Ellis explores the relation between religion and history in *Four Quartets*, describing the challenge, as Eliot saw it, of transcending time-bound

human experience. *Four Quartets*, Ellis concludes, 'by no means washes its hands of the political and historical situation' (p. 113).

Anthony Cuda surveys the verse drama, outlining Eliot's position as 'a critic and theorist of the stage, profoundly concerned with the state of contemporary theatre and determined to change its direction' (p. 116). Helen Thaventhiran explores Eliot's career as a literary critic, scrutinising the 'Eliotic swerve' (p. 132), namely his deployment of litotic negative forms and logical inconsistencies to confound the reader and drive home a point. In comparison, John Xiros Cooper examines Eliot as a social critic, establishing his opposition to the substitution of 'culture' for religion and 'resistance to the advance of secularism and its accompanying materialist values' (p. 147). Jewel Spears Brooker takes advantage of the recent publication of Eliot's graduate essays in the ongoing edition of his *Complete Prose* to provide a detailed and thoughtful account of his responses to Henri Bergson and F.H. Bradley. Barry Spurr closes the volume with an essay on Eliot's Anglo-Catholicism which criticises those who fail 'to take the poet at his word' (p. 187). Eliot's turn to the Anglo-Catholic church was not, Spurr urges, a 'conversion' but something more gradual. Accordingly, Spurr argues, we should read *The Waste Land* as 'at least as much a "Christian" poem as *Four Quartets*' (p. 188).

Barry Spurr's work also enjoys prominent positioning in Scott Freer and Michael Bell's edited collection, *Religion and Myth in T.S. Eliot's Poetry*, which contains a stimulating range of essays on Eliot's religious interests. Spurr's essay on Eliot and Anglo-Catholicism starts in a combative mode, singling out John Haffenden for perpetuating a divide between Eliot's output before and after his open declarations of religious affinity. Curiously, Spurr doesn't substantiate the claim made here and in his contribution to Harding's volume, that 'the continuities in Eliot's *oeuvre*, thematically and technically, are more remarkable than any striking change of manner and vision' (p. 2). Instead, this essay provides a thoughtful and conscientious delineation of the specific nature of Eliot's poetic commitments to Anglo-Catholicism, from his fascination with liturgical cycles to his thoughts and feelings about doctrines of incarnation. Tony Sharpe's contribution begins with the negative reactions towards Eliot's public confessions of Christian faith expressed by contemporary modernists, such as Virginia Woolf. Citing Graham Hough's accusation of dogmatism, Sharpe then explores tensions between poetry and doctrine in *Four Quartets* and the verses Eliot wrote for *The Rock*. Andy Mousley's contribution draws a title, 'Felt Significance' from the work of F.R. Leavis. Contemporary criticism, Mousley suggests, focuses upon material and ideological factors at the expense of attending to what Leavis called 'life'. His essay offers

readings of 'Prufrock' and *Four Quartets* in an attempt to achieve 'the reconsecration of literature's ability to minister to life' (p. 50). Michael Bell's contribution situates Eliot's poetry in relation to a broader conception of Modernist mythopoeia, drawing on work by Matthew Arnold, Nietzsche, Freud and J.G. Frazer to provide historical and intellectual context. In *The Waste Land*, Bell argues, myth functions as 'a place-holder for religious belief, rather than the mythopoeic precipitate of its loss' (p. 73). *Four Quartets*, on the other hand, remains resistant to Arnoldian humanism and aestheticism, invoking 'by poetic means a vividly felt intuition of an alternative order of being' (p. 74).

Scott Freer's contribution to this volume begins with the influence of Baudelaire upon Eliot, exploring the role of 'ennui' in the poetry. The Frenchman's vision of cosmopolitan apathy provided Eliot with the basis for a vision of ennui as 'an unorthodox and uncompromising vision of evil' which also derives from medieval notions of 'acedia – spiritual apathy – being dead to the world and oneself' (p. 77). Freer then traces these notions across Eliot's work from 'The Hollow Men' to *Four Quartets*. Joanna Rzepa examines Eliot's concern with the realities of Incarnation, through a reading of 'The Journey of the Magi'. Rzepa sets this in context with Eliot's extended conversation about theological matters with John Middleton Murray in print and via correspondence. In turn, she places their disagreements in relation to contemporary Modernist theology in the early years of the twentieth century and Eliot's formative reading of Launcelot Andrewes during the 1920s.

Jeremy Diaper's essay locates Eliot's 'Religious Agrarianism' in relation to the organic husbandry movement, tracing his connections with the *New English Weekly*. Eliot's interest in 'the cultivation of the soil', Diaper argues, 'was directly related to the opportunity it presented for spiritual rebirth and the renewal of a Christian sensibility' (p. 130). But Diaper also discerns mixed feelings on Eliot's part towards 'merely countrified' forms of existence, lacking in spiritual rigour (p. 139). Matthew Geary's contribution on 'Maternal Allegory' in *Ash Wednesday*, builds on previous work by Elizabeth Daumer in order to identify 'the spiritualised presence of the mother' within Eliot's poem 'in eschatological-allegorical moments of faith under conditions of melancholia, death and doubt' (p. 147). Geary finds his claims in evidence from typescript drafts of *Ash Wednesday* and a reading of Walter Benjamin's theory of tragedy. Finally, the collection concludes with Lynda Kong's deeply personal description of Eliot's influence upon her own 'spiritual quest' (p. 176) and conversion to Christianity. She draws on Charles Taylor's account of the current 'secular age' to explore Eliot's sensitivities to the lived experience of religious belief and the difficulties this poses.

Beyond such edited collections, several critics chose to centre chapters or parts of chapters on Eliot, within a longer work. W. David Soud devotes a chapter of his monograph on Modernism and theology, *Divine Cartographies* to what he describes as ‘The Dialectical Poetics of Four Quartets’ (pp. 147-216). Specifically, Soud traces the influence of Karl Barthes’ theology upon Eliot during the 1930s through his activities as an editor and critic for *The Criterion*, before offering a reading of *Four Quartets* in terms of Barthesian dialectics.

A chapter on Eliot concludes Ranjan Ghosh’s *Transcultural Poetics and the Concept of the Poet* (pp.147-76), offering ‘a transhabitual understanding of the platinum poet’ (p. 157). Ghosh’s definitions of ‘trans-habit’ are slippery, even contradictory, but that may be the point: ‘trans-habit’ seems to be a way of acknowledging the hardening of experience into habit at the same time as understanding an oppositional power within ‘habitual modes of seeing, doing and thinking’ that leads to the modern and the new (p. 168). As such, Ghosh is indebted to sources and thinkers as various as Jacques Derrida and Buddhist, Hindu and Jain teachings on the concept of ‘*tarka*’ (p. 4). This work has clear applications for re-examining the mixture of the monumental and the dynamic in Eliot’s understanding of ‘tradition’.

Eliot’s post-war writings on culture feature prominently in the third chapter of Terry Eagleton’s *Culture* which concludes by contrasting him with Raymond Williams regarding their views on the degree to which historical societies can be brought to consciousness of culture. For Eliot, Eagleton suggests, a common culture is ‘commonly shared’, whereas Williams conceived of it as ‘commonly made’ (p. 94). Amongst the essays and articles collected in *Common Writing*, Stefan Collini’s lucid and informed writings on public intellectual culture in Britain, Chapter 2 derives from previously published reviews of the first two volumes of Eliot’s *Letters* and A.D. Moody’s biography of Ezra Pound. With characteristic poise and style, Collini re-treads some familiar ground, outlining Eliot and Pound’s collaborative interactions, tracing Eliot’s activities as editor of the *Criterion* and pondering his flirtation with a university career whilst delivering the Clark Lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge during 1926.

Martin Hampton’s ‘T.S.E. and the *TES*: Eliot and Educationalism’ (*ModCult* 11:ii[2016] 206-24) also examines Eliot’s career as a public intellectual, tracing the poet’s ‘neglected though intriguing relationship’ with H.C. Dent, the editor of the *Times Educational Supplement* (p. 207). Dent used his editorship to push a radical educationalist view, but moved in some of the same circles as Eliot and the two men became involved in open, public debate within both the *TES* and *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*. At stake, Hampton suggests, were significant, but cordial differences of opinion about the nature

of organised state intervention in the moral development of individuals. The implications are broad and Hampton's argument takes in Eliot's 'deliberation of historical time and the multitude of potentialities through which one's responsibility to the future becomes manifest' within *Four Quartets* as well as Eliot's critical prose (p. 216).

Duncan MacKay's 'Eliot's Scientific "Tendencies" in 1919' (*PNR* 42:vi[2016] 26-29) seeks to challenge the notion that Eliot took only a limited interest in the dramatic developments in science and physics during the first decades of the twentieth century. Building on work by Michael Whitworth, MacKay traces Eliot's active interest in theories of relativity and scientific knowledge through his social connections to figures such as J.W.N. Sullivan, Arthur Eddington and Bertrand Russell, and his involvement with periodicals such as the *Athenaeum*, *English Review* and the *New Age*. This short piece is nicely rooted in historical facts, such that it indicates how much more there may be still to say in this area.

Eliot features too within particular contributions to broader, themed collections of essays. In the wake of recent work by Vincent Sherry and Kristin Mahoney, *Reconnecting Aestheticism and Modernism*, edited by Bénédicte Coste, Catherine Delyfer and Christine Reynier seeks to re-examine 'historiographical assumptions' about the influence of the *fin-de-siècle* upon Modernism. Contributions by Elisa Bizzotto (pp. 31-44) and Rainer Emig (pp.45- 55) feature Eliot with varying degrees of focus. Bizzotto's essay cites the influence of Arthur Symons upon Eliot in order to make a case for 're-crediting' his impact on Modernism; Emig places Eliot alongside Gerard Manley Hopkins, Lionel Johnson and Ezra Pound as part of a larger argument about the place of 'excess and waste' (p. 46) within the 'repressed decadent inheritance of modernism' (p. 53).

Almost neurotically sensitive about the risk of over-statement, Ann Stillman's 'T.S. Eliot plays Edward Lear' (in James Williams and Matthew Bevis, eds. *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, pp. 260-80) doesn't offer an argument, so much as 'some coincidences of atmosphere' (p.275). Stillman provides a dense collection of shared verbal and figurative motifs and interests across the writings (and drawings) of Eliot and Lear. The most resonant and suggestive material here catches the ways in which the poetry of both men can shift rapidly from the comical to a more serious note, or vice versa.

As the digitisation of literary texts increases, so do opportunities for performing computer-driven analyses of those texts. The influence of these techniques upon our understanding of Modernism is the subject of Shawna Ross and James O'Sullivan's edited collection, *Reading Modernism with Machines*, within which Adam James Bradley's contribution, 'In the End Was the Word: A Computational Approach to T.S. Eliot's Diction'

(pp. 185-202) deploys a 'whole-corpus approach' (p. 199) to the analysis of Eliot's lexis. Bradley assembles a database of language usage from Victorian poets, the Georgian poets and the works of George Herbert and John Donne, in order to evaluate claims that Eliot's poetic diction implemented a break from the kind of verse sponsored by Harold Monroe in the *Georgian Poets* anthologies. This database is then cross-referenced with data from the *Oxford English Dictionary* in order to establish patterns of use relative to the historical origins of words used. On this basis, Eliot's diction, Bradley shows, is much closer to his precursors in terms of his linguistic usage than he might have acknowledged.

Digitisation has also been key to the continuing survival of many academic journals, where Eliot's poetry continues to attract critical scrutiny from a variety of perspectives. Anna Aresi's 'Dante in T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*: Vision, Mysticism, and the Mind's Journey to God' (*L&T* 30:iv[2016] 398-409) argues that the influence of Dante upon *Four Quartets* should be understood in terms of Bernard of Clairvaux's 'distinction between consideration and contemplation' (p.400) for a better understanding of links between Eliot's poem and the *Divine Comedy* as forms of spiritual journey. Nicoletta Ascuito also explores Eliot's debts to Dante in 'The Sun Also Sets: The Violet Hour in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*' (*LitImag* 18:ii[2016] 150-65). This starts by describing Eliot's concern with finding the precise word to describe twilight conditions of light. Ascuito then reads reference to 'the violet hour' in *The Waste Land* as 'Eliot's intentional recreation of Dante's purgatorial atmospheres' (p. 151). Amongst other things, this allows her to establish suggestive connections between the figure of the typist in 'The Fire Sermon' and Beatrice d'Este, the neglectful wife of Nino Visconti in Dante's *Purgatorio*. Elsewhere, in 'Bergsonian Memory and Simultaneity in the Poetry of T.S. Eliot and César Vallejo' (*FMLS* 52:i[2016] 43-55), Ascuito compares Eliot with his Peruvian contemporary, César Vallejo through their mutual concern with the poetic forms of memory. Common ground, Ascuito argues, can be found through the work of the French philosopher, Henri Bergson, which 'permeated early twentieth-century culture' (p. 45).

Sean Dempsey's "'Set my lands in order": States of Exception, the Cinematic, and *The Waste Land*' (*Mosaic* 49:i[2016] 111-27) assembles a patchwork of theoretical material from Kant, to Jacques Ranciere, Merleau-Ponty and recent work on Eliot and film by David Trotter and Susan MacCabe to argue that *The Waste Land* can 'be experienced as an occasion of dissensus' in which disruption to the workings of 'everyday habits and practices' is 'suddenly experienced as a source of joy' (p. 121). Reading the poem, Dempsey suggests is to be guided towards this experience by Eliot's 'expert hand'.

Starting from Romantic tradition, Tony Sharpe's 'Unbearable Lightness: Some Modern Instances in Auden, Stevens and Eliot' (*Romanticism* 22:iii[2016] 312–21) explores and unpicks the association between bad and good and the antithesis of darkness and light in poetry by Auden, Wallace Stevens and T.S. Eliot. This article culminates in a discussion of the patterns of light and shade in *East Coker* from Eliot's *Four Quartets*, although this is amongst the earlier modern poetry under discussion, historically.

Two short articles by David-Antoine Williams explore links between Eliot and the *Oxford English Dictionary*: 'The "Oxford Dictionary" in T.S. Eliot' (*N&Q* 63:ii[2016] 293–96) sketches the poet's interest in questions of definitions. Williams tracks Eliot's usage of the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, the *New English Dictionary* and *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, pointing out that Eliot wasn't always clear about which he was using. 'Muddy' on such matters, Eliot was both concerned about linguistic 'chaos' and intrigued by the 'wobbliness' created by language change (p. 296). In comparison, 'T.S. Eliot in the *Oxford English Dictionary*' (*N&Q* 63:ii[2016] 296–301) examines the frequency with which Eliot is cited within the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Williams cites the enthusiasm of Robert Burchfield (editor of the second edition of the *OED*) for Eliot, as well as active efforts by Eliot's wife and the critic Helen Gardner to secure attestations for the poet's usage.

In 'Phlebus in Glastonbury: A Phoenician Sailor in the Tin Trade' (*YER* 31:iii/iv[2016] 39–44), Russell Elliott Murphy explores the hinterland to 'Death by Water', connecting the figure of Phlebus to Joseph of Arimathea, via the grail myth and an earlier version of the poem in French.

Carla Sofia Ferreira, 'Seeing through French Eyes: *Vers Libre* in Whitman, Laforgue, and Eliot' (*CQ* 45:i[2016] 20–41) traces lines of affiliation and influence amongst Walt Whitman, Jules Laforgue and Eliot. Starting with Laforgue's translations of Whitman, Ferreira traces the American poet's influence upon Laforgue in the form of punning points of contact between the English and French language. More controversially, Ferreira claims that Eliot's apparent poetic reconciliation with Whitman in the 1940s requires us to see him as Eliot's 'inevitable grandfather' (p. 34). But the point is urged through Laforgue's influence upon Eliot's practice of *vers libre*.

William Q. Malcuit's 'The Poetics of Political Failure: Eliot's Antiliberalism in an American Context' (*TCL* 62:i[2016] 75–95) also examines Eliot in relation to Whitman, comparing 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' to *The Song of Myself* in order to re-insert Eliot into 'the American poetic tradition that most importantly structures his early poems' (p.

75). For Malcuit, Whitman's presentation of urban subjectivities isn't so much an inspiration as a provocation for Eliot in the formation of an 'antiliberal position' (p. 77)

William Anthony Connolly's 'Raids on the Inarticulate: T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* and God' (*YER* 31:iii/iv[2016] 3-19) offers a general sequential survey of the poems in *Four Quartets*, exploring their presentation of 'apophatism, the rhetoric of negative theory' (p. 4) through a number of theological sources. In 'The Formal and Moral Challenges of T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*' (*Logos* 19:i[2016] 167-203), James Matthew Wilson, explores 'historical contexts and intellectual genesis' (p.167) of 'Eliot's formally wrenching play' (p.197) in order to emphasise its engagements with 'the permanent truths that govern our existence' (p.198) derived from the poet's religious understanding.