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b.) T.S. Eliot.

Although 2018 was a relatively quiet year in comparison with the ongoing recent busy work on the letters of T.S. Eliot and the edition of his critical prose, those projects continue to yield results. *T.S. Eliot's Dialectical Imagination* by Jewel Spears Brooker offers an overview of his poetic career by a scholar who has closely been involved in the Johns Hopkins University Press's edition of his prose. Making ample use of his early university work on philosophy and anthropology at Harvard and Oxford, Brooker argues that Eliot's poetry was shaped by dialectics. Eliot's study of F.H Bradley, she argues at the outset, led to the revelation that 'contradictions are best understood dialectically, by moving to perspectives that both include and transcend them' (p. 1); and, Brooker suggests, Eliot understood that truth was never 'self-sufficient, that all truths exist in relation to other truths' (p. 2). The first chapters of the book then adumbrate Eliot's early poetry in terms of his response to the split between mind and body, between subject and object as Eliot found it in work by Henri Bergson and F.H. Bradley. Subsequent chapters explore the 'dialectic between internal and external interpretations' (p.65), exploring *The Waste Land* in relation to J.G. Frazer's presentation of myth and theories of primitivism. Later chapters explore Eliot's turn to religion in terms of a dialectic tension between intellect and emotion and a final chapter reads *Four Quartets* in terms of a dialectic split between the reproachful theodicy of St Augustine and a more, self-forgiving theodicy associated with Julian of Norwich. Eliot's insistence on division and the dilemma of being caught 'between' forces or impulses is familiar, but, crucially, *T.S. Eliot's Dialectical Imagination* insists on moving beyond simple binary divisions towards the reconciliation of opposites in dialectic. This does not always convince, but as a whole Brooker offers a complex and nuanced overview of his work that is deeply informed by an understanding of the intellectual, historical and biographical contexts.

A second monograph from a major university press also addresses the contours of Eliot's imagination. Publishing by Cambridge University Press, Sarah Kennedy's *T.S. Eliot and the Dynamic Imagination* is, however, more various than Brooker's emphasis upon dialectic oppositions and syntheses. Kennedy starts by invoking George Steiner's *Grammars of Creation* [2001] and *Metaphors We Live By* [1980] by Mark Johnson and George Lakoff in order to set out her interest in 'Eliot's metaphoric practice in his understanding of poetic creation' (p. 8). What follows is a set of thematically organised chapters, each of which traces out a particular recurring metaphor, figure or trope in Eliot's poetry and critical prose. *The Dynamic Imagination* starts with Shakespeare and the importance of *The Tempest* to Eliot,

outlining his interest in metaphors of depth and transformation exemplified by the sea. A chapter on 'sea voices' shifts into reflections on Eliot's attitude towards divided subjectivity. Elsewhere, Shakespeare seems to represent 'pattern' for Eliot: the possibility that a coherent system of thought might lie beneath a surface of words and sounds.

Part two of Kennedy's monograph explores contemporary science as a source of metaphorical thinking in Eliot. There are chapters here on space, the gaps between atoms and the gaps between stars; on sight and the science of vision; and on the relation between psychology and physiology. These draw on Eliot's engagement with recent writings by Arthur Eddington and Alfred North Whitehead, amongst others. The final part of *The Dynamic Imagination* explores figures for selfhood. Picking up on previous discussion of divisions and splits, three chapters set out Eliot's fascination with doppelgangers, ghosts and the concept of the embryonic self.

Kennedy describes her project as a study of 'the ways Eliot imagined the process of poetic composition' (p. 161), but the results are more complex and rich than such reflexive self-preoccupation. *The Dynamic Imagination* offers a fascinating digest of the characteristic figures and locutions that shaped Eliot's thought about selfhood and literature – it outlines the habitual linguistic tools for which he reached when he sought to express himself. At the same time it is tantalising and elusive: each chapter ranges back and forth across Eliot's career without a strong guiding sense of argument across the book as a whole. The material is so well chosen and the intelligence of this project so striking, it is hard not to wish that Kennedy had pushed her findings into a stronger thesis of some kind.

As Kennedy's monograph demonstrates, some words or phrases acquire meaning or emphasis through repetition, others acquire a kind of salience from the relative infrequency with which they occur. A.J. Nickerson commences 'T. S. Eliot and the Point of Intersection' (*CambQ* 47:iv[2018] 343-59) by observing that the phrase the 'point of intersection' occurs only three times in Eliot's poetry and prose, but argues that this formulation offers 'one of the primary ways in which he interrogates his own poetics, thinking both about what poetic language is and the experiences of consciousness or meaning that it uniquely affords' (p. 343). For Nickerson the conceptual nub of 'intersection' lies in 'crossing' (a more frequent term in Eliot's vocabulary) – the frontiers broached by such crossings include theological questions about the relation between human and divine, the knowable and the unknowable; but they also encompass formal concerns with the relationship between words and music through pattern. The fundamental question for Eliot, then, would seem to be whether these

different preoccupations coincide or intersect, whether the patterning of poetry has something to offer in Eliot's striving to make sense of his spiritual experience.

Another significant study of Eliot in monograph form, Jeremy Diaper's *T.S. Eliot and Organicism* draws together recent materials from articles and essays to offer a coherent case for Eliot's 'agricultural sensibility' (p. 31). Diaper positions Eliot's critical thought and poetic output within an 'environmental literary modernism' (p. 6). The book begins with a chapter exploring Eliot's commitment to that 'agricultural sensibility' in the poetry he wrote during the 1920s. Diaper finds it telling that Eliot's conception of social crisis in *The Waste Land* is expressed in terms of a land that has suffered environmental catastrophe, that produces no nourishment for body or soul. In this chapter (as throughout out), the book moves between figurative readings of Eliot's most famous modernist works and more literal readings of contemporary writers, such as Viscount Lymington and H.J. Manningham who address questions of diet, the industrial production of food and the impoverishment of Britain's agriculture.

The rest of *Eliot and Organicism* shifts to his more direct and explicit dealings with agricultural thought from the 1930s until after the Second World War. A second chapter concerns Eliot's role as editor of the *Criterion*, examining ways in which he fostered writing and debate about agricultural policy and the environment. For Diaper this signals the poet's interests, but also constitutes a formative contribution to the organic husbandry movement in the 1930s. Chapter 3 explores Eliot's involvement with the *New English Weekly*, connecting the publication of part of *Four Quartets* there to discussion of the new organic movement and agricultural issues. Diaper probes drafts of 'Little Gidding' to uncover allusions to soil erosion. He claims that scenes frequently taken to represent the dust falling after an air raid can 'arguably' (p.72) be understood instead as allusions to the dust storms in Kansas. Chapter 4 moves onto the *Christian Newsletter* and tempers previous arguments about Eliot's agricultural concerns by contrasting his 'agrarian standpoint' (p. 100) with that of contemporaries John Middleton Murray and Ronald Duncan. In contrast with their enthusiasm for idealised rural communities, Eliot's vision of agricultural bliss was more qualified and Diaper reads this into the presentation of country life in *East Coker*. Chapter 5 reads the version of *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture* that Eliot published in book form during 1948 (as opposed to the articles and essays from which it was drawn). Concentrating on his friendship with Philip Mairet, Diaper argues that 'Eliot's engagement with organic continues to permeate' his concern with questions of culture and social organisation from a Christian perspective (p. 143).

Well-informed throughout and full of interesting contemporary material on the organic movement, there is a strong historicist bent throughout *Eliot and Organicism* which seeks to deepen and focus existing work on the poet's interest in agricultural matters; but Diaper is also keen to demonstrate the influence of these social and theoretical concerns upon the substance of his poetry. It is unfortunate that Diaper's own fondness for agricultural metaphor is overindulged in places: 'in ploughing a new scholarly furrow for Eliot and organicism, I aim to provide a fertile soil in which ecomodernism can produce further yields' (p. 6). At the risk of falling into the same trap, the joke seems a bit laboured.

Diaper's monograph is just one work that considers Eliot in the light of recent theories of ecocriticism and the ongoing environmental crisis threatened by climate change. Elizabeth Black devotes a chapter to Eliot in *The Nature of Modernism* (pp. 87-139) as part of her broader exploration of 'modernist poetry's environmental thinking' (p. 2). Black's chapter covers similar ground to the early parts of Diaper's study. Her chapter focusses upon *The Waste Land* [1922] as a new way of writing about place that departs from 'inherited forms of nature writing' (p. 88). Developing from previous writing about Eliot and nature, Black aims to present 'the whole poem as an expression of environmental concern regarding the broadening gulf between humans and nature' (p. 94). Where the poem's urban landscape and breadth of allusive reference seem to place it within a 'human sphere' of interest (p. 87), Black discerns these as a series of figures for mediating Eliot's preoccupation with the environment. She connects the criticism of materialism in *The Waste Land* to a broader 'ecocritical' concern with mankind's responsibility for preserving the natural world.

Elsewhere, 'T.S. Eliot, ecofeminist' by Etienne Terblanche (in Douglas A. Vakoch and Sam Mickey, eds. *Literature and Ecofeminism*, pp. 54-67) sets about the unlikely task of casting Eliot as 'an early ecofeminist' (p. 54). Terblanche's approach consists first of 'lingering in the moment of the text' (p. 62), delicately probing rhyme and line endings in *The Waste Land* to suggest more sympathetic affinities with female characters. Terblanche then argues that Eliot's poem aligns the act of rape with natural catastrophe and the despoliation of landscape, before launching into a blustering attack on 'feminist warmongering' (p. 63) by critics, such as Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, for interpreting his poetry through his biography (specifically, Eliot's treatment of his first wife). There are plausible arguments in the essay, but the style and structure mean that the broad claim that the 'greatness' of *The Waste Land* lies in 'Eliot's egalitarian handling of the opposite realms of male and female experience' (p. 58) is unconvincing as presented.

The most coherent sequence of work on Eliot this year within scholarly journals can be found in the *Wallace Stevens Journal* which devoted a special issue to Stevens' relationship with his contemporaries Eliot and Yeats. After Edward Ragg's prefatory piece, 'Pages from Tales: Narrating Modernism's Aftermaths' (*WSJour* 42:i[2018] 1-5), the issue commences with an interview between Ragg and Marjorie Perloff on the 'Eras and Legacies' of the three poets (*WSJour* 42:i[2018] 6-16). This interview ranges widely, but knowledgeably across the fortunes of all three poets in the academy (and beyond) on either side of the Atlantic; the status of modernism; the influence of nineteenth-century French poetry on Stevens, Eliot and Yeats; and their political views.

Skipping those articles in the journal which focus exclusively on Stevens and Yeats, this special issue continues with Lee M. Jenkins' 'Atlantic Triangle: Stevens, Yeats, Eliot in Time of War' (*WSJour* 42:i[2018] 17-30). This suggests that a 'three-way comparison' of his chosen poets 'collapses binaries that too often obtain between these major figures of poetic modernism' (p. 17). The comparisons that follow explore connections through representations of war and bloodshed by Stevens, Yeats and Eliot, but also through intricacies of form, such as Eliot's deployment of Dante's *terza rima*. In concluding, Jenkins turns to Derek Mahon's poems about the Troubles in Northern Ireland as 'the late product' of this 'circumAtlantic matrix' (p. 27). Tony Sharpe's "'Dead Opposites" or "Reconciled among the Stars"?: Stevens and Eliot' (*WSJour* 42:i[2018] 62-76) starts from the unpromising observation that Stevens 'had a certain investment in asserting his difference from Eliot, and Eliot seems not to have bothered greatly about Stevens' (p. 62), but goes on to trace points in their work where a 'momentary confluence of feeling' (p. 64) can be discerned or their interests coincide, despite the seemingly knotty intransigence which would otherwise characterize their relationship. They were not, Sharpe concludes, 'dead opposites', but they were, nevertheless 'very different' (p. 75).

"'We reason of these things with later reason": Plain Sense and the Poetics of Relief in Eliot and Stevens' (*WSJour* 42:i[2018] 99-116), by Sarah Kennedy considers the later works of both Stevens and Eliot, exploring 'the struggle to sustain creativity across a lifetime' (p. 101). The two poets, she argues, 'share a commitment to an anti-creative plainness as a vital and liberating element of the continuous turning of the imagination' (p. 99). Kennedy sets the apparent prosaism of *Four Quartets* against poems such as 'Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction', discerning 'a principle of complementarity' between them and concluding that 'it is precisely the turn toward plainness, the pursuit of poetry in spite of loss rather than as consolation for it, and the writing through the painful equinoctial awareness of infirmity, that

humanizes the late poetic work, granting it power and poignancy' (p. 114). Densely argued, this article is alert to the tone and dynamics of both Stevens and Eliot.

Looking further afield, Benjamin Madden's 'The Idea of a Colony: Eliot and Stevens in Australia' (*WSJour* 42:i[2018] 77-98) explores the anti-modernist Nietzschean poetics of the writers associated with the journal *Vision* as a means of accounting for the reception of Eliot and Stevens in Australia. As well as tracing the poetic influence of Eliot and Stevens on Australian authors, this article is alert to the material conditions informing their reception – raising important questions about which texts were available and in what form, as part of canon formation. 'Australian writers,' Madden concludes, 'have always sought [...] a means and an idiom through which to invert the colony / metropole dyad' (p. 96).

Other articles and essays in 2018 explored Eliot's literary relations with other writers too. Alan Blackstock's 'Chesterton, Eliot and Modernist Heresy' (*Renascence* 70:iii[2018] 199-216) probes Eliot's discussion of Heresy in *After Strange Gods* (1933) using the writing of G.K. Chesterton on *Heretics* (1905) and *Orthodoxy* (1908). Blackstone concedes their differences, characterising Eliot's interest in tradition as 'elitist' in comparison with Chesterton's 'populist' view (p 208). But he seeks to reconcile this contrast through their shared concern with 'religious orthodoxy' in relation to apparently literary matters. Both men, he concludes, acknowledged the importance of 'openness to rival traditions', but urged the necessity of 'maintaining a shared tradition within a community, in order to allow its members to evaluate competing claims to truth' (p 212). Felix Schmelzer's 'Jacob's Ladder in Modern Lyrical Poetry' (*symplokē* 26:i[2018] 293-306) incorporates a reading of 'Burnt Norton', alongside Novalis' *Hymnen an die Nacht* and Baudelaire's 'Élévation' as part of an attempt to gauge the nature and impact of thinking spatially about the relation between good and evil, above and below. Eliot's poetry, Schmelzer argues, manifests a 'particularly modern linguistic sensibility' (p. 304) when it comes to mapping such structures onto reality.

William Davies explores the disposition of Samuel Beckett towards Eliot in "A new occasion, a new term of relation": Samuel Beckett and T.S. Eliot' (in *Beckett and Modernism*, ed. Olga Beloborodova, Dirk Van Hulle, and Pim Verhulst, pp. 111-27). Beckett's disdain for Eliot, Davies suggests, has been exaggerated and this essay traces elements from 'Eliot's style, methods, and attitudes towards writing and art' (p. 113) across the Irish writer's career. Providing some useful nuance for recent critical accounts which identify Beckett as a late Modernist, Davies argues that even where he evinces disdain towards Eliot, Beckett's stance is better understood as something akin to Harold Bloom's anxiety of influence. 'Traces, echoes and challenges to Eliot's form of modernist

composition' in Beckett's early works, Davies claims, constitute 'a part of the creative impulse' of his writing (p. 114).

Several articles this year address questions of biography in relation to Eliot's work. Stephen D. Thompson's 'Eliot's End and Beginning: Scholarship, Poetry, Forms of Life' (*TCL* 64:iv[2018] 413-48) explores the Eliot's decision to publish his doctoral thesis on the philosophy of F.H. Bradley in 1964 to argue that the 'belated' publication 'reimagines the forms of scholarship as fundamentally personal' (p. 414). For Thompson this return to scholarly forms at the end of his career stands for Eliot's sustained engagement with the tension between 'objective externality' (p. 424) and the personal nature of experience and utterance, from the notes to *The Waste Land* to the meditations and observations of *Four Quartets*. Reviewing the 'fraught' relation of Eliot's poetry to 'life-writing' (p. 118), Jamie Wood's "'Here I Am": Eliot, "Gerontion," and the Great War' (*Biography* 41:i[2018] 116-42) seeks to read 'Gerontion' as a kind of 'confessional poetry' that seeks to come to terms with his status in 1919 as a noncombatant. Wood's reading starts with biographical inquiry into the sources of the poem and its composition, marrying this to a strong sense of the historical moment at which Eliot worked on the poem and the ways this may have shaped its form and content. The article concludes by reviewing different ways of reading the poem's sardonic depictions of inaction and impotence in the face of conflict in relation to Eliot's own position. And Marjorie Perloff's 'Eliot the Young Reviewer: The Formation of Aesthetic Judgement' (*LitJ* 19:ii[2017] 135-42) draws upon the ongoing edition of Eliot's critical prose to reassess Eliot's 'early bread-and-butter pieces' (p. 136), reviews written for the *Egoist* in the first decades of the twentieth century, before he had acquired much fame. Noting Eliot's hostility towards the 'Georgian poetry' of Rupert Brooke, Alec Waugh and others, Perloff is impressed by the precision of his critical censure and the occasionally wicked turn of Eliot's wit.

Frank Capogna's 'Ekphrasis, Cultural Capital and the Cultivation of Detachment in T.S. Eliot's Early Poetry' (*JML* 41:iii[2018] 147-65) re-examines the unpublished poems from *Inventions of the March Hare* to argue that Eliot 'experimented with ekphrastic poetics early in his career through ambivalent appropriations, parodies, and formal innovation' (p. 149). Readings follow of 'Embarquement pour Cythère' and 'The Love song of St Sebastian' in particular. For Capogna, strongly indebted to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, this engagement with ekphrasis and the seeming refusal that followed in Eliot's later, published work are 'inscribed in a cultural dialectic' with various 'forms of cultural authority' (p. 162). 'Modernism and T.S. Eliot', by David Ellis (*CambQ* 47:i[2018] 53-64) takes the publication

of Christopher Ricks and Jim McCue's edition of Eliot's poetical works in 2015 as the point of departure for a general survey of Eliot in relation to Modernism. Competent, cogent, clear, this essay covers familiar ground and offers an account of his work up to and including *The Waste Land*; but there is little that is new here and no sense that Ellis profited from any of the copious annotation material provided by Eliot's editors to refresh or alter our understanding of the poet.

In 'Swinburne, Wagner, Eliot, and the Musical Legacy of *Poems and Ballads*' (*JVC* 24:iv[2018] 542-55), Michael Craske rejects Eliot's claim in *The Sacred Wood* [1919] that the poetry of A.C. Swinburne is divorced from music. As well as setting Eliot's criticisms of Swinburne in context with contemporary musicological theory, Craske shows that he was empirically wrong to claim that Swinburne's work was not of a kind that could be 'set to music' (p. 543). On the contrary, Craske cites 125 compositions inspired by Swinburne's poetry by a range of composers from Charles Villiers Stanford to less well-known figures such as Felix Corbett. Craske then traces complex synergies between the influence of Wagner on Swinburne and the influence of Swinburne upon Wagnerianism at the end of the nineteenth century. Swinburne's poetry, he shows, was 'more versatile, sophisticated and open to possibility than Eliot believed' (p. 555).

Craske reveals that musical settings of Swinburne's poems were popular in music halls. Eliot's apparent ignorance of this may be mystifying given the enthusiasm he expressed for the music hall performances of Marie Lloyd in his critical writing and the saturation of allusion to music hall in his poetry. A note from Brian Vickers ('Prufrock and Mary of Argyle' *N&Q* 65:iii[2018] 411-12) suggests that the mermaids at the close of 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' may recall an otherwise forgotten source, 'Mary of Argyle', a Victorian music-hall ballad by Charles Jefferys. Nancy Hargrove's 'T. S. Eliot and Popular Music: Ragtime, Music-Hall Songs, Bawdy Ballads, and All That Jazz' (*SoAR* 83:ii[2018] 16-28) by This draws on work by David Chinitz and Ronald Schuchard, as well as her own previous research into Eliot's time in Paris, to review the influence of various popular cultural forms upon his work. Jazz and the music-hall she observes, 'informed the rhythm and shape of his works' as well as prompting him to experiment with form (p. 16). There is little new here, but this essay is well-illustrated with striking images from the archive and Hargrove links to a touching video of her late husband performing some of the works under discussion. Matthew Sperling's 'Talking of Michelangelo' (*Apollo* [2 February 2018] 60-65) is, if anything, more lavish than Hargrove's article, reproducing works by Wyndham Lewis,

Patrick Heron, David Jones and others in a breezy summary of Eliot's interest in the visual arts and the subsequent influence of his poetry upon visual artists.

Brian Clifton's 'Textual Frustration: The Sonnet and Gender Performance in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"' (*JML* 42:i[2018] 65-76) seeks to reconcile readings of Eliot's poem in terms of gender politics with accounts of its form. Prufrock, Clifton suggests, understands the sonnet as predominantly English and masculine (presumably Eliot's persona is imagined never to have read Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*), so that the constant approximation and then retreat from something like the sonnet within the poem enacts Prufrock's self-conscious failure to live up to an over-demanding standard of masculinity. This is an ingenious reading, but one that struggles in places (like Prufrock) to reconcile itself to exceptions and approximations.

Matthew Scully's 'Plasticity at the Violet Hour: Tiresias, *The Waste Land*, and Poetic Form' (*JML* 41:iii[2018] 166-82) argues against readings of *The Waste Land* that seek to restore a sense of 'order' by placing the character of Tiresias at its centre. For Scully, this figure exemplifies, instead, Catherine Malabou's theory of 'plasticity', a 'reading' he explains, 'that seeks to reveal the form left in the text through the withdrawing of presence, that is, through its own deconstruction' (p. 168). Accordingly, the metamorphosis of Tiresias 'displaces or defers any ontological containment of form-essence-presence' (p. 178). The 'plastic form' of *The Waste Land*, Scully, concludes 'resists all ordering impositions' (p. 179).

The additional hyphen in the title of Tony Sharpe's "'Always Present": T. S. Eliot and Re-cantation' (*Mo/Mo* 25:ii[2018] 369-87) is intended to connect the way that Eliot's later work revisits earlier utterances in such a manner as to incant or sing again, rather than merely recanting an earlier position. Against Eliot's broad disposition to avoid repeating himself, Sharpe points to the workings of repetition within the poems, articulating a 'poetics of resonance' (p. 384). In this way, he links the disquisition on remorse in *Four Quartets* with the deep allusive power of poetry that alludes to some present but not fully articulated source of emotional energy. David Ben-Merre also offers an account of *Four Quartets* in the final chapter of *Figures of Time: Disjunctions in Modernist Poetry* (pp. 169-89). As part of a broader argument about the 'temporalities' of Modernism (p. ix), Ben-Merre engages in a lucid and good-natured close reading of Eliot that understands his achievement as 'a lyric failure, but not in a pejorative sense' (p. 169). There is a complex argument here about Eliot's representation of a lyrical voice struggling to place itself in time.

Finally, Jed Perl draws on Eliot to reflect on the relative differences between an 'impasse' and an interlude when it comes to thinking about historical progress, in his introduction to the twenty-fifth anniversary issue of *Common Knowledge*, 'Impasse or Interlude: Reflections on an Imminent Anniversary' (*CK* 24:iii[2018] 474-82). Perl's article is not really about Eliot, but his reflections on historical events (the collapse of the Cold War), cultural change and the way in which writers and critics respond to those changes draws heavily upon Eliot, probing and questioning the kind of example he offers to present writers.