The 2011 International Conference
in Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of
the T. S. Eliot Society of Korea

T. S. Eliot in the 21st Century

Date: October 7-8, 2011
Venue: Global Conference Hall (B109), Centennial Memorial Samsung Hall,
Korea University, Seoul, Korea

Hosted by The T. S. Eliot Society of Korea
The Institute of British and American Studies, Korea University

Sponsored by Seoul National University
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This work was supported by the Institute of British and American Studies, Korea University.
Day One: Friday, October 7, 2011

- 12:00-13:00  Registration
- 13:00-13:30  Opening Ceremony
  Moderator: Yangsoon Kim (Korea University)
  Opening Remarks: Joong-Eun Ahn (Andong National University), President
  Congratulatory Poem: Jong-Gil Kim (Poet & Professor Emeritus, Korea University)
- 13:30-14:30  Keynote Speech: Jewel Spears Brooker (Eckerd College, USA)
  What T. S. Eliot Learned from Dante
  Moderator: Yong-Kwon Kim (Sogang University)
- 14:30-14:40  Coffee Break
- 14:40-15:50  Session 1: Eliot’s Early Poetry and Criticism
  Chair: Jae-Yong Yang (Kangwon National University)
  Presentation 1: Leila Bellour (Mila University)
  T. S. Eliot’s Critical Theories: New Perspectives
  Presentation 2: Yangsoon Kim (Korea University)
  The Poetics of Observation in Prufrock and Other Observations
  Discussants: Hong-Seop Lee (Inje University)
  Sook-Ja Pae (Chonbuk National University)
- 15:50-16:00  Coffee Break
- 16:00-17:10  Session 2: Religious Dimensions in Eliot’s Life and Work
  Chair: Koo-Seul Kim (Hyupsung University)
  Presentation 1: Keiji Notani (Kobe University)
  Characteristics of T. S. Eliot’s Christian Faith
  Presentation 2: Kyung-Sim Chung (Dongyang University)
  Religious Dimension in the Linguistic Technique of T. S. Eliot
  Discussants: Kyung-Chull Kim (Kosin University)
  Seong-Chil Park (Andong National University)
- 17:10-17:20  Coffee Break
Day Two: Saturday, October 8, 2011

17:20-18:00 Special Performance
Sook-Hee Chung (Andong National University)
“Creative Dance Performance for The Waste Land V”
Kwang-Soon Lee (Andong National University)
Linda Park (Andong National University), “Songs of Congratulation”
Moderator: Jung-Hie Kim (Dankook University)

18:00-20:00 Banquet
Moderator: Man-Sik Lee (Kyungwon University)

Special Talk 1
John Xiros Cooper (University of British Columbia, Canada)
Powers of Horror: Sex Crimes, Cannibalism, and T. S. Eliot
Moderator: Young Min Hyun (Chungnam National University)

Session 3: Eliot and Other Modernists
Chair: Myung-Ok Kim (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)
Presentation 1: Anna Weitemeyer (University of Kassel)
Fluctuations of the Self: T. S. Eliot’s and Conrad Aiken’s Early Poetry
Presentation 2: Byung-Hyun Yang (Sangji University)
T. S. Eliot and Hart Crane in Matters of Style
Discussants: Joon-Hwan Kim (Yonsei University)
Jung-Ja Huh (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Lunch

Session 4: Eliot across Borders
Chair: Han-Mook Lee (Myongji University)
Presentation 1: Chris Wigginton (Sheffield Hallam University)
“Birth and copulation and death”: The Poetries of T. S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas
Presentation 2: Aida Suleymenova (Far East Federal University)
Impersonality and Individuality as Inspirational Moments in the Art of Poetry: The Cases of T. S. Eliot and Yosano Akiko
Discussants: Hong-Ki Kim (Kwangwoon University)
Byung-Hwa Joh (Koje University)

Special Talk 2
Akira Nakai (Doshisha University, President of the T. S. Eliot Society of Japan)
Japanese Eliot in Pre-war Years: Perspectives and Issues

Moderator: Jai-Hwa Kim (Sungkonghoe University)

15:30-15:40 Coffee Break

15:40-17:20 Session 5: Eliot as a Literary and Social Critic
Chair: Kyoon-Won Yang (Daejin University)

Presentation 1: Eriko Hayashi (Gifu University)
  T. S. Eliot: The Significance in His Concept of Culture

Presentation 2: Jeo-Yong Noh (Yeungnam University)
  T. S. Eliot’s Idea of a Christian Elite

Presentation 3: Joon-Soo Bong (Seoul National University)
  The Title Page of *The Waste Land*

Discussants: Cheol-Hee Lee (Myongji University)
  In-Cheon Yeou (Calvin University)
  Seung-Hyeok Kwon (Seoul Women’s University)

17:20-18:00 Closing Ceremony
Moderator: Han-Mook Lee (Myongji University)

Conradulatory Poem: Chang-Soo Ko (Poet)

Rodemnamu Ensemble

Closing Remarks: Joong-Eun Ahn (Andong National University), President
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Opening Remarks from the President of the T. S. Eliot Society of Korea

Joong-Eun Ahn (Andong National University, Korea)

I wish you all a very warm welcome to the 2011 International Conference, being held in commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the T. S. Eliot Society of Korea under the title of “T. S. Eliot in the 21st Century.” It is a great honor for me to give a welcome speech here at this wonderful Global Conference Hall, the Centennial Memorial Samsung Hall at Korea University. This event is being hosted by our Society and the Institute of the British and American Studies, Korea University.

As president of the T. S. Eliot Society of Korea, I would like to extend my heart-felt appreciation to all of the participants in the International Conference, and especially to our keynote speaker and former president of the T. S. Eliot Society of the United States, Professor Jewel Spears Brooker. I would also like to personally thank our invited speakers, Professor Akira Nakai, current president of the T. S. Eliot Society of Japan, and Professor John Xiros Cooper of the University of British Columbia, Canada, for coming here to Korea. Moreover, I extend my deepest thanks to all the Eliot scholars from England, Japan, Russia, Ukraine, Algeria, and Korea who enthusiastically responded to our call for papers and whose brilliant presentations you will all be attending.

Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to the vice president of our Society, Professor Yangsoon Kim, director of the Institute of British and American Studies. Finally, I say thank you to our institutional sponsors, including Seoul National University, the TEDU Center and SISA TOEIC, and our individual sponsors who are too numerous to name here. I trust our two day International Conference will strengthen the international bonds that have been forged through the study of Eliot, Nobel Laureate, famed playwright, the father of New Criticism, and the greatest poet of the 20th century as designated by *Time* on June 8 in 1998.

Please indulge me as I recite the opening and closing lines of Eliot’s poem, “East Coker,” which are inscribed on the memorial plaque of Eliot inside St Michael’s Church, East Coker, “In my beginning is my end” and “In my end is my beginning (En ma fin est mon commencement). It makes me very happy knowing that, at the end of this two day International Conference, your active participation will have brought forth a renewed starting
point in your study and appreciation of Eliot, our common pursuit and inspiration, our eternal companion, our treasure island, our great master and teacher, and *il miglior fabbro*.

Thank you very much.
It was half a century and four months ago, to a day,
that I sat face to face with you in your office at Faber & Faber.
We talked for about forty minutes from three o’clock in the afternoon
of June 7, 1961. It was a slightly misty and breezy day.
The lush canopy of branches over Russell Square
rippled above my head as I was sitting on a bench, waiting for the appointed time to come.

Your seventy-third birthday was one hundred and eleven days ahead,
but you looked almost arborescent as lush and breezy
as the trees of the little park outside your office window.
After we exchanged sundry topics for about half an hour,
you asked me whether there were any Korean poems translated in English.
“Yes,” I said and presented to you a copy of some of them I had taken with me.

Your eyes fell on the top sheet which happened to be
Chong Ji-Yong’s ‘In the Glen of Kusongdong,’ translated by my mentor:

    Often in the glen
    Are buried shooting stars,

    Where at dusk at times
    Noisy showers of hail accumulate,

    Where the very flowers
    Live in exile.

    With no wind tarrying
    Where once an ancient temple stood,
In the dim mountain shadow
A stag is seen to move over the ridge.

Your response was almost an ejaculation: “Excellent English!”
which momentarily released me, I felt, of my obligation to my mentor
who opened my eyes to your name and works in the spring semester of 1948 on this very
 campus.
Then, I told you about his career and his premature tragic end during the Korean War.
And your response was again terse but deep: “A great loss!”

On leaving your office, I told you I was leaving for Ireland the following morning to visit the
Yeats country.
You said: “I am thinking of a visit to his grave, but I haven’t. It’s in the west, isn’t it?”
“Yes,” I said, “in the Drumcliff churchyard, outside Sligo.”

And then, you intoned quietly:

    Cast a cold eye
    On life, on death.
    Horseman, pass by!

All of a sudden, it struck me as your words of farewell to me:
you survived less than four years thence.

I also attended your lecture, ‘To Criticise a Critic,’
at the Convocation Hall of Leeds University on July 1, that year.
After the lecture, I watched, from among the crowd outside, you and Mrs. Eliot coming out of
the hall,
but I refrained from approaching you then and there.
You looked tired, and slightly embarrassed somehow, under your black felt hat.
All these memories, after half a century, are as vivid as those of yesterday.
Over the last half a century, your works have enjoyed perhaps the highest reputation in the literary world of Korea, not only among students of English. And for me personally, my most cherished memories of you and my mentor have been inseparable all along, so much so that I wrote a short poem ‘The Cruel April’ in Korean this spring:

The lilac that used to bloom
In front of your study, Sir,
Is going to bloom in front of mine, too.

April, Eliot’s “cruelst month,”
That breeds “lilacs out of the dead land,”
Has come around again.
Keynote Speech

Keynote Speech
Jewel Spears Brooker (Eckerd College, USA)
What T. S. Eliot Learned from Dante

Moderator
Yong-Kwon Kim (Sogang University)
What T. S. Eliot Learned from Dante

Jewel Spears Brooker (Eckerd College, USA)

Eliot published the second and most substantial of his three essays on Dante in 1929. In a letter to Ezra Pound (9 December), he described it as “merely a small autobiographical fragment.” In fact, all three of Eliot’s Dante essays could be described with the title of the third, “What Dante Means to Me” (1950). Eliot wrote the 1929 essay for a Faber series that he himself invented called The Poets on the Poets, and in the preface, dropped when he included the piece in Selected Essays, he explained that he was not a Dante scholar, but rather, one poet writing about another who had become increasingly meaningful for him.

From the beginning, early in 1911, Eliot’s relationship with Dante was a deeply felt response to a core element in his experience, namely, a disconnect between intellect and feeling, mind and body. This psycho-physical division is reflected in all four of Eliot’s early masterpieces, including “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” As seen in “Prufrock” and “Portrait of a Lady,” this disjunction had social and sexual parallels in the division between self and other, men and women; and in “Preludes” and “Rhapsody on a Windy Night,” it is projected as a disturbing and unbridgeable gap between self and world, mind and matter. This need for unification, anchored in autobiography, was the driving force of Eliot’s life. He dealt with it in various ways: friendship (Jean Verdenal), marriage (Vivien), philosophy, art, religion. In different situations, it assumed different shapes: mind and body, self and other, subject and object, philosophy and poetry. In his account of literary history, he gave it a name, the dissociation of sensibility.

My contention is that in reading Dante, Eliot discovered a model for the unification he sought, and that he eventually found his way out of the dark wood by adopting Dante as his Virgil. In my view, what Eliot learned from Dante has three primary dimensions. The first is psychological, and it has to do with a perception, in reading, of feelings and ideas as unified. The second is aesthetic, and it has to do with poetry, with understanding how to achieve such unification in art. And the third is moral, and it has to do with social and spiritual unification through the cultivation of humility.

Although these dimensions overlap, they are roughly sequential, with each stage including those previous. They progress from the psychological, which is overtly personal, to
the aesthetic, which is ostensibly impersonal, to the moral, which is super-personal. The first, memorably described in his 1950 address to the Italian Institute, occurred in early 1911 in Paris. Equipped with several years of Latin and French, and a prose translation on facing pages, Eliot began, in his own words,

to puzzle out *The Divine Comedy*. . . and when I thought I had grasped the meaning of a passage which especially delighted me, I committed it to memory; so that, for some years, I was able to recite a large part of one canto or another to myself, lying in bed or on a railway journey. Heaven knows what it would have sounded like, had I recited it aloud; but it was by this means that I steeped myself in Dante’s poetry (“What Dante Means to Me,” *TCTC* 125).

Eliot introduces this speech by saying that “out of respect to the audience and to Dante himself, I shall refrain from quoting him in Italian.” It was the Italian, however, that he marked in his copy, the Italian that he memorized and murmured while lying in bed or on railway journeys, the Italian that he quotes or misquotes in his subsequent work. This was the moment of delight, a moment he described metaphorically as being hit, being struck. And as I have argued elsewhere, this moment led to a change of vocation and all that followed in its wake. Dante entered Eliot’s poetry almost immediately; in 1911-14, he appeared in *Prufrock* and in the suppressed personal poems he kept in his notebook.

The second stage of Eliot’s relationship with Dante, the aesthetic, begins in early 1915. This is the moment in which he changes his vocation from philosopher to poet, begins his long conversation with Pound about literary paternity, and crosses the Rubicon by marrying Vivien Haigh-Wood. In this period, Dante appears repeatedly in both his poetry and his criticism. In his first Dante essay (1920), he mediates between two competing assessments (1) that Dante was a great thinker, and (2) that he was a great poet. Eliot maintains that neither is right, for Dante was both at once, a philosopher-poet, who combined intellect and feeling, and in this provided a model for modern poets. Bringing his own studies in philosophy to bear, he focuses on Dante’s achievement in presenting philosophical concepts so that they could be experienced as objects rather than concepts or feelings. This is the moment in which Eliot articulates his notion of tradition and writes *The Waste Land*.

The third state of Eliot’s engagement with Dante retains the delight and analysis, but realizing that his own life had become a nightmare, Eliot began to reflect more on the relevance of Dante’s moral and spiritual insights for his own life. This begins in the 1920s
and runs until the end of his life. It is reflected in his acceptance of the Incarnation, his new style, and the unification of the fire and the rose, achieved in Little Gidding. With Dante at his side, he comes to say, “The poetry does not matter” . . . “Humility is endless.”

Among the images that struck the young Eliot with delight are two that display encounters with poets—one in Hell, one in Purgatory. At the time, he was not bothered by the presence of larger meanings, but by the power of isolated images. As he later put it, “Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood . . . we can see and feel the situation of [Paolo and Francesca] even though we do not yet understand the meaning which Dante gives it.” (SE 200, 206). The two poets who caught his eye are the Florentine intellectual Brunetto Latini (1220-94) and the Provençal troubadour Arnaut Daniel (fl. 1180-1210). The first is seen dancing in sand, the second swimming in fire. I will discuss them separately, and then bring them together, as Eliot does, in Little Gidding.

Brunetto Latini was a famous statesman and writer of Dante’s grandfather’s generation, and like Dante himself, he was a Guelf. When the Ghibillines took over after the Battle of Montaperti in 1260, Brunetto fled to France, where he remained until 1266, the year after Dante’s birth, when the Guelfs again took control. His most significant work, the Treasure (Les Livres du Trésor), was written during his exile. He was not, as Eliot assumed, Dante’s teacher (Singleton), but rather, his role model as public intellectual and poet.

Dante and Virgil encounter Brunetto in a vast desert of burning sand over which flakes of fire are slowly falling, like flakes of snow on a windless day in the Alps (XIV.28-30). He is first glimpsed among a group of naked men approaching in a sort of running dance. This is how Dante describes these burnt dancers.

Without a moment’s rest the rhythmic dance
of wretched hands went on, this side, that side,
brushing away the freshly fallen flames. (XIV. 40-42) (trans. Mark Musa)

Interestingly, the Italian, which is what Eliot memorized, is performative, the language reflecting the rhythm of the dance. The sand beneath is on fire, so the sinners must constantly move their feet; and they must constantly move their hands to brush off the falling flakes of fire. Their contrapasso is to dance, dance, dance forever. There can be no doubt that this image struck Eliot, for early in 1914, he used it as the basis for one of his most psychologically intriguing poems, “The Burnt Dancer.” It is a poem about an insomniac fascinated by a burnt moth which repeatedly flies into a candle, retreats, flaps its wings, and
returns to the fire. The insomniac gets caught up in this dangerous game, cheers on the singed reveller, and then internalizes the dance within the circle of his brain.

When Eliot in the early London period returns to this scene in Hell, he is no longer focused on Dante’s first glimpse of Brunetto, but on his last. When Brunetto sees another group of souls approaching, he suddenly turns and dashes off to catch up with his “family.” As Eliot renders it,

Then he turned, and seemed like one of those who run for the green cloth at Verona through the open field; and of them he seemed like him who wins, and not like him who loses. (121-24). (―Dante,‖ SE 209)

Eliot discusses this image in both “Tradition and the Individual Talent” in 1919 and the first Dante essay in 1920. He retains the fascination, but he now brings a more analytical, more professional, focus. He sees this image as an example of the objectification of emotion, a subject he had been dealing with in his dissertation. Not of Dante’s emotion, but as Eliot explains it, “of the emotion evident in the situation itself” (SE 8). He sees it, voilá, as an illustration of impersonality. Eliot remarks: “The emotion of the passage resides in Brunetto’s excellence in damnation—so admirable a soul, and so perverse” (SW 166). And later, in commenting on Dante’s visual imagination, he says, “One does not need to know anything about the race for the roll of green cloth, to be hit by these lines; and in making Brunetto, so fallen, run like the winner, a quality is given to the punishment which belongs only to the greatest poetry” (SE 209).

Eliot returns to Brunetto in his 1929 essay. He is still interested in aesthetics, especially in Dante’s visual imagination, but he is now attending more broadly, not only to the image, but to the scene. The image he calls attention to this time is the famous one of the old tailor squinting at the eye of his needle.

Each of them
looked us up and down, as some men look
at each other, at night, when the moon is new.
They sharpened their vision (knitted their brows) at us
like an old tailor peering at the eye of his needle.

The purpose of Dante’s simile, Eliot remarks, is “to make us see more definitely the
scene which Dante has put before us in the preceding lines” (SE 205). Eliot’s comment is often misread as meaning that Dante enables us to see the old tailor. But this is to confuse the tenor and the vehicle; the purpose of using the image is not to make us see how a tailor looks at his needle (we all know that), but to use that everyday image to enable us to visualize something far more exotic—the eyes of promiscuous men looking at two approaching strangers in moonlight.

Looked at in such a way by this strange family,
I was recognized by one of them, who grabbed
my garment’s hem and shouted: “How marvelous!”

In loaded language, Brunetto refers to Dante as a “sweet fig” (66) whom people will “be hungry to devour” (71), as sweet “grass” to be eaten by a goat (72), and most explicitly, he refers to the “sinfully erected nerves” of one sinner (114).

Dante’s hell, you recall, is divided into three sections—Incontinence, Violence, and Fraud. Violence is subdivided into violence against neighbors (murder), violence against self (suicide), and violence against God. Brunetto Latini is in the last of these, violence against God, which is subdivided into blasphemy, sodomy, and usury. His sin is sodomy, which to Dante was representative of all vices that pervert human fruitfulness, human flourishing, and thus damage the image of God in man. The geography and weather, of course, are emblematic, the fiery rain suggesting Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24), and the burning sand, “a desert / whose soil refuses the roots of all plants,” suggesting sterility.

The homosexual language and gestures indicate an essential fact about hell. The inhabitants are those who chose not to repent, and whose choice is now fixed. Their punishment is getting what they wanted, being what they are, and living with themselves forever. It is simply the ultimate form of self-expression.

How, one might ask, does the principle of sympathetic identification work here? It is essential to the design of the Commedia that each part have relevance to Dante himself as he tries to find his way out of the dark wood. But Dante, we know, was not a homosexual. The identification here does not relate to sexual orientation, but to an understanding of art that involves a parallel perversion of fruitfulness. What Dante shares with Brunetto is ambition, the confidence that he is a great writer, the desire to have disciples, and ultimately, to gain immortality through art.
When Dante looks down at the burnt face of the man tugging at his hem, he recognizes his old mentor, and in the warmest greeting in all of the Inferno, he says “Is this really you, here, Ser Brunetto?” (30). Brunetto responds with equal warmth, “O my son,” and asks “what destiny / leads you down here before your final hour?” (46-47). When Dante replies that he was lost and is now trying to find his way, Brunetto assumes that he has writer’s block or some such malady. He re-assures Dante that he is a genius.

Follow your star,
and you cannot fail to reach your port of glory,
not if I saw clearly in the happy life;
and if I had not died just when I did,
I would have cheered you on in all your work,
seeing the gifts Heaven had bestowed on you. (55-60)

Dante accepts this compliment, and acknowledges Latini as his father:

in my memory is fixed . . .
your image, loving and paternal
when, living in the world, hour by hour,
you taught me how man makes himself eternal.
and while I live my tongue shall always speak
of my debt to you. (82-87)

Here we have the crux of the matter, and of Dante’s participation in the sin. The topic is literary paternity, as understood by a damned writer. Here is a poet presenting himself as a father blessing his son, and a son expressing gratitude for instructions on how to follow in his father’s footsteps, how to make himself eternal.

Fame as a way of securing immortality is an old subject. The Greeks called it Kleos, or glory. To insure one’s immortality meant to do great deeds, as did Achilles, to be so extraordinary that one’s name would live forever in song. Another way to make oneself eternal is to father children, to be fruitful and multiply, as Abraham did. And still another, the choice not only of Brunetto Latini, but of many modern writers, is to write a great poem. Brunetto’s parting words to Dante reflect this choice:

Remember my Trésor, where I live on,
this is the only thing I ask of you. (118-20)

It is no accident that the title of Brunetto’s book is “my treasure.” He believes that he
will live forever through his book, and through the books of his “sons,” brilliant writers such as Dante. So even his paternal interest in Dante is a form of self-exaltation, a perverse way of seeking immortality. These celebrations of self, of course, are manifestations of pride and perversions of the Christian virtue of fruitfulness. Brunetto, interestingly, does live on, not in the pages of his Trésor, but in a footnote in Dante’s poem. Dante’s moral complicity with Brunetto, then, has to do with pride and with art—more specifically, with the perversion of re-defining paternity as literary influence, children as disciples, and immortality as fame.

In the 1930s, as Eliot worked on Four Quartets, he shifted his focus again. His central preoccupation became the disjunction between time and eternity, and the glimpses of unity he found in mystical experience and in poetry. In fact, he was trying to understand the very issue brought up in Dante’s discussion with Brunetto in Hell, the quest for immortality. Eliot’s final use of Brunetto is in the compound ghost section of Little Gidding, which like Inferno XV, is a recognition scene containing a discussion of literary paternity. In the first draft, as the narrator is walking home on the bombed streets of London, he encounters not a compound ghost but a “vague familiar ghost,” a single ghost with “scorched brown features,” to whom he says, “Are you here, Ser Brunetto?” This encounter with a dead master, at first unrecognized, contains other details from the seventh circle of Hell, including one that seems to allude to the simile of the old tailor. The narrator “scrutinizes the down-turned face with the pointed narrowness . . . we bear upon the first-met stranger at dawn.” And they discuss a range of issues, including art. Eliot decided, however, to drop the reference to Brunetto, and in a letter to John Hayward, he explained why. First, it was too narrow to allow him to discuss his own tradition, and second, he wanted Little Gidding to be purgatorial. Eliot solved the problem, brilliantly, by substituting a compound ghost comprehending his dead masters from Dante to Yeats.

When we turn to Eliot’s response to Purgatory, we find the same pattern: psychological immediacy, critical analysis, and moral reflection. Of the numerous encounters with artists in Purgatory, the one that struck Eliot most powerfully on first reading was the meeting with poets in canto XXVI. And from this scene, one image—that of Arnaut Daniel diving into flames and swimming in fire—remained in his mind for decades. Eliot memorized most or all of this canto, and quoted it at least nine times in his prose and major poems, including “Prufrock,” The Waste Land, Ash-Wednesday, and Little Gidding. Arguably, it meant more to him than any other part of the Divine Comedy.

Canto XXVI describes the encounters at the top of Purgatory, the summit of the stair,
where lust is purged. The last place of purgation, it is ringed with fire, the only fire, in fact, in Purgatory. This fire serves two purposes: it is the penance for lust, and since this is the last cornice, it is also the wall separating Purgatory, a place of suffering, from the Earthly Paradise, the Garden of Eden, where human kind would have dwelled had they not fallen. So souls who swim in this fire are almost home; they are returning to Eden.

Here, Dante and Virgil meet the poets of carnal love. They see penitents moving through flames, singing through their tears. A poet named Bonagiunta recognizes Dante himself as a love poet, and exclaims: “do I not see standing here / him who brought forth the new poems that begin: / ‘Ladies who have intelligence of Love’.” This is the opening line of the first canzone of the Vita nuova. “It marks a turning point in Dante's love for Beatrice and in his conception of love in general. With this canzone, he turns from an erotic and thoroughly selfish love to discover the beauty of loving unselfishly” (Musa, 264). Dante is deeply moved, and in a famous tercet, acknowledges, yes: “I am one, who, when Love / inspires me, takes careful note, and then / gives form to what he dictates in my heart” (XXIV.51-53). “This is a description of Dante’s new method: he [tries to] follow the dictates of love, [not erotic love, but]. . . love as the desire for the highest good.” (Musa, 264)

In the part of this scene Eliot most admired, Dante and Virgil meet two of Dante’s predecessors, Guido Guinizelli (c. 1230-1997), the thirteenth-century poet from Bologna who founded the dolce stil nuovo, and Arnaut Daniel (fl. 1180-1210), the twelfth-century French troubadour, best remembered for inventing the sestina. Here, Dante has a conversation with Guinizelli, his most illustrious predecessor. Guinizelli’s canzone: “*Al cor gentil ripara sempre Amore*” (Love makes his dwelling in the noble heart) marks an epoch in Italian literature, and inspired not only Dante but the entire Florentine school. This conversation is the last in an important series of discussions among poets about poetry, about poetic making and literary paternity, and about fame. It is clear from the conversation that neither Dante nor Guinizelli have given up the hope that their poetry will make them immortal. Dante greets Guido as the “father of me / and father of my betters, of all who wrote a sweet and graceful poetry of love” (97-99). Guinizelli asks “what it is that makes you show / in words and looks this love you have for me?” And Dante responds: “Those graceful poems of yours, / which, for as long as our tongue serves for verse, / will render precious even the ink you used (112-14). So Dante clings to the idea that writing poems makes the poet immortal, at least as long as time endures.

Ginuzelli responds to Dante’s compliment by pointing to a spirit up ahead, and says, “I can show you now / . . . a better craftsman of his mother tongue.” (115-17). The better
craftsman, “il miglior fabbro” is Arnaut Daniel. Guinizelli then turns and swims into the fire, “the way fish seeking deeper waters swim” (135).

When Dante asks the second spirit to reveal his name, Daniel responds briefly in his native Provençal. Here are the words especially admired by Eliot:

“Your elegant request so pleases me,
I could not possibly conceal my name.
I am Arnold, who weeps and goes singing. I see in thought all [my]
past folly. And I see with joy the day for which I hope, before me.
And so I pray you, [ara vos prec], by that Virtue which leads you to
the topmost of the stair—be mindful in due time of my pain.” Then
dived he back into that fire which refines them. (Musa, 289; SE 217)

For Eliot, this would clearly have been an image that communicated before it was understood. In 1911, when he was smitten by it, he would not have known Daniel’s poetry and would not have understood Daniel’s place in Dante’s purgatorial scheme. Still, for whatever reason, he locked the image in his heart. Perhaps a clue can be gleaned from the fact that he added Daniel’s final request—“be mindful in due time of my pain” and his leap into the fire—as an epigraph to his draft of “Prufrock among the Women.” He quickly realized, rightly so, that the purgatorial image, though striking, was inconsistent with Prufrock’s situation and so he replaced it with the image of Guido da Montefeltro encased in tongues of flame from *Inferno* XXVII.

Eliot’s understanding of the image of Arnaut diving into the flames was deepened by the long conversation he began with Pound in September 1914 in London. A week after they met, Eliot, who had read little, perhaps none, of Pound’s work, reported to Conrad Aiken that “Pound is rather intelligent as a talker. . . his remarks are . . . good” (L1.63). Some of those remarks would have concerned Pound’s admiration for the French troubadours, outlined in *The Spirit of Romance* in 1910. Pound’s second chapter, entitled “Il miglior fabbro,” is devoted to Daniel and begins by announcing that “The twelfth century . . . has left us two perfect gifts: the church of San Zeno in Verona, and the canzoni of Arnaut Daniel” (22). For a decade or more after 1915, Eliot would have associated Daniel with Pound, a fact reflected in the famous dedication to *The Waste Land*, where he points to Pound as “il miglior fabbro.” In using Guinizelli’s compliment to Daniel, Eliot was giving to Pound the tribute that Pound had given to Daniel in *The Spirit of Romance*. It was a genuine compliment, a gesture of humility on Eliot’s part.
In the criticism of this period, Eliot uses the image of the poet swimming in fire to illustrate Dante’s ability to structure emotions, to create “the most comprehensive and the most ordered representation of emotions ever presented.” (SW 168). In poetry, Eliot chooses “Ara vos prec”—I pray you—as the title of his second collection of poems in 1920, a title appropriating Daniel’s request, formerly attached to “Prufrock,” now associated with Purgatory, though not, to be sure, with proximity to the Earthly Paradise. More significantly, he includes Dante’s line of diving into fire in the cascade of fragments that come together at the end of The Waste Land.

Eliot continued to be drawn to Dante, and in the mid-1920s, presented in the Clark Lectures a sustained reflection on literary precursors, including Guinizelli, Dante, Donne, and others. By the late 1920s, he had enlarged his focus to include reflection about the moral implications of the scene at the summit of the stair. To explain the larger meanings that I believe Eliot came to associate with the Daniel scene, the meanings reflected in Ash-Wednesday and Little Gidding, I need to comment briefly on a couple of background points.

The first is that although both Pound and Eliot were interested in Arnaut Daniel, they were interested in different ways, for different reasons. Pound admired his craftsmanship, and in The Spirit of Romance and a later forty-page essay, he profusely praised Daniel’s seventeen surviving poems. Eliot, on the other hand, showed little or no interest in the troubadour poet. Yes, he greatly admired the eight lines spoken by Daniel before he dives into flames. But those are not Daniel’s lines; they are Dante’s.

Why, you might ask, do I think that Eliot, unlike Pound, was not interested in Daniel’s poetry. In the preface to the second Dante essay, Eliot says that the one book to which he is most indebted is Charles Grandgent’s Dante (1916). And he owes something, he adds, to George Santayana’s Three Philosophical Poets. Grandgent and Santayana were part of the resurgence in Dante studies at Harvard that occurred during Eliot’s years there. Eliot discovered Dante in early 1911, and in the fall of 1911, he returned to Harvard, and one can safely surmise that he consulted the writings of his mentors there. Grandgent says that Daniel was “one of the most laborious and tiresome of the Provencal versifiers.” And Santayana doesn’t even mention him. The general view, as summarized by Dorothy Sayers: “Modern taste does not greatly relish his highly artificial, elaborate, and enigmatic style.” (Purgatory 279, note to l. 116). There have been attempts, including Pound’s, to rehabilitate Daniel, but Eliot was not part of that. When he says in the 1929 essay that “the canto ends with the superb verses of Arnaut Daniel,” he is complimenting Dante, not Daniel.
The second point: Daniel’s position as the last soul to be purged in the refining fire, the one closest to the Earthly Paradise, is one of great honor. Why, especially if he is an inferior poet, does he have this honor? Why is HE here? It is generally assumed from Canto XXVI that whatever Eliot and the Harvard school may have thought, Guinizelli and Dante admired Daniel and considered him “il miglior fabbro.” Petrarch admired him, and certainly, Pound takes Guinizelli’s compliment at face value. What is crucial here, and what is usually missed in discussions of Eliot and Dante, is the function that Arnaut serves in Dante’s poem. When Guinizelli points to Arnaut and says he is the better craftsman, he is clearly referring to Arnaut’s love poetry—witty, artificial, ironic, playful—that poetry that he has just discussed with Dante. But as Thomas Bergin and other Dante scholars have pointed out, these lines are surprisingly unlike those of the historical troubadour. When Arnaut insists in the simplest language that he is “one who weeps and sings as he goes,” he provides the climax to a re-definition of poetry for which Dante has been carefully preparing throughout the Comedy. And to move to another level, he not only provides the example of a purged style, but of a re-made self. Daniel is the better craftsman, precisely because he has remade not only his poetry, but himself. Though an inferior poet, he is a better craftsman than Guinizelli, or Dante, or Pound or Eliot. In this stage of Eliot’s appreciation of Dante, the meaning of “il miglior fabbro” is much richer than it was in 1922, and could no longer be used to compliment mere poetic making, could no longer be applied to his old and troubled friend, Ezra Pound.

As Eliot suggests in the 1929 essay, the contrast between Latini and Daniel shows the difference in hell and purgatory. The souls in hell suffer as part of an eternal itch to express themselves.

The souls in purgatory suffer because they wish to suffer, for purgation. . . they suffer more actively and keenly, being souls preparing for blessedness . . . In their suffering is hope. (SE 216-17)

In moving from hell to purgatory, Dante and Virgil are moving from pride to humility. It is important in Dante’s scheme for Brunetto to eternally express the vice that landed him in hell, i.e., sodomy, thus his lascivious overtures to Dante. It is equally important that Arnaut, the last sinner to be purged in Purgatory, speak in a new voice, a new style, to be as he would have been in a pre-lapsarian world. Brunetto says “read my book” where I have achieved immortality; Daniel, on the other hand, asks to be remembered, not in his poetry, but in prayers, and then he turns and swims back into the fire.
The same year that Eliot finishes the Dante essay, 1929, he uses a phrase from the Arnaut Daniel passage, “al som de l’escalina”—at the summit of the stair—as a working title for the third poem in the Ash-Wednesday sequence. This sequence reflects Eliot’s new style—surprisingly different from his old style, personal, but not narrowly so; simple, performative, and ritualistic, poetry with some function beyond self-expression and indeed beyond language itself.

To conclude: Eliot’s ultimate tribute to Dante is surely in Little Gidding. It is here that Brunetto Latini and Arnaut Daniel come together. In fact, I would suggest that in Little Gidding, we have in miniature the entire Divine Comedy. In part II, we stroll the streets of Hell with the ghost of Brunetto Latini; in part IV, “The dove descending breaks the air,” we are at the summit of Purgatory with a re-made poet, Arnaut Daniel, and invited to be redeemed from fire by fire. And in part V, having passed through the ring of fire, we find that we have opened an unknown, remembered, gate into a rose garden, an Earthly Paradise, a place where all shall be well. We have made the dialectical loop—Paradise, Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained—and come back to the place from which we started, to know it for the first time.

Eliot was to allude once more to the meeting of the poets at the top of the seven-story mountain. In his 1951 essay, “Poetry and Drama,” he refers to the moment, a poignant one for Dante and for the reader, in which Virgil, the wisest and kindest of guides, suddenly disappears. Virgil had to go, Eliot explains, because he was no longer needed: “It is ultimately the function of art, in imposing a credible order upon ordinary reality, and thereby eliciting some perception of an order in reality, to bring us to a condition of serenity, stillness, and reconciliation; and then to leave us, as Virgil left Dante, to proceed toward a region where that guide can avail us no farther” (SP 146). The foundation for this profound conclusion was Eliot’s journey of a lifetime, from falling in love with an image, to becoming a master poet, to surrendering that mastery and swimming into the silence, into “the frontiers of consciousness beyond which words fail, though meanings still exist.”
Session 1
Eliot’s Early Poetry and Criticism

Chair
Jae-Yong Yang (Kangwon National University)

Presentation 1
Leila Bellour (Mila University)
T. S. Eliot’s Critical Theories: New Perspectives

Presentation 2
Yangsoon Kim (Korea University)
The Poetics of Observation in *Prufrock and Other Observations*

Discussants
Hong-Seop Lee (Inje University)
Sook-Ja Pae (Chonbuk National University)
T. S. Eliot’s Critical Theories: New Perspectives

Leila Bellour (Mila University, Algeria)

This paper is a daring attempt to test the verity and validity of the terms tradition and impersonality, which have always been attached to Eliot’s criticism. It will demonstrate that despite the fact that Eliot propounds a theory of impersonality and divorces the sufferer from the poet by setting emotions at odds, he does not cling to his impersonal stance. In some essays, he proposes the personal aspect as a prerequisite for artistic creation.

Eliot pays a great tribute and respect to tradition because it is a framework, which helps him develop his individual talent. Though the poet, according to Eliot, must write ‘with his dead ancestors in his bones, in order to recreate monuments of the past’, he still adheres to the romantic principle that the poet should strive for originality and individuality. So, as the paper aspires to vindicate, Eliot’s theories of impersonality and tradition are difficult to prove right.

According to Eliot’s artistic philosophy, great art can be achieved only through surrender to tradition. But Eliot contradicts himself, in some critical essays, by giving prominence to individuality over tradition. Eliot admits that there is always something unique in each artist who, as a human being, has emotions, passions and impulses that must be satisfied. In “The Humanism of Irving Babbitt”, for instance, he points out that:

To be modern has meant practically to be increasingly positive and critical, to refuse to receive anything on an authority ‘anterior, exterior, and superior’ to the individual. With those who still cling to the principle of outer authority I have no quarrel, I am not primarily concerned with them. I am myself a thoroughgoing individualist, writing for those, like myself, irrevocably committed to the modern experiment.¹

So, Eliot does not reduce the individuality of the borrower. According to him, the poet must actively labour to acquire tradition, but he should also struggle to prove his difference and individuality. Though he was influenced by many authors, Eliot did not imitate them slavishly; his work is earmarked by idiosyncratic traits.

In his essay on Ben Johnson, Eliot calls for the necessity of a personal poetic voice. In his words: “it is in the end of no value to discuss Jonson’s theory and practice unless we recognize and seize this point of view, which escapes the formulae, and which is what makes his plays worth reading. Jonson behaved as the great creative mind that he follows: he creates his own world.” So, for Eliot, the artist should find his own point of view. He should escape the oppressive conventions to breathe the fresh air of free thinking.

In another essay, “A Romantic Aristocrat”, Eliot makes an explicit declaration that elucidates his real artistic project: “The Arts insist that a man shall dispose of all that he has, even of his family tree, and follow art alone. For they require that a man be not a member of a family or of a caste or of a party or of a coterie, but simply and solely himself.” In contrast to “Tradition and the Individual Talent”, where he states that the artist should plant himself firmly in his tradition, Eliot’s declaration, here, calls for a break with the past. For him, the artist should not even address himself to his people. Though he had a very close relationship with his mother, Eliot realized that he could never find a voice of his own unless he broke the bondage with her. This departure is manifested in his critical writings, where he praised so many critics who had nourished his poetic growth; but he makes no mention of his mother, the greatest precursor, who had influenced his talent and intellectual growth. Eliot was eager to step out of the confinement of any external authority, not only his family but also the whole tradition.

The paradox of “Tradition and the Individual Talent” offers Eliot’s critics ammunition to explain the notion of tradition in the light of Harold Bloom’s theory of the anxiety of influence. According to Bloom, the poet has two basic drives: the first one is to imitate the precursor’s poetry, while the second is to strive for originality. For him, the poet should struggle and wrestle with his precursors to realize himself. In Bloom’s words, “Poetic strength comes only from a triumphant wrestling with the greatest of the dead, and from even more triumphant solipsism.” This antagonistic relationship with the other poets results in a deeper poetic identity. The critic Lee Oser explains the poet’s competition to overcome the influence of the father poet in terms of Freud’s Oedipus complex. According to her, “The period of Freud’s Oedipus complex was the most Oedipal in modern history. Revolution and war

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dominated politics. Style overthrew style, philosophy philosophy.” In this light, one might opine that Eliot’s adoration for tradition is a deceptive mask behind which lurks hostility for the father’s authority from which Eliot wants to liberate himself. The veracity of this position is obliquely echoed by Eliot in “The Function of Criticism”, where he confesses that: “A common inheritance and a common cause unite artists consciously or unconsciously: it must be admitted that the union is mostly unconscious. Between the true artists of any time there is, I believe, an unconscious community.” So, by pretending to revive tradition, the poet is engaging in an unconscious oedipal struggle with his precursors to find his poetic voice and authority. In his essay “Philip Massinger”, Eliot reproaches Massinger for his total adherence to the authority of the forebears. According to him: “He might almost, have been a great realist; he is killed by conventions which were suitable for the preceding literary generation, but not for his.” Thus, Massinger’s failure to achieve greatness is due to his submission to others’ conventions and his lack of individuality. As Eliot puts it, “at the moment when a new view of life is wanted, he has looked at life through the eyes of his predecessors” (‘Philip Massinger” 143).

According to Bloom, poetic influence starts with a deep attraction and love for the precursor, which will soon fade away and turn into repulsion and revisionary strife. A reading of Eliot’s critical essays reveals that he possesses a passionate admiration for the dead poets. This love, if it is a sincere one, is the first step in developing his poetic genius. But it soon turns into a feeling of disavowal and distaste. In his essay “Religion and Literature”, Eliot confesses that: “everyone, I believe, who is at all sensible to the seductions of poetry, can remember some moment in youth when he or she was completely carried away by the work of one poet […] What happens is a kind of inundation, of invasion of the undeveloped personality by the stronger personality of the poet.” So, Eliot’s seduction by other poets has pernicious effects; and thus, it should be avoided. For Eliot, blind imitation of the precursor deprives the young poet of his personality, i.e, individuality. To this effect, Eliot, in his book To Criticise the Critic, states that: “the difference between influence and imitation is that

influence can fecundate, whereas imitation—especially unconscious imitation—can only sterilize.”

To escape this blind imitation, that kills the poet’s individuality, poets repulse against the works of the father poets. This repulsion takes the form of a misreading or misinterpretation of this precursor: “Poetic influence—when it involves two strong, authentic poets—always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation”

Eliot, the forerunner of Bloom’s theory, argues, in his essay on Philip Massinger, that: “Immature poets imitate, mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make into something better, or at least something different. The good poet welds his theft into a whole of feeling which is unique, utterly different from that from which it was torn, the bad poet throws it into something which has no cohesion” (“Philip Massinger” 125). So, the good poet, for Eliot, is the one who struggles to ascertain his identity by unconsciously distorting the message of the precursors, who have influenced him most. Eliot reiterates the same idea as follows: “One author takes complete possession of us for a time, then another; and finally, they begin to affect each other in our mind […] we begin to be, in fact, critical; and it is our growing critical power which protects us from excessive possession by any one literary personality” (“Religion and Literature” 394-95).

Along similar lines, the critic Colleen Lamos opines that Eliot’s allusive method is not an attempt to preserve tradition; it is rather an act of betrayal. As he puts it: “Eliot deftly veils his usurpation in elaborate displays of surrender”

He informs us that the word “tradition” is etymologically intertwined with “traitor”; it reruns us to its root in Latin, which is “trader”, meaning “to hand over, to hand on, to deliver.” Therefore, it means to traduce or betray. So by this act of alluding to the literary tradition, Eliot aspires to affirm his poetic voice and to free himself from the oppressing authority of the forebears. Though he excessively writes about the authors who influence his poetic talent, his admiration for them is due to their collision head-on with his critical views. This view is defended by Bloom, who states that: “If the poetic self in us loves another, it loves itself in the other” (Poetic Origins and the Final Phases 223)

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As opposed to the Romantic tradition, Eliot’s theory of impersonality, which is extensively highlighted in his critical essays, bears a corrective force. But despite his staunch belief in a poetry that is devoid of personality, Eliot does not cleave to this artistic stance. He affirms the personal roots that lie at the foundation of art, and this provides his critics and readers ammunition to suspect his theory of impersonality.

Eliot praises artists, like Jonson and Shakespeare, because they have a personality and because they create a world of their own. In Eliot’s words:

Marlowe’s and Jonson’s comedies were a view of life; they were, as great literature is, the transformation of a personality into a personal work of art, their lifetime’s work, long or short. Massinger is not simply a smaller personality: his personality hardly exists. He did not, out of his own personality, build a world of art, as Shakespeare and Marlowe and Jonson built. (“Philip Massinger” 139)

According to this view, personality is a pre-requisite for the creation of a great work of art. Hence, Eliot remains faithful to the Romantic attitude that the business of the artist is to express his feelings. In his essay on Ben Jonson, Eliot calls for the necessity of a personal point of view: “and it is in the end of no value to discuss Jonson’s theory and practice unless we recognize and seize this point of view, which escapes the formulae, and which is what makes his plays worth reading. Jonson behaved as the great creative mind that he follows: he creates his own world” (“Ben Jonson” 118). Thus, for Eliot, the greatest artist is the one who constructs his own world. Jonson is singled out in this way because the materials of his poetry are drawn from emotional shocks, the experience of passion and real life in general.

In “Tradition and the Individual Talent”, Eliot states that “only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things.” (58), Escape from emotions and personality might be read as an escape from the painful experiences and emotional shocks. Hence, Eliot’s definition of poetry as an escape from personality implies the idea of art as a curative power for the poet, which transforms his psychological state. In “Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca”, Eliot spells out a very approximate idea as follows:

Poetry is not a substitute for philosophy or theology or religion […] it has its own function. But as this function is not intellectual but emotional, it cannot be defined adequately in intellectual terms. We
can say that it provides ‘consolation’: strange consolation, which is provided equally by writers so different as Dante and Shakespeare.\textsuperscript{12}

The quote throws fresh light on the function of poetry as a therapeutic technique. Poetry, for him, is a means for lifting the burden of anxiety and fear, which press upon one’s daily life. It momentarily whisks away some kind of obstruction and burden. Carrying this idea further, Eliot asserts that:

What every poet starts from is his own emotions […] Dante’s railings, his personal spleen […], his nostalgia, his bitter regrets for past happiness-or for what it seems happiness when it is past-and his brave attempts to fabricate something permanent and holy out of his personal animal feelings […] Shakespeare, too, was preoccupied with struggle—which alone constitutes life for a poet-to transmute his personal and private agonies into something rich and strange, something universal and impersonal. (“Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca” 137)

Indeed, the quote above is rich with ramifications. First, it evinces that Eliot does not deny or prescribe a lack of emotions in art. The latter, as in the case of Dante and Shakespeare, portrays the warp and weft of the artist’s mind. Second, and more importantly, the artist’s psychic disposition gives his work root and branch. Hence, reading Eliot’s “The Waste Land”, in particular, is unthinkable without these personal determinants. Eliot’s biographer, Peter Ackroyd, vindicates this view by quoting Eliot’s second wife, who contends that “He felt he had paid too high a price to be a poet that he had suffered too much.”\textsuperscript{13}

Making the same point more explicit, Eliot, in his essay on Matthew Arnold, asserts that artistic creation is a means of self-purgation, a mystical process of stripping and purification. As he puts it, “One feels that the writing of poetry brought him little of that excitement, that joyful loss of self in the workmanship of art, that intense and transitory relief which comes at the moment of completion and is the chief reward of creative work.”\textsuperscript{14} So, for Eliot, writing is a protective shield or a therapeutic technique, which procures him health by releasing the repressed emotional tensions. Having Eliot in mind, it is possible to draw inferences about him from his poetry, which contains indelible traces of his pleasurable and

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painful experiences. It follows that a purely aesthetic view of Eliot’s poems would seriously neglect their psychological substance and miss much of their intensity and meaning.

The dissociation of sensibility, a theory coined by Elliot in his essay “The metaphysical Poets”, further confirms Eliot’s admittance of the emotional aspect of art. This dissociation, or the split between the sentimental and the intellectual, is fostered by Milton and Drydon. Tennyson and Browning also exemplify this phenomenon. In contrast to those poets, John Donne is an exemplar of a “unified sensibility” because in his poetry, “there is a direct sensuous apprehension of thought or a recreation of thought into feeling”15 In other words, John Donne is singled out mainly for his ability to fuse and unify thought and feeling. Such unity was missing in the poetry of the nineteenth century, which became increasingly vague and emotional.

Indeed, Eliot’s essay on the metaphysical poets shakes the verity of his theory of impersonality, where he posits that the poet should efface himself completely in the work of art. The essay confirms Eliot’s ever-present belief in feeling as a recipe in the creative process. He states:

We say, as in a vague way, that Shakespeare, or Dante, or Lucretus, is a poet who thinks, and that Swinburne is a poet who does not think, even that Tennyson is a poet who does not think. But what we really mean is not a difference in quality of thought, but a difference in quality of emotion. The poet who thinks is ‘merely the poet who can express the emotional equivalent of thought. But he is not necessarily interested in thought itself. We talk as if thought was precise and emotion was vague. In reality there is precise emotion and there is vague emotion. To express precise emotion requires as great intellectual power as to express precise thought. (Shakespeae and the stoicism of Seneca 134-35)

This quote highlights the ideal state of a poet, which is to reconcile and to keep a balance between thought and feeling.

Though Eliot tried to articulate a theory, which fulfills the author’s need for distance and detachment, and in which emotions, apparently, play no part, the objective correlative is the best way for projecting the interior into the exterior. So, emotions in Eliot’s poetry are detached and relocated in the external objects, but they are never erased or denied. The objective correlative does not objectify the author’s emotions or baffle his emotional

discharge as it has been misunderstood by many readers and critics. On the contrary, it makes them as real and concrete as the poet experiences them. In his discussion of the concept, the critic Russell Elliott Murphy reproaches Eliot for his sharp attack on Shakespeare’s play Hamlet. In doing so, he explains Eliot’s stance vis-à-vis Hamlet in a tone that brings to mind Bloom’s anxiety of influence. In Murphy’s words, “Eliot himself wisely avoids suggesting any concrete ways in which Shakespeare might have improved the play. The point is that Eliot takes the opportunity to pontificate on finding a serious flaw in one of the world’s greatest tragic plays, and he not only gets away with it but enhances his own reputation and credentials as a critical intellect in the process.”

Years after writing his essay on Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Eliot, in the Preface to Essays on Elizabethan Drama, explains why he excludes some essays from the collection. These essays include “Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca”, “Hamlet and His Problems”, and “Four Elizabethan Dramatists”. According to him,

All these three essays on re-examination embarrassed me by their callowness, and by a facility of unqualified assertion which verges, here and there, on impudence. The Hamlet, of course, had been kept afloat all these years by the success of the phrases “objective correlative”-a phrases which, I am now told, is not even my own but was first used by Washington Alston.

So, Eliot feels an inward shame for formulating a principle, which is misunderstood as a means to objectify art and purge it from the emotional traces of the author. The exclusion of “Hamlet and His Problems” from the book evidences Eliot’s wondering about the very utility of the term.

One of the problems, which arise, while discussing Eliot’s criticism, is how to explain Eliot’s self-contradictory critical views that vacillate mainly between personality and impersonality, tradition and the individual talent? To surmount the paradoxical aspects of his poeticalness and solve them more satisfactorily, Eliot’s own view on the subject seems to be the most convenient and necessary point of reference. Commenting on his critical writings, Eliot traces the circumstances under which he came to formulate his theories as follows:

I can never re-read any of my own prose writings without acute embarrassment: I shirk the task, and consequently may not take account of all the assertions to which I have at one time or another committed myself: I may often repeat what I have said before, and I may often contradict myself. But I believe that the critical writings of poets, of which in the past there have been some very distinguished examples, owe a great deal of their interest to the fact that the poet, at the back of his mind, if not as his ostensible purpose, is always trying to defend the kind of poetry he is writing, or to formulate the kind that he wants to write.\(^\text{18}\)

In fact, two plausible explanations surface in these statements. First, whilst he pretends to approve other poets, Eliot is obliquely defending his own poetry. This idea is in tune with Bloom’s self-love in the other. In his essay “To Criticize the Critic”, Eliot reiterates the same idea as follows: “I was implicitly defending the kind of poetry me and my friends wrote” (“To Criticize the Critic”\(^\text{16}\)). The second justification proffered by Eliot in the long aforementioned quote is that some of his early essays were used as a testing ground to develop his poetics. That is, in reproaching other authors, Eliot formulates the poetic qualities he is eager to obtain.

Carrying further the idea of his self-contradiction, Eliot admits the fact that, in his critical theories, he does not express himself properly. Discussing W.B. Yeats’ sense of a unique personality, which he highly appreciates, Eliot avows that he has made a mistake in his theory of impersonality; and he asserts his uncertainty about the verity and validity of the concept. In his words:

I have in early essays, extolled what I called impersonality in art, and it may seem that, in giving as a reason for the superiority of Yeats’s later work the greatest expression of personality in it, I am contradicting myself. It may be that I expressed myself badly, or that I had only an adolescent grasp of that idea-as I can never bear to re-read my own prose writings, I am willing to leave the point unsettled-but I think now, at least, that the truth of the matter is as follows. There are two forms of impersonality: that which is natural to the mere skilful craftsman, and that which is more and more achieved by the maturing artist. The first is that of what I have called the “anthology piece” […]. The second impersonality is that of the poet who, out of intense and personal experience, is able to express, to make of it a general symbol.

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And the strange thing is that Yeats, having been a great craftsman in the first kind, became a great poet in the second.19

So, Eliot, who uses impersonality and avows it frankly, seems to be embarrassed by such term. With excruciating explicitness, he expresses his vehement dislike of the theory because he realizes its wrong usage by his critics and readers alike. Indeed, two connotations of the word ‘impersonality’ are discussed in Eliot’s quote. The first one emanates from one’s commitment to tradition, to which he refers by “anthology piece”. The second, which is practiced only by a mature artist, like Eliot and Yeats, paradoxically, bears the meaning ‘personality’. The second sense of impersonality echoes that of his mentor, De Gourmont, whose views on personality and impersonality had a pervasive influence on Eliot’s The Sacred Wood. De Gourmont elaborates the idea as follows: “être impersonnel c’est être personnel selon un mode particulier: Voyer Flaubert. On dirait en jargon: l’objectif est une des forme du subjectif.” 20 The fact that Yeats, according to Eliot, moves from the first to the second type of impersonality recalls Eliot’s and Bloom’s views on the development of the poet, which starts from an attraction to the father poet, and then turns into a repulsion.

Along similar lines, in “Ulysses, Order, and Myth”, Eliot contends that he has made a mistake by his theory of impersonality; because he has never practiced what has been preached. In his words,

It is much easier to be a classicist in literary criticism than in creative art—because in criticism you are responsible only for what you want, and in creation you are responsible for what you can do with material which you must simply accept. And in this material I include the emotions and feelings of the writer himself, which, for that writer, are simply material which he must accept—not virtues to be enlarged or vices to be diminished.21

The quote voices D.H Lawrence’s famous dictum: “Never trust the artist—Trust the tale.” 22 In Eliot’s case, Eliot’s tendency towards emotional expression cannot be escaped. So, despite his theory of impersonality, emotions are, actually, the origin of Eliot’s poetry.

If some critics still stick to the view that Eliot’s poetry is impersonal; then, the question is: can we believe the artist in all what he says about his art? In “The Music of Poetry”, Eliot maintains that:

A poem may appear to mean very different things to different readers, and all of these meanings may be different from what the author thought he meant. For instance, the author may have been writing some peculiar personal experience, which he saw quite unrelated to anything outside; yet for the reader, the poem may become the expression of a general situation, as well as of some private experience of his own. The reader’s interpretation may differ from the author’s and be equally valid—it may even be better. There may be much more in a poem than the author was aware of. (“The Music of Poetry” 111)

**Conclusion**

The paper has evinced that although he has frequently been linked under the broad rubric of tradition, and though he has been widely considered as an impersonal poet not only by his contemporaries but also by later literary critics, Eliot’s theories of tradition and impersonality are difficult to prove right. Eliot, who apparently wants to revive tradition, seems to complain from a literary environment shrouded in conventions. If Eliot dismisses the labels of individuality and personality and displays in his essays his lifelong opposition to these concepts, he often digresses from his position. Hence, we might conclude that Eliot’s poetry is not impersonal because one has to commit to the entire doctrine and not merely to bits and pieces of it.

To round off, it could be said that Eliot’s poems can be read as intensely subjective and personal. For Eliot, artistic creation can even be a consoling cure or a protective shield for the artist. Despite his condemnation and vehement opposition to some authors, who express themselves in art, emotional self-expression and individuality are major preoccupations and concerns for Eliot. Hence, critics’ constant description of his poetry as impersonal veils Eliot’s personal experience, which would constitute a great gain for the understanding of his poems. By applying a reader-response approach, one can not only read Eliot’s poems against his rules; one can even contextualize him in any age and century. As Eliot states in his essay “Matthew Arnold”, “From time to time, every hundred years or so, it is desirable that some

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critic shall appear to review the past of our literature, and set the poets and the poems in a new order. This task is not of revolution but of readjustment” (1).
The Poetics of Observation in *Prufrock and Other Observations*

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I

Modernists are skeptical of the overhumanizing impulse in the nineteenth century English poetry, and attempt to formulate their paradigm to correct it. In the modernist efforts, T. S. Eliot’s “Impersonal theory of poetry” stands out as one of the landmarks, reacting against the previous English poetry’s “fuzziness and facile emotionalism” (Greenblatt 1834). In his theoretical essay, “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” Eliot criticizes the extremes of romantic subjectivism, quoting Wordsworth’s well-known definition of poetry, “emotion recollected in tranquility” (*Selected Essays* 21). According to Eliot, modern poetry should not turn emotion loosely, but take the process of transmuting emotions into objects. In this vein, the title of his first book of poems, *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917) is noteworthy. “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” and other poems in this book do not seem to be self-expressions of the poet but rather some portraits described or objects observed by him. To borrow Manju Jain’s words, the title “emphasizes the distance between the author and the various personae” in the book (34). Reading Eliot’s early poems, this paper examines his poetics of observation in the context of the importance of objectivity in modernist poetry.

For Marianne Moore and William Carlos Williams, Eliot’s contemporaries, their poems are observations as well. Moore, who was born in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri only about ten months before Eliot, observed peculiar animals such as the jerboa, the pelican, mongooses and the pangolin by her “piercing glances” (*CPMM* 48). For example, in “The Pangolin” this “armored animal” has “scale / lapping scale with spruce-cone regularity until they form the uninterrupted central tail-row!” Curiously enough, Moore has also seen “this near artichoke with head and legs” as “the night miniature artist engineer” and “Leonardo da Vinci’s replica” (*CPMM* 117). Furthermore, this ant-eater is presented as a graceful animal; one “keeping / the fragile grace of the Thomas- / of-Leighton Buzzard Westminster Abbey wrought-iron vine”; “the giant-pangolin- / tale, graceful tool, as prop or hand or broom or axe”; “between / dusk and day they have . . . frictionless creep of a thing / made graceful by adversities” (*CPMM* 117, 118). The pangolin in Moore’s poem is both an eccentric, particular animal and a wonder that evokes the significance of art, grace, and endurance in human
beings. That is to say, Moore’s descriptions of the pangolin and other objects are very vivid and accurate based upon a biologist’s observation, but at the same time they are still ambiguous due to the imaginative process. In her interview with Donald Hall in 1961, she stated, “Precision, economy of statement, logic employed to ends that are disinterested, drawing and identifying, liberate—at least have some bearing on—the imagination” (45). In other words, Moore maintains that if we observe objects lovingly, we will discover significance in them. To rephrase Moore’s words, precision not only liberates imagination but also leads us to ethical views. If we read carefully her keen observation of particular objects including animals, and her precise portraits of them, we will ponder over human nature and find the significance of moral characteristics.

Moore’s title Observations (1924) shows a possible influence of Eliot’s Prufrock and Other Observations. As Bonnie Costello notes, Observations was more clearly inspired “by [Eliot’s] comments on her work in an Egoist essay entitled ‘Observations’” (66). Eliot remarked in “The Function of Criticism” that “a critic must have a very highly developed sense of fact” (Selected Essays 31) and “Moore made a note of it” (Costello 66). Thus, there existed mutual respect between Eliot and Moore.

The early work of Moore and Williams such as Observations and Spring and All are considered as “a direct alternative” to the modernism of T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. Yet Williams is more distant from cosmopolitan modernism, and openly criticized Eliot on the ground that Eliot’s poetry is backward-looking and “rehash of rehash of hash of rehash” (Selected Essays 291):

[The Waste Land] wiped out our world as if an atom bomb had been dropped upon it and our brave sallies into the unknown were turned to dust. To me especially it struck like a sardonic bullet. I felt at once that it had set me back twenty years, and I’m sure it did. Critically Eliot returned us to the classroom just at the moment when I felt that we were on the point of an escape to matters much closer to the essence of a new art form itself—rooted in the locality which should give it fruit. (Autobiography 174)

Williams sees the publication of The Waste Land as “the great catastrophe” to American poets’ letters (Autobiography 146), and points out the potential danger of Eliot’s influence on American poetry. Under this genius’ influence, American poetry “staggered to a halt” and younger poets did not know how to respond to him (Williams, Autobiography 146). According to Williams, Eliot’s poetry still employs traditional means of describing the world,
and belongs to Continental Modernism that is rooted in the European past. Interestingly enough, he maintains that he is making “a modern bolus” in which “some other later Eliot will dig” (*Selected Essays* 285). In brief, Williams’s evaluation of his own poetry is that it is forward-looking, and firmly rooted in American soil. Focusing on the local, external world around him, Williams observes ordinary things in everyday life, and presents them “in the mouths of the living” and with the language that “is changing and giving new means for expanded possibilities in literary expression” (*Selected Essays* 291). His objects for observation are a “red wheel / barrow / glazed with rain / water,” the “figure 5 / in gold / on a red / firetruck,” “the plums / that were in / the icebox,” “the road to the contagious hospital,” “old / bright / broken / branch,” etc. He is interested in “images in the world” rather than “images of the world” (Cooper 555).

Williams’s method of representing objects is “physical,” “concrete,” “particular,” “immediate,” and “populist.” He does not attempt to interpret objects from a subjective human perspective, but allow the objects to express themselves. Williams states: “[poetry] affirms reality most powerfully and therefore, since reality needs no personal support but exists free from human action” (*The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams* 234-35). In Williams’s work, the thing exists in its own right and free and independent of human agency. In this respect, Williams’s poetry is also ethical or democratic but in a manner different from Moore’s. While Moore evokes the importance of ethics and morality by her poetry—“imaginary gardens with real toads in them” (*CPMM* 267)—Williams stresses the thing’s “haecceity” or “thisness” by his direct encounter or contact with the object. He observes objects not to discover humanistic significance in them but to present their essence and beauty.

**II**

With the backdrop of the observations of Moore and Williams, this paper analyzes Eliot’s means of observing and rendering the external or internal world. *Prufrock and Other Observations* could supposedly be divided into three categories according to the type of observation: the persona’s urban explorations, the perception of human relationships, and the self-observation. The observation poems in *Prufrock* can also be classified according to the kind of persona: a dramatic persona with a specific name, an observer in the dialogue with another, and a perceiving intellectual subject, “I.” Interestingly enough, however, the boundary between the different types of observation is often blurred. Moreover, it also seems difficult to determine how close and how remote the distance is between the persona of each
work and the poet himself. In a poem with a dramatic persona, “Prufrock,” there will be a wider gap between the persona and the poet. But in a poem with the perceiving observer “I,” “The Boston Evening Transcript,” the chasm between the observer and the poet becomes narrow.

Although the publication of Prufrock and Other Observations is viewed as the beginning of the era of modern poetry, and “Prufrock” is seen as “the summation of Eliot’s achievement in his early poetry” (Jain 32), the contemporary reviews of the book were not all positive:

Mr. Eliot’s notion of poetry—he calls the ‘observations’ poems—seems to be a purely analytical treatment, verging sometimes on the catalogue, of personal relations and environments, uninspired by any glimpse beyond them and untouched by any genuine rush of feeling. As, even on this basis, he remains frequently inarticulate, his ‘poems’ will hardly be read by many with enjoyment. (Clark, ed. 9)

The above anonymous review on June 21, 1919 in the Times Literary Supplement asserted that Eliot’s observation poetry was obscure, unmoving, and merely a product of brain work. The criticism seems to indicate that observations in poems should start from the author’s emotion and move to the evocation of the reader’s emotion. This review, however, ignores the unique effect of the seemingly dry and hard observations in Prufrock. Although the observation poems are oblique at first glance because of the suppression of “links in the chain, of explanatory and connecting matter,” the reader shall experience “a total effect” at the end, finding “a logic of the imagination” and “a logic of concepts” (Eliot, Preface 8). In addition, the emotional effect cannot be totally excluded from the reader’s response to Eliot’s early work. Eliot uses the urban setting and explores the interior landscape of the personae to comment on the self and the modern society. Through Eliot’s detailed observations on urban life, the reader comes to think about or feel the consequences of isolation, fragmentation, psychic conflicts, and the lack of communication in society.

The first category of observation this paper will deal with is urban exploration. The urban imagery of Eliot’s early poetry is “that of St. Louis, upon which that of Paris and London had been superimposed” (Eliot, “The Influence of Landscape upon the Poet” 422). Cambridge and Boston could be added between St. Louis and Paris. For example, the following well-known images—“half-deserted streets” (CPP 13), “the muttering retreats / Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels” (CPP 13), “the grimy scrapes / Of withered leaves
about your feet / And newspapers from vacant lots” (CPP 22), “faint stale smells of beer / From the sawdust-trampled street” (CPP 22), “the yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes, / The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes” (CPP 13), which lingers, falls, slips, and curls about a house, and sleeps—are inseparable from the city of St. Louis. At the same time, the bleak and sluggish urban images could also be based upon the poet’s observations of Boston, for “Prufrock” is noted as a satire on New England, especially Boston society, and Eliot himself wrote in 1918 that “the society of Boston was and is quite uncivilized but refined beyond the point of civilization” (qtd. in Sigg 18). For Eliot, Boston was not a vital, cultural center but a city of sterile boredom. Furthermore, Eliot’s accentual urban landscape such as city streets and city slums in Prufrock can be the scenes mediated through other literary sources like Baudelaire’s Paris.

The urbanity in Prufrock is not only the reality from Eliot’s own experience and literary sources but also the view from the persona’s quest through city. At this point it would be more difficult to discuss Eliot’s observations compared to those of Moore and Williams, for the observations in Prufrock are mostly supplied by personae, and Eliot’s attitude toward the objects is complicated.

In addition, the urban landscape through either Eliot’s eyes or the persona’s eyes is not just exterior reality but something else that is intricately connected with the persona’s mind. For instance, it would be too simplistic a reading if we interpret the first three lines of “Prufrock”—“Let us go then, you and I, / When the evening is spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherized upon a table” (CPP 13)—as merely an objective presentation of evening between day and night. As Brooker notes, “Prufrock, not the evening, is etherized upon a table. Like everything else in the poem, the tired, sleepy evening is an aspect of Prufrock’s mind” (908). “Streets that follow like a tedious argument / Of insidious intent” (CPP 13), “the yellow smoke that slides along the street” (CPP 13) are objective correlatives to represent the persona’s timid, inactive, and indecisive characteristics.

When another persona observes the Bostonians who read the Boston Evening Transcript, he makes an odd connection between the people and “a field of ripe corn” swaying “in the wind” (CPP 28). “When evening quickens faintly in the street,” the persona recognizes that most Bostonians are not quickened but vegetate. As Eliot repeats the title of the newspaper, “the Boston Evening Transcript” three times in a short poem, the observer, “I,” being keenly aware of Bostonians’ unvarying routine, mentions the name of a disillusioned satirist, “La Rochefoucauld.” Although the observer is an internal non-conformist, he nods
“good-bye” to the seventeenth-century French society moralist, and says “Cousin Harriet, here is the Boston Evening Transcript” (CPP 28). Externally he comes close to a conformist. Significantly, however, the first person observer conveys a satirical view of the city around him to a different degree from Prufrock submerged in the barren society.

The second type of observation is the perception of human relationships which is linked with and inferred by the speaker’s portrayal of the other character(s). In “Portrait of a Lady,” we are given a one-sided dialogue; a lady talks and a man silently reports the lady’s speech. Through the narrator’s interior monologue, the reader surmises the “power dynamic” and the relationship between the man and the lady. Their encounters in the poem have been set in four seasons: December, April, August, and October. A conflict of feeling increases through the course of time. The narrator visits the lady’s “darkened room,” and does not feel comfortable with her desire to have an intimate relationship with him (CPP 18). She said, “I have saved this afternoon for you” and “Without these friendships—life, what cauchemar!” (CPP 18), but the narrator thinks “Inside my brain a dull tom-tom begins / Absurdly hammering a prelude of its own, / Capricious monotone / That is at least one definite ‘false note’” (CPP 19). The primitive warning of percussion, “tom-tom” and the “prelude” urge him to flee from her room-tomb. The narrator is intimidated by the possibility that his “self-possession” (CPP 20) might be lost in the close relationship with her. Thus the room is viewed as a symbol of her emotional entrapment and his burial site. The lady’s violent action, “slowly twisting the lilac stalks” (CPP 19), represents the cruel atmosphere of the room, and furthermore the division between the two characters. Significantly, the narrator would feel more comfortable with external masculine routines on the outside rather than with being under the “female emotional demands” (Mayer 112-13) inside the room: “Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance, / Admire the monuments, / Discuss the late events, / Correct our watches by the public clocks. / Then sit for half an hour and drink our bocks” (CPP 19).

In the third section, the final encounter, his flight is not temporary but “going abroad” (CPP 20) without promising to come back. The poem ends with the narrator’s contemplation of her death—“what if she should die some afternoon, / Afternoon grey and smoky, evening yellow and rose; / Should die and leave me sitting pen in hand / With the smoke coming down above the housetops” (CPP 21); and his questions and doubt—“Would she not have the advantage, after all? . . . And should I have the right to smile?” Here the narrator appears to be similar to a “detached artist” who tries to articulate the meaning of “contingent objects” in a neutral language “built up internally within the poem” (Habib 95). In his imagined retrospect,
the lady dies in a “yellow and rose” romantic evening, and the man sits writing. Their relationship seems to end up in a competitive struggle to be more “successful” (CPP 21), and in the enormous distance between death and sitting (writing). At the end, the reader remains uncertain about the authenticity of the narrator’s observations: his self-analysis, his musings about their relationship, and especially his “acceptance of guilt and responsibility” (Jain 61). The narrator in “Portrait of a Lady” observes the lady, listens to her, and interprets the situation and their relationship. The internal observations about human relationships in this poem, however, are presented not by an objective speaker but by a problematic persona. He himself seems to be alienated from his inner life.

The third type of observation in *Prufrock* is the self-portrait, which is an interpretation either by a dramatic persona or by a lyrical “I.” In “Prufrock,” the speaker, Prufrock, defines himself negatively: “I am no prophet” even if “I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed” (CPP 15); and furthermore, “I am not Prince Hamlet” (CPP 16). According to Eliot, the Hamlet passage is one of the earliest fragments he wrote at Harvard, and he wanted to keep this section for “Prufrock” in spite of Pound’s suggestion to remove it. The parallel between Hamlet and Prufrock is based on Eliot’s early conception of this poem. Hamlet’s overwhelming question “to be or not to be” and his indecisiveness are compared to Prufrock’s relatively trivial question to visit “the room the women come and go” (CPP 13, 14) and to contact his beloved, and his indecision over whether to take action. Hamlet’s tormenting “self-scrutiny,” however, is ironically paralleled by Prufrock’s self-consciousness: “I . . . / Am an attendant lord, one that will do / To swell a progress, start a scene or two, / Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool, / Deferential, glad to be of use, / Politic, cautious, and meticulous; / Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse; / At times, indeed, almost ridiculous— / Almost, at times, the Fool. // I grow old . . . I grow old . . .” (CPP 16). His self-evaluation similar to self-mockery is not just about his identity but about his middle-aged appearance: “a bold spot in the middle of” his hair (CPP 14), and his thin arms and legs in sharp contrast with Michelangelo’s masculine and muscular sculptures. Prufrock’s self-observation is that of a physically and mentally inert, unattractive urban man.

While the self-observation in “Prufrock” is made by a dramatic persona appearing with his name, some other self-observations in *Prufrock* are the self-representations by a series of poems, each with a first person persona. The male “I” of “Conversation Galante” in a dialogue with a woman placed himself as one who is “inane” (CPP 33). As we have seen before, the first person persona in “The Boston Evening Transcript” is keenly aware of the
self-dividedness between an internal non-conformist and an external conformist. The speaker “I” in “Hysteria” feels an intense psychic threat from a neurotic woman’s laughter, and “being part of it,” he becomes hysterical as well. In brief, even the first-person poems in *Prufrock* seem to be distanced from the poet’s own emotion to some degree.

III

To conclude, the poetics of observations in Eliot’s *Prufrock* is more dramatic, psychological, complex, and intriguing than that in Moore’s *Observations*, Williams’s *Spring and All*, and their other works. Eliot’s manner of observation is more inward looking than Moore’s, which meticulously focuses on external objects, even including the moments when she attempts to link the objects’ characteristics to human characteristics. Eliot’s poetics of exploring urban reality is much more dramatic and psychological than Williams’s populist gesture to objectify the external reality. While Eliot depicts the sordidness of urban environments, he does not ignore the problems of human relationships and the self-identity in modern society. Starting from hard, precise, particular, and objective observations, Eliot’s poems in *Prufrock* evoke symbolic, psychological, humanistic, and universal meanings. Yet his technique of description and representation of self and society is rather intellectually controlled than emotionally charged. *Prufrock* is the aesthetic embodiment not out of his own personal, powerful feelings but out of impersonal, objective observations. Thus, Eliot’s intricate means of rendering personae, and his subtle manner of dealing with the distance between the persona and the poet would make the reader puzzled over the “objectivity” of *Prufrock*. The reader’s puzzlement will not be lessened due to the fluid and overlapping boundaries between the different types of observation—the persona’s urban explorations, the perception of human relationships, and the self-observation.

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[Abbreviated as CPMM]

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Session 2
Eliot’s Early Poetry and Criticism

Chair
Koo-Seul Kim (Hyupsung University)

Presentation 1
Keiji Notani (Kobe University)
Characteristics of T. S. Eliot’s Christian Faith

Presentation 2
Kyung-Sim Chung (Dongyang University)
Religious Dimension in the Linguistic Technique of T. S. Eliot

Discussants
Kyung-Chull Kim (Kosin University)
Seong-Chil Park (Andong National University)
Characteristics of T. S. Eliot’s Christian Faith

Keiji Notani (Kobe University, Japan)

I. Espousal of Anglo-Catholicism

The triplicate definition Eliot gave of himself in 1928, a year after his baptism, in the Preface of For Lancelot Andrewes, “classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and Anglo-catholic in religion,” presents him as an Anti-Modernist. The great Modernist poet turned his perplexingly bold face to the increasingly secularist society. His taking up Anglo-Catholic faith surely marks a crucial stage in his intellectual development. Eliot’s baptism and confirmation at the age of 38 plunged him into a new dimension of life, which can be characterized as living out Christian theology and liturgy. Seeking the ideal of measuring the whole of life by one supernatural order, he finally found himself in the bosom of Christian orthodoxy. Modeling on Charles Maurras’ counter-revolutionary conviction that the Catholic Church is an “embodiment of the Roman virtues of order and authority and tradition,” Eliot dared to sound a battle cry against secularism and cosmopolitanism, to the shock and bewilderment of his liberal friends in Bloomsbury, where he had landed successfully as a promising modernist poet. Becoming a British citizen later in the year, Eliot espoused “Good King Charles’s Golden Days—the tradition of Anglican religious culture best formalized in the early seventeenth century and the household of Nicholas Ferrar in Little Gidding” (Hastings, 236).

The transition from the moral dimension of horizontal/human relationship to that of the vertical/transcendental, premised in the God-human relationship, necessitated acceptance of the standard of good and evil upheld by the authority of the Church. The religious milieu T. S. Eliot was raised in is his awesome grandfather’s Unitarianism, which grasps man as the imago Dei, believing in natural man’s endowment with the possibility of self-regeneration. It led William Greenleaf Eliot to proclaim, “God helps those who try to help themselves. He will not save us in spite of ourselves” (Ahlstrom, 270). William Greenleaf took the Original Sin for “original imperfection,” which could and should be rectified in this life. And thus, we
must fight against “self-love, or self-indulgence, or worldly ambition,” and “The proof of Regeneration is in this life” (Ahlstrom, 275).

Dissatisfied with this human-centered, “anthropocentric” religion, Eliot came to choose Anglo-Catholicism. The satiric verses written in his younger days show how deeply disgusted he was with the genteel atmosphere of Boston society created by Emersonian transcendentalists. Take a look, for example, at a room of “Cousin Nancy,” who comfortably lives in the world of “The Boston Evening Transcript.” And we find there, “Upon the glazen shelves kept watch / Matthew and Waldo, guardians of the faith, / The army of unalterable law.” Eliot criticizes the sage of Concord for his philosophy of self-reliance, and Matthew Arnold for his calamitous inclination “to set up Culture in the place of Religion, and to leave Religion to be laid waste by the anarchy of feeling” (“Arnold and Pater,” SE, 436). Eliot’s quotation from Arnold’s Literature and Dogma: “the fundamental thing for Christians is not the Incarnation but the imitation of Christ” clearly epitomizes his abhorrence of the overall trust in human progress.

Eliot’s skepticism toward his family religion and the romantic humanism prevalent in his days at Harvard led him on to a “theological pilgrimage,” and he found the Original Sin. It is not merely man’s “original imperfection” as his grandfather perceived, but the fundamental reality, whose recognition is indispensable to one’s salvation. Eliot learned this from Baudelaire. He states Baudelaire’s greatness lies in the ability to understand that “what really matters is Sin and Redemption.” Eliot asserts Baudelaire’s glory is paradoxically “his capacity for damnation” (SE, 429). By the recognition of Sin, Eliot was able to leave “the twilight kingdom of hollow men,” as Baudelaire was saved from “the ennui of modern life.”

Then, Pascal presented to Eliot a far more important model of intellectual man’s conversion. Eliot elucidates how Pascal’s mind worked in finding his faith. We feel as if he were talking of his own experience:

The Christian thinker—and I mean the man who is trying consciously and conscientiously to explain to himself the sequence which culminates in faith, rather than the public apologist—proceeds by rejection and elimination. He finds the world to be so and so; he finds its character inexplicable by any non-religious theory; among religions he finds Christianity, and Catholic Christianity, to account
most satisfactorily for the world and especially for the moral world within; and thus, by what Newman calls ‘powerful and concurrent’ reasons, he finds himself inexorably committed to the dogma of the Incarnation. (SE, 408)

This remark is crucial to the understanding of the nature of Eliot’s faith. The most important article of the faith of Eliot and his fellow Anglo-Catholics is the belief in the Incarnation: vertical intervention of God into human history, theology of God becoming man. Its exact poetic expression should be Eliot’s own: “The point of intersection of the timeless with time.” Also, his reference to John Henry Newman gives us a hint that there is some sort of affinity between these three men. Thinking mind eventually finds “the misery of man without God,” and is captivated by the drama of the Incarnation. Eliot observes, “The Pelagians … emphasized the efficacy of human effort and belittled the importance of supernatural grace” (SE, 413). Identifying his American religious inheritance with Pelagianism, and finding himself in a society where there was an irresistible trend towards “a progressive and insidious adaptation to totalitarian worldliness” (ICS, 20), he professed the anti-modernistic faith of the dogmatic Church. He needed an apostolic and authoritarian church that can absolve his sins with sacraments.

Here we naturally ask why Eliot chose Anglo-Catholicism, rather than Roman Catholicism. It is indeed puzzling that Eliot did not choose the Catholic Church outright. In fact, he was deeply attached to the idea of Christendom, as we witness in his Dante essay. There would have been no surprise if Eliot had become a Roman Catholic. Eliot remained, however, in the Anglo-Catholic wing, which came into being after the secession of Newman. I argue he was deeply influenced by the Tractarian theology of the church. Anglo-Catholics claim that the Church of England is the church of Apostolic succession, and its Episcopacy has been of divine appointment. They maintain that the real Church is “One Holy Catholic & Apostolic Church.” It is, however, unfortunately divided, and takes forms of three ‘visible’ churches, i.e., “the Latin, the Greek, the Anglican.” The booklet entitled Catholicity, which is the report of the Anglicans of the Catholic school of thought including Eliot himself as the only layman, along with The Criterion contributors: Gregory Dix, V. A. Demant, and C. H. Smyth, states: “In our divided Christendom we do not believe that any existing institution or group of institutions gives a full and balanced representation of the true and primitive
Catholicity. It is the recovery of the principles of that Catholicity that is our quest” (9-10). This argument could be regarded as a part of the strategy of appropriating catholicity for the national Church. Anyhow the Anglo-Catholic understanding of the Church is behind Eliot’s unique theory of the subculture replacing the main European culture, as expounded in *Notes towards the Definition of Culture.* (74) His logic is that in England “it is easier for the Church of England to become Catholic, than for the Church of Rome in England to become English” (“Thoughts after Lambeth,” *SE,* 382). For, in England, the main cultural tradition has been Anglican, Roman Catholics are outside the tradition, and therefore, the bearer of catholicity is Anglican.

The priest who baptized Eliot was William Force Stead, a former U.S. diplomat, and at the time the chaplain of Worcester College, Oxford. (Interestingly, Stead later became a Roman Catholic.) It is also Stead who led Eliot to read the writings of the Caroline divines, esp., those of Lancelot Andrewes (Sencourt, 127). Eliot must have read the *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology* and the *Library of the Fathers,* the great achievements of the Tractarians. We can safely locate his faith in the tradition of the Oxford Movement. The Oxford Movement can be defined as the revival of catholicity in the Anglican Church. Newman in his Anglican days notes “the English Church has the mission of representing a theology, Catholic and Apostolic, but not Roman” (*Via Media,* Vol. I, 20). Eliot shares the Tractarians’ awareness of the impending crisis caused by liberalism, which he characterises in *The Idea of a Christian Society* as “a progressive discarding of elements in historical Christianity” (*ICS,* 16). The Church, with the authority to administer the sacraments, fights the modernistic trend. And especially important in prompting Eliot’s conversion is the sacrament of the Eucharist, which exemplifies the sacramentalism of the Catholic Church, both Roman and Anglican. It is the Eucharist, which is at once the Incarnation and the Sacrifice and the Atonement that forms the core of the Anglo-Catholic theology. It is fortunate for Eliot that there was a good theology prepared for him to pick up, when he sought the authority outside his person.

We should not forget, however, that within the Anglican Communion itself Anglo-Catholics had been long denounced for “doing in the Church of England the work of the Church of Rome” (Llewellyn, 96). Anglo-Catholics had to fight against the label of
“Un-English,” which reflected the popular understanding that Roman Catholicism was an “unconquerable threat of externality, and an unassimilable other” (Tumbleson, 2). Catholicism constitutionally contradicts Englishness. It is only around the late 1920s and 30s, a hundred years after the Oxford Movement started, that the Anglo-Catholic party gained its proper position in the Church (Pickering, 33; Kaye-Smith, 133). Lord Halifax and the English Church Union made a great contribution to this enhancement. So it may well be said that Eliot joined the Anglo-Catholic party in a good time, or rather, at the peak of Tractarian glories between the wars.

Besides the positive fact that Anglo-Catholicism was firmly established within the Established Church, and so he was able to practice Catholicism in the culturally congenial Church, there was a negative factor that made it difficult for Eliot to take a step to the Roman Catholic Church. We know that for Eliot, Lancelot Andrewes is a Saint-like figure (Eliot calls him “saintly” in George Herbert, 9), and he is a model in every respect. It is not only for his being a prototype of an Anglo-Catholic believer, but also for his having “breadth of culture, an ease with humanism and Renaissance learning” (SE, 343) that Eliot values Andrewes so highly. Eliot affirms the “voice of Andrewes is the voice of a man who has a formed visible Church behind him, who speaks with the old authority and the new culture” (SE, 344). Here we can deduce one essential element of religion to satisfy Eliot’s mind and heart. It is the well-balanced synthesis of the humbleness before the spiritual authority of the Church Catholic and Apostolic, and the human learning which absorbs the European culture. We recall Eliot’s remark: “Religion without humanism produces the vulgarities and the political compromises of Roman Catholicism” (Foerster, Humanism and America, 107).

While Eliot thought the dogmatic church is necessary in the war against liberalism, he did not completely approve the stance of the Roman Catholic Church, as Hasting explains, “Eliot’s urge to be thoroughly English in his religiosity could hardly have been satisfied by Roman Catholicism, at a time when ultramontanism reigned supreme” (Hastings, 238). He demanded intellectual and theological freedom to think. He proposed, on the one hand, that the Anglican Bishops should exert more authority in the Church and called for stronger spiritual direction from the Episcopate, as when he touched on the delicate issue of birth control. On the other, when in 1945 the scheme for the Church Union in South India was
published, Eliot quite vehemently attacked it by issuing the pamphlet entitled *Reunion by Destruction*. The gist of his criticism is that “if [the Anglicans] are to enter into a union, on terms of complete parity, with non-conformists …they are leaving a church and entering a society.” For Eliot, an easy ecumenical reunion invalidating the divinely appointed Episcopacy is peace of death. Eliot admonishes:

... we have to unite, not only phrases, but cultures; that protocols and concordats are vain without assimilation of sensibility; that we have to deal with human beings with human passions; and that sociological issues are involved, which far exceed the limits of what is ordinarily assumed to be the subject-matter of theology. (21)

This being an explanation of the difficulty of church union, it indicates, at the same time, what Eliot thinks important in religious life. He emphasizes “human passions” and “sociological issues.” And I think this recognition of the difference of ethos endorsed his choice of Anglo-Catholicism. As Adrian Cunningham points out, Eliot took up the task “to harmonize the Catholic and European and the Anglican and English traditions” (“Continuity and Coherence in Eliot’s Religious Thought,” *Eliot in Perspective*, 221). He chose the national Church of England, formulating the theory that in England the Church of England was the Catholic Church, while the Roman Catholic Church was only “a sect.” By emphasizing the catholicity of the English Church, he was able to free himself from Roman Catholics he encountered at first hand in St. Louis, Boston, and London. The status of Catholicism in Anglo-American society had been rather low. “No Popery” had long been a watchword ever since the Reformation. Catholicism had been the religion of the lowest classes. It was fixed with the image of unintellectual Irish immigrants, and totally alien to the English Protestant identity. Converting to it, therefore, meant social suicide for Eliot.

**II. Limitations of Eliot’s faith seen in The Cocktail Party**

Now, I want to consider the “limitations” of Eliot’s Christian faith, which only comes into view in our post-colonial situation. In 2010 Barry Spurr published ‘Anglo-Catholic in Religion’: *T. S. Eliot and Christianity*, and I’m sure all Eliot scholars have welcomed it, for it is full of valuable information which only practicing Anglo-Catholics could provide. And yet
it rarely addresses the problem of Eliot’s faith. I’m not going to criticize Eliot. If I may sound too harsh on Eliot, it is rather because I have found myself apotheosizing Eliot. I believe we should read any work of art, not only as an object realized in its own time and space, but in its relationship to our own time and space. So what sort of problem does Eliot’s faith pose for us now, at this moment? The claim I should like to make is that the world of Eliot’s Christianity is closed to the ‘other’ cultures and traditions, as he is against Irishness and Roman Catholicism. The hot spot is Kinkanja depicted in *The Cocktail Party*. It symbolizes the ‘otherness’ to the authentic Western/Christian civilization and culture.

Eliot the believer found England “a state secularized, a community turned into a mob, and a clerisy disintegrated” (*ICS*, 67). To evangelize this England, he ventured to write plays, a form of art in which he could engage himself more directly with society. Eliot believes “the choice [before us] is between the formation of a new Christian culture, and the acceptance of a pagan one” (*ICS*, 47). And by the year 1949, the year of *The Cocktail Party*, he had been quite successful as an Anglo-Catholic churchman, even though his evangelizing efforts bore almost no fruit. He was awarded the Order of Merit in January, dined with the King and Queen, and was received in private audience by the Pope Pius XII. We should note the play was performed in the heyday of Eliot’s Christian leadership.

It is not difficult to grasp the Christian message of the play. The psychiatrist Reilly heals Edward and Lavinia, and their younger “intimate” friends, Celia and Peter. Reilly has two helpers in the persons of Julia, who has a lot of acquaintances in the upper class, and Alex, who has been traveling around the globe under Pax Britannica. From the Christian perspective, these two figures perform the role of a guardian angel, and Reilly serves as a confessor to sinners. The collaboration of these three persons enables those “hollow men” who are stuck in a wasteland, to resurrect from the “death in life.” They eventually follow the admonition of Reilly’s: “Work out your salvation with diligence.” Reilly and Julia and Alex form the community of Christians expounded in *The Idea of Christian Society*. Supporting this is a Catholic idea of the Church that there are three churches; namely, Church militant on earth, Church suffering in Purgatory, and Church triumphant in heaven. They are all connected with one another in prayer and through the working of the Holy Spirit. God’s grace is brought into the communion of saints. The whole of *The Cocktail Party* is one sacramental
space, in which each character is being invited to a higher stage of spirituality.

So far, so good. However, Eliot seems to insinuate that the recovery of order should be accompanied by the “atonement” by human sacrifice, that is, an act of martyrdom. Devoid of any meaningful relationship with other people, Celia feels she needs to be at-one-ment with God. Reilly leads her to live her life in a convent. Here we remember that Eliot affirms the necessity of religious orders, which were revived by the Anglo-Catholic Movement (Eliot remarks, “I cannot conceive a Christian society without religious orders”, ICS, 80). As Julia observes, Celia’s way leads to illumination, involving “the process by which the human is / Transhumanized.” Celia is sent to Kinkanja, where she is captured and crucified. Reilly judges Celia’s death “a happy death.” Living “the ultimate life of a death in God” (Hughes, 35), and the sacred drama triumphantly completed, saintly Celia affects those who live in a secular society. Indeed, after sharing the news of Celia’s “happy death,” the Cocktail Party duly begins. Lavinia’s last remark just before the curtain, “Oh, I’m glad, it’s begun.” attests a very happy ending. The working of the community of Christians has restored the domestic order, even with the gift of a baby. But is this really as happy as it sounds?

The problem of The Cocktail Party, seen as another martyrdom play than Murder in the Cathedral, looms large in our view when we realize that the play is enacted by upper-class people, and especially tailored for the West End theatre goers, and all of them enjoying the legacy of the British Empire, albeit unconsciously. The world of The Cocktail Party is decidedly Anglo-centric, uncritically reflecting the views of the English ruling classes. Even the names of the characters: Sir Harcourt-Reilly, the Chamberlaynes, Julia Shuttlethwaite, Alex MacColgie Gibbs, and Celia Coplestone seem all too appropriate for implying they are dwellers in the heartland of the Empire.

Consider Julia Shuttlethwaite, whose acquaintances are aristocratic. Lady Kloots was found by a butler “rinsing her mouth out with Champagne.” Julia has stayed at the castle of the man who has ‘a remarkable sense of hearing’ and can ‘hear the cry of bats.’ Julia’s set reminds us of Evelyn Waugh’s “Bright Young Things.” The names “Alex MacColgie Gibbs” suggest he is one of the good Scotch, who, representing the Celtic fringe, serves as an efficient imperial clerk overseas. He has been to various places including Kinkanja, where he was “staying with the Governor / Three of us have been out on a tour of inspection / Of local
conditions.” For natives he invented new recipes using saffron monkeys! He has connections all over the world, even in Hollywood. This is, Kojecky insists, “an obvious, though indirect, reference to the world-wide Christian Church” (Kojecky, 169). The church is of course the Anglican Church forming “the Anglican Empire” to use Kaye-Smith’s expression.

For the audience of The Cocktail Party, the words “heathen,” “pagan,” and “natives” sound natural. The healers and the healed (and the audience)—the citizens of “Natopolis” (Cooper)—are the people who have benefited from the formation and expansion of the British Empire. However, both aristocracy and the Empire were declining. In the words of Jed Esty, Great Britain was “a shrinking island.” Towards the end of the play, Peter comes to report that he is taking Hollywood filmmakers to Boltwell, which he describes as “the most decayed noble mansion in England” and maintains that for all this it suits well for the film. Peter, who has a good Roman Catholic name and never stays on at the party, highlights the post war decline of aristocracy, and hints at Great Britain’s survival resources of tourism.

At the shrinking island’s imperial outpost of Kinkanja, Celia was martyred. This sacrificial death, unlike Thomas Becket’s martyrdom, posits a serious problem seen from the viewpoint of the present day Christianity. Let us look into what Kinkanja means. Mary Brewer, in her enlightening book titled Staging Whiteness, identifies Kinkanja with the Other. The British imperial rule and its accompanying Christian missions sadly split the indigenous people into two groups: the obediently colonized and Christianized; and the people remaining “pagan” and worshipping monkeys. To be civilized is to be Christianized, and the heathen and barbaric savages must be Christianized. Kinkanja is being described stereotypically by the eyes of white, European, and Christian values. In Kenneth Asher’s words, the ruling idea is “the mid-nineteenth century Churchman’s notion of Darwinism” (Asher, 114).

Increasing numbers of monkeys have become a pest. Lavinia nonchalantly suggests a slaughter of them, but Alex informs that heathen people do not kill them, and blame the colonial government instead. This is clearly “unreasonable” according to the Western idea of reason. Christian converts eat monkeys. The young monkey is very palpable. Eating monkeys and keeping monkeys away from their crops, the converts have become richer than the other group. This situation creates a real issue. The rumour has spread that eating monkeys incurs a curse, and to be lifted, Christians must be consumed. The obvious target is the Christian who
eats a monkey. The word has made some converts revert to paganism. Celia is sent to take care of the endangered Christians. Then a riot breaks out, and Celia’s life is in danger, but she refuses to leave the dying behind, only to be crucified.

Two years after *The Cocktail Party*, Eliot talked about “Virgil and the Christian World” over the BBC third programme. He presented Virgil’s role of connecting the Roman pagan world and the Christian world, and pointed out Virgil’s importance in prophesizing the Incarnation of Christ. Eliot observes that Virgil stands very close to the spirit of Christianity in terms of three cardinal ideas: Labor, Pietas, and Fatum. Depending on Theodor Haecker’s little book, *Virgil the Father of the West*, Eliot finds the merit of *Eclogues* in its appreciation of agricultural labour, and he connects it with monastic orders’ attaching much value to physical labour, most succinctly expressed in St. Benedict’s dictum “*Ora et labora.*” The new Christina idea of labour is hinted at in stark contrast to the Greek view that work is for slaves and leisure for citizens.

The word “Pietas” means piety to parents, and piety to one’s mother country. For Virgil it means faithfulness to his *patria*, Rome and its gods. Virgil’s Aeneas is a prototype of an Anglo-Catholic hero, who devotes himself to England and Christ. “Fatum” means fate. Aeneas is destined to found the Roman Empire, which is to be handed to Christianity, and, through the Holy Roman Empire, to the British Empire in the end. Eliot firmly believes in the Established “national” Church of England, in spite of the fact that Anglo-Catholics are “more or less in favour of Disestablishment” in order to maintain the independence of Church from the intervention of State (Kaye-Smith, 97). They are mostly anti-Erastian. Eliot seems to uphold the Christian empire, and consequently his Christian outlook remains limited in scope.

Eliot’s struggle to search for real Christianity in a “desacralized landscape” (Hughes, 21) is ever moving, but we live in an age when the West itself has acquired the viewpoint of seeing themselves critically. Doesn’t Eliot’s Anglo-Catholicism seem stopped at Anglo-Catholic triumphalism? If so, is it due to the narrow frontier of Eliot’s mind, or more generally to Anglo-Catholicism itself? Anglo-Catholicism combines universal Catholicism with particular Englishness. The young modernist Eliot was an avid reader of anthropological works, but finding the absolute truth in Anglo-Catholicism and the “Anglican Empire,” he became an anti-Modernist. Although the term sounds contradictory, Eliot is an “Imperial little
England’s.” For him “Little Gidding” presents the ideal vision of England, but it cannot stand on itself. It needs the Anglican Empire to support it. Eliot died a happy death early in the year 1965, the year the Second Vatican Council closed. He did not live long enough to see the revolutionary changes. Had he seen them, would he have reconsidered his faith, lest that his true Church turns to be a “broad-backed hippopotamus”?

Eliot rests in East Coker, a village reminiscent of Merry England, where rustic folks danced a matrimonial dance around the bonfire. But we remember the same poet is also enshrined at Westminster Abbey as a national poet. It is quite appropriate for the man who envisioned God’s blessing by the apocalyptic image of the unity of the fire of the Holy Spirit and the rose of England.

Eliot’s Christian faith is an absolutist one which monopolizes the truth. Eliot believes Virgil’s and Kipling’s empires. Indeed, he was able to say “we can also learn to respect every other culture as a whole, however inferior to our own it may appear, or however justly we may disapprove of some feature of it: the deliberate destruction of another culture as a whole is an irreparable wrong, almost as evil as to treat human beings like animals” (NTDC, 65). But his view could not go beyond the condescending standpoint of the British Christian Empire, which bears the responsibility to inferior peoples all over the world. The mentality that equates civilization with Christianization, and those two with Anglicization, keeps Eliot’s Christian faith and imperialistic trend intact. For Eliot it is by no means a multicultural coexistence, but Christian absolutism, that brings water to the modern wasteland. He lacks the view that the encounter with different peoples could bring new life and energy to the Christian Church.

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Religious Dimension in the Linguistic Technique of T. S. Eliot

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The objective of this presentation is to look into Eliot’s linguistic technique in his poems of *Prufrock and the Other Observation* (1917) to get evidence of his religious dimension in the early stage. Eliot’s linguistic techniques as innovations have been explored extensively and his religious tendency has been recognized as all-too-apparent in his early poems. However, it is still valid to uncover some elusive nature of his language as implicit indicator of his religion. Especially the connection between his religion and linguistic technique has not been fully focused. This presentation first shows how inseparably related religion and the spiritual life of human being in Eliot’s mind. Then it traces Eliot’s idea of language in his early writings not merely as a means of communication but as an agent of spiritual redemption. To get insight into Eliot’s religious dimension in his use of language, Martin Buber’s philosophy of language is introduced and paralleled with that of Eliot. Doing this, the presentation is to demonstrate the religious dimension was an inherent element of Eliot’s impersonality thesis from the very beginning, not a later addition. The distinction between his early poetry and later poetry is simply that he kept the dimension implicit in the former and explicit in the latter. To uncover further the implicit nature of Eliot’s religion, the presentation finally focuses on the three aspects of Eliot’s linguistic techniques: his peculiar use of personal pronouns, verb tenses, words and images, with juxtaposition being the dominant method. All these, used to make Eliot’s religious dimensions implicit, are evidence of it.

I

In the first edition of *The Sacred Wood* (1919) T. S. Eliot emphasizes the purely aesthetic nature of poetry and asks to consider poetry “primarily as poetry and not another thing,” calling such approach as the "Impersonal theory of Poetry" (SW viii, 53). Then, in the Preface to the second edition of the book (1928), he revises this position by saying that he has
“passed on to another problem not touched” in the book: “that of the relation of poetry to the spiritual and social life of its time and of other times” (SW viii). This is in other words the non-aesthetic nature of poetry. Thus Eliot’s critical shift from the purely aesthetic into the non-aesthetic was officially marked in 1928. But that “the essays” in the book, as he records, “were written between the years 1917 and 1920” (SW vii) makes an 8-year gap between them and the Preface. So even if we believe Eliot, the ‘real’ shift could fall anytime between the years 1921 and 1928.

The truth is that Eliot’s “Impersonal theory of Poetry” was never purely aesthetic from the beginning. In 1917 the year “Tradition and the Individual Talent” with the announcement of the theory was first printed in the Dial, Eliot also published a curious short story “Eeldrop and Appleplex” in The Little Review. While Eeldrop, “a sceptic, with a taste for mysticism,” “learned in theology,” but “in private life, a bank-clerk” is portrayed unmistakably as Eliot’s literary mouthpiece (7-11), the story itself seems to be deliberately meant for a literary endorsement that religion and poetry have been inseparable, sharing their fate in the history of human soul. Besides, in “Dante” (1920) Eliot emphasizes how crucial and inseparable is Dante’s philosophy to his poem and criticizes Valery’s “pure” poetry for its thorough exclusion of philosophy (SW 160). The religious poems, written before Eliot met Pound in 1914, poems in the first (1917) and the second (1920) volume of poetry such as “Preludes” and “Mr. Eliot’s Sunday Morning Service,” and finally The Waste Land (1922) are all-too-apparent in their carrying of strongly religious tones and messages.

Now it is proven that the religious dimension was there in the Impersonal theory of poetry from the beginning, but Eliot remained elusive about it in his criticism long enough, making it implicit in his writings. It is in 1926 that Eliot was officially converted to the Anglican Catholicism in his private life and started to explicitly champion religion over aesthetics in his criticism, going extreme in After Strange Gods in 1933. But even during the late 1920s he took contradictory positions every now and then. In 1929 Eliot said that “a straightforward philosophical statement can be great poetry” as in Dante’s Purgatorio (SE 213-4). In 1928 he said “literature can be no substitute for religion, not merely because we need religion but because we need literature as well as religion” (SE 36). When Richards hailed that The Waste Land effected “a complete severance between poetry and all beliefs,”
Eliot suggested that Richards was wrong because such complete severance is not possible (UPUC 130). As early as in 1922 Eliot said in “The Lesson of Baudelaire,” “all first-rate poetry is occupied with morality” (Tyro 1, 1922). Thus religion and poetry were rendered independent of each other at one time and connected with each other at another. But important is that Eliot did not feel this seriously problematic. Rather he seemed to think these apparently contradictory positions justifiable according to the contexts—what he calls “directions.” So in the 1928 Preface to the second edition of The Sacred Wood Eliot mentions the “directions” by clarifying that the essays in the first edition were written between 1917 and 1920 under the influence of Middleton Murry: “some of them directly at Mr. Murry’s suggestion. Those years in which we were struggling to revive old communications and to create new ones.” Having already shifted into another direction, he took reprinting of the second edition in 1928 as a chance to speak out the shift: “both Murry and myself are a little more certain of our directions than we were then” (SW vii-viii). But Eliot’s departure from Murry started much earlier. He wrote in November 1922 to Gilbert Seldes, a Dial editor, that “My present ideas are very different” from those in The Waste Land (letter, 12 Nov. 1922). Shortly afterwards, he wrote “The Function of Criticism” (1923) in order to express these new “ideas,” feeling it necessary publicly to differentiate his own position from Murry’s idea of the “Inner Voice.” And these “ideas” turn out to be closely related to Eliot’s notion of “Catholicism” (SE 18), which he defines later as “orthodoxy” or “a tradition” with “intelligence” (ASG 19). A humanist in the line of Arnold who views “poetry as a substitute for religion,” Murry’s influence on Eliot in religion can be compared to that of Pound in aesthetics (UPUC 113). Their relationship initially came about through mutual cooperation and they exchanged ideas from as early as 1916 when Eliot started to contribute to the Athenaeum, which Murry edited. But there were the underlying differences between them from the time of cooperation. Then in 1923 Eliot established a clear distinction between his own theological position and idea of poetry, and Murry’s by branding it as “Whiggery tendency” (SE 18).

So Eliot might think that the issue of critical inconsistency or illusiveness does not do him justice: his earlier concern was more with the creative process and his later concern more with the ‘practical’ use of poetry. These two concerns were like the two faces of a coin: they
were there with Eliot from the moment he declared the impersonality thesis, though the one explicitly and the other implicitly. Art’s exclusive goal is its own creation to be done as something autonomous—or “autotelic” in Eliot’s term, but in reality on its being delivered to the human world of relations, it takes human respect with a moral significance, good and evil, which is, as he called, the use of poetry. So while we see Eliot insisting that “poetry is of course not to be defined by its uses,” we also see him warning at the same time that aesthetic searches turn “perilous if not guided by sound theology” (UPUC 150).

My objective below is to look into how Eliot manages to use language as a means to avoid any explicit statement of religion in the early stage, whereas he holds it implicitly at the same time. I will narrow my focus largely onto Eliot’s unconventional usage of personal pronouns, and specific words/images in the poems from Prufrock and Other Observations (1917).

II

Before I discuss Eliot’s linguistic technique, let me briefly introduce Eliot’s view of language. Language means everything to Eliot. It is what justifies him as a poet and it is eventually what justifies his art and life as well. Language is also inseparably bound up with our spiritual and moral life, turning evil and good, depending on how it is used. Importantly language is closely involved in our spiritual redemption. Eliot’s critical dictum “to see an object as it really is” in “The Perfect Critic” is Arnoldian but originally taken from Aristotle. For Eliot it means finding a correct or “precise” word. And finding a correct word means spiritual redemption. Language is of something Godly in itself instead of simply being a means of it. Thus religious dimension was already in Eliot’s idea of language. That’s the context Eeldrop and Appleplex, with Eliot, deeply regret the corruption of language and parallel it along with “the decline of orthodox theology and its admirable theory of the soul.”

Eliot’s keen awareness of language as such—shared by the Imagists—made him extraordinarily scrupulous in its usage. The choice of every word and image is believed to be deliberate and consciously made. Especially Eliot’s use of personal pronouns and verb forms are known to be quite unconventional. It is because he wants to establish a new mode of
existence in the poem. And, I maintain, this new mode of being has religious dimension underlying in it. Insight into Eliot’s complicated use of pronouns can be gained from Martin Buber, a German theologian and philosopher of Eliot’s time, who argues that we manipulate epistemological distances between the self and the world through personal pronouns. Buber introduces in his *I and Thou* (1923) the two basic word pairs by which people “establish a mode of existence”: the basic word I-You and the basic word I-It (53). According to Buber, “basic words are spoken with one’s being.” In other words, when one says You and when one says It, in both cases the I is included. But “the basic word I-You can only be spoken with one’s whole being,” whereas “the basic word I-It can never be spoken with one’s whole being” (54). The I-You word pair establishes the world of relation, whereas the I-It word pair can bring not relation but simply experience: “The world as experience belongs to the basic word I-It. The basic word I-You establishes the world of relation” (54, 56, 13). In other words, whereas I-You word pair posits a relation between the subject and the object, I-It word pair detaches the subject from the object. Here Buber’s It includes all the third personal pronouns, he, she, it and they. Applied to Eliot’s vision, the I-You word pair primarily shadows and aims at the world of unified sensibility, the original stage which Bradley calls the stage of “feelings” or “immediate experience”(216). On the other hand the I-It word pair stands for Bradley’s second stage of our experience as dissociated sensibility, this world where we live now and we cannot escape from as a conscious being. As a result, like Buber’s word pair I-You, Eliot’s third stage aims at the restoration of the original unity, based on and transcending the second stage of dissociation—Buber’s word pair I-It. Buber too considers the I-It as inevitable and even takes for granted for us as human being to survive in this world. Buber’s stage of true relation and Eliot’s—and Bradley’s—stage of transcendence are and should be both based on the dissociation and not lost en route. But Eliot’s transcendence is much closer to Buber’s

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1 Published in German in 1923, *I and Thou* was drafted during the 1910s. Though Eliot and Buber met later as Friedman recounts, there is no direct evidence that they met during the time of Eliot’s formative years as a poet. However, Eliot in the early 1910s was probably familiar with Buber’s work, as was interested in the contemporary German philosophy and considered staying in Marburg shortly before the First World War. The striking parallels between Buber’s ideas and Eliot’s have also been noted by Buber scholars: see, for example, The Philosophy of Martin Buber, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp and Maurice Friedman (London: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 584, 625, 627. See also Martin Buber, Between Man & Man, trans. Gregor Smith (London: Fontana, 1968), pp. 12-3; 32-33.
than to Bradley’s in that it involves strongly religious dimension, implicit as it be in earlier poetry, as I will show below.

So I propose now that the general objective of Eliot’s narrative technique in poems written in 1910s as a whole is an exploration either into the possibility of Buber’s I-You for a higher unity or into the present dichotomy of Buber’s I-It for its transcendence. The dramatic monologues in *Prufrock and Other Observations* are mostly for the one, whereas the satirical poems in *Poems 1920* are for the other. Into my discussion of personal pronouns I will also fuse that of word choice and image.

III

Buber’s account closely parallels Eliot’s poetic usage of pronouns as a monitor of the distance between the self and the world. The I-You word pair in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” the first poem of *Prufrock and Other Observations*, signifies or presumes the unity between the poetic self and the world: between the speaker and his other self, the poet, the reader, and his masks. I use ‘presumes’—in the sense Eliot uses it—because the unity is often not real but falsely presumed by the speaker’s deliberate pretence of unity, as shown in Prufrock’s false “we” in the final three lines. In *Poems* (1920), on the other hand, the I-You word pair is markedly replaced by the I-It, as the poetic self does not involve its whole being with the world by assuming an almost godly (if ironic) distance from it. The focus here is not on a fusion, a unity, or a Prufrokan appeal for sympathy between his self and the world, but on the distance between them, so the world not as the object of relation/unity but as dissociated experience.

The unity presumed by Prufrock, however, is not an ordinary one as the self itself is not the ordinarily received self and intends to transcend the ordinary time and space. Eliot’s method is to have it first decentred and then reconstructed, which he calls “a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality.” In other words, Buber’s I-You unity across identities/selfes/persons also happens across time and space. This is what Eliot means by “tradition” in his impersonality doctrine in 1917 and the key to understand the quibble “only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from
these things” (SW 53, 58). As Taylor comments in *The Sources of the Self*, this sort of “decentring is not the alternative to inwardness; it is its complement” (465). Thus is carried Eliot’s attack on the Romantics’ “metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul,” whereby he also aims to attack “the relation of the poem to other poems by other authors” and “the relation of the poem to its author” (SW 53). In other words, with the doctrine Eliot ambitiously decentres and redefines subjectivity, art, and its canon altogether. So the choice of language, i.e. writing poetry, is to be highly “conscious and deliberate” (SW 58). For this purpose the dominant technique Eliot chooses is juxtaposition: unconventional juxtaposition of identities, time, and space. That’s how personal pronouns, verb tenses, and images turn so crucial in Eliot’s poetry. Pound and other Imagists also are highly selective in the use of words with their dominant method being juxtaposition. But Eliot’s peculiarity lies in the religious dimension with it: he does not fail to suggest a centre lurking behind such strained decentring of subjectivity, which is uniquely religious.

The famous first line of “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” begins straight with the I-You word pair: “Let us go then, you and I.” This shocking start must be carefully chosen for the purpose of decentring the conventional idea of identity. With the juxtaposition of various identities in the following lines it economically scatters the conventional reader’s expectation of the poetic identity as well. Furthermore, the imposed ungrammatical juxtaposition of present and past tenses in the description of “the yellow fog” imagery succinctly suggests that this identity resides beyond the limit of ordinary time and space. With further juxtaposition of literary and Biblical identities that follow, the I-You further extends its horizon. Eventually the bound it aspires to goes beyond the human. We see Prufrock repeatedly intimidates his own desire to “presume” with “How should I presume?” Repeated as it is, however, the rhetorical questions expose his suppressed desire to *presume* as well. So while he pretends to persuade himself not to *presume*, he deliberately and repeatedly takes for granted his omniscience—God’s exclusive feature—at the same time: “For I have known them all.” Here Eliot’s choice of the word “presume” instead of “assume” is particularly critical. The word with its obvious connotation of an individualistic standpoint indicates the elusive nature of human subjectivity —what Eliot calls “the Senecan attitude of Pride” the typical example of which is Othello’s self justification on his murder of Desdemona (SE 112).
Eliot’s religious dimension in the presentation of Prufrock’s subjectivity is also revealed in the latter’s subtle assertion of omnipotence in the “Shall I say” passage: “I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of silent sea.” The clever image of a “scuttling” crab with “ragged claws” is repeated and connected with the image of “a stick” in “Rhapsody on a Windy Night”: “a crab one afternoon in a pool, / An old crab with barnacles on his back, / Gripped the end of a stick which I held him” (CPP 5, 15). These two images are very important to the understanding of Eliot’s religious standpoint. “A crab” is in a sense Prufrock’s self-dramatization from a higher viewpoint of his own subjectivity, himself trifling and trifled by others—with shame and humiliation at the same time. On the other hand “the yellow fog” image—as is connected with the images of a cat and “a patient etherised,” lethargic and malingering—is with no shame and no mortification. What is worth scrutinizing is their relation with the image of “a stick:” the crab is attached to “a stick” whereas the fog/cat/patient is not. More correctly, it is the “end” of the stick that the crab “gripped” itself and it is also what “I held him.” We need to note Eliot’s ungrammatical structure of the sentence: with no “with” before “which” or after “him” in “Gripped the end of a stick which I held him” is syntactically wrong, but this effects the directly connection and identification between “I” and “him,” recalling Buber’s I-You word pair. Besides, the stick is what we use to get help or to depend on, and as a symbol it suggests a presence of a guide. And the implicit expression of the presence is found in “Preludes”:

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing. (CPP 13)

The image invoked above is unmistakably that of Jesus Christ, who is consciously and deliberately connected with “these images” by the “fancies” of the “I.” Interestingly enough, we cannot be sure of the identity of this “I,” whether Prufrock or the third party. But clearly in this final section of “Preludes” Eliot juxtaposes three different points of view at the same time, suddenly exposing a third point of view by substituting the previous “I” by “His” in the
first line of the section: “His soul stretched tight across the skies” (CPP 13). To get some insight into the identity of the “I,” it is probably worth citing the lady’s insistence on the male speaker’s God-like power—though conveyed by his consciousness—in “Portrait of a Lady”: “What life is, you who hold it in your hands” (CPP 9). Taken as Prufrock’s display of “the Senecan attitude of Pride,” the “I” turns out to be a false consciousness. Taken as the lady’s illusion of reality, it again turns out to be another example of human weakness. Taken as the presence of a redemptive being, however, it is definitely indicative of Eliot’s religious dimension underneath.

IV

As we all agree now, it is not an easy task to locate Eliot’s religious dimensions in his early poetry, as he kept it implicit until mid-1920s. With such recognition, I have tried to demonstrate several points relating to Eliot’s religious dimensions both in criticism and poetry. Now to summarize, first of all, impersonality is from the outset a metaphysical—both philosophical and religious—idea, largely modeled after Bradley’s philosophical system. Because of this, Eliot’s apparent theoretical shift in the 1928 ‘Preface’ to The Sacred Wood is more correctly understood as a move from an implicit to an explicit formulation of such metaphysical dimensions of impersonality. The essay on Dante from 1920 and ‘Eeldrop and Appleplex’ are evidence of Eliot’s habitual unification of poetry and belief. Eliot’s 1923 attack on Murry in “The Function of Criticism” is also evidence of the latent character of Eliot’s religion, which is definitely “Catholic.” It is Eliot’s metaphysical relativism and skepticism still strongly under Bradley’s influence at this stage that curbed and kept his religious dimension underwater. He chooses instead to care about how it [poetry] works and to do a good job where he can. Eliot’s intensive experimentation and exploration of the limits of poetry should be considered in this light.

Abbreviations

ASG: After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy
CPP: The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot
SW: The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism
SE: Selected Essays of T. S. Eliot
UPUC: The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England

Works Cited

Special Talk 1

John Xiros Cooper (University of British Columbia, Canada)
Powers of Horror: Sex Crimes, Cannibalism, and T. S. Eliot

Moderator
Young Min Hyun (Chungnam National University)
Powers of Horror: Sex Crimes, Cannibalism, and T. S. Eliot

John Xiros Cooper (University of British Columbia, Canada)

The first volume of T. S. Eliot’s published letters ends in December 1922. The next volume begins with a letter he published in the Letters to the Editor page of the London daily newspaper, the *Daily Mail* on January 8, 1923 (*Letters* II 7-8). In the letter, Eliot describes himself as a devoted reader and notes with particular interest the paper’s sensational reporting of the latest murders. The *Mail* built itself a very large circulation in this period on its ambiguous approach to reporting events like sex crimes or crimes of passion or the varieties of sexual liberation (usually involving women) associated with modern life. On October 2, 1922, for example, an article headed ‘The Cocaine Plague’ told the story of ‘factory girls’ from the Midlands who are drawn to London and ‘who turn to cocaine to give them bright eyes and the gay manner they lack and require’.

They herd together, two and three in one room, in filthy surroundings which contrast strangely with their clothes and their night life in the dance clubs and cafés (5).

Later in October 1922, the *Mail* began a new serial called ‘Helen of London: A Romance of Modern Babylon’ (14) focussing on the heroine’s sexual adventures with a series of young men, some of whom are office clerks, like the ‘young man carbuncular’. Given the moral climate of the time, it’ll come as no surprise to you to learn that she comes to a very bad, and very predictable, end. One more interesting point is that the prose style of the serial closely resembles the stilted and stiff rhetorical mannerisms of the language of the rape/seduction of the typist in ‘The Fire Sermon’ canto of *The Waste Land*. Eliot seems to have deliberately adapted, and in a devilishly ironic way, the prose style of serials like ‘Helen of London’ for that part of the poem. The young Eliot seemed to take a peculiar delight in the transgressive behaviour of young women. In a letter to his cousin Eleanor Hinkley back in the US in April 1915 (the 24th), he wrote about his comings and goings in Oxford and London and especially about meeting thoroughly modern young women. In the letter, he adds this strange, vaguely erotic note: ‘I confess to taking great pleasure in seeing women smoke’ (*Letters* I [rev. ed.] 105).
But it was the *Daily Mail’s* reports on the juiciest crimes, especially crimes committed against women and by women, that stimulated the greatest interest in the reading public and it seems for Eliot himself. Indeed, women were the *Mail’s* special center of attention for the colourful proprietor, Lord Northcliffe, whose real name was Alfred Harmsworth. The paper pioneered daily journalism targeted at women (William E. Carson169-95). Women seem to have been seen primarily as consumers of clothes, cosmetics, decorative furnishings, pulp romances, and pictures. They were also thoroughly sexualized as objects of desire. Oddly enough, the *Mail’s* general attitude towards the ‘modern’ woman in the editorial pages was usually scornful, when it wasn’t openly misogynist. This is odd because the *Mail’s* advertising strategy largely depended on women as consumers and was a major contributor in the social construction of the popular image of the ‘modern’ woman in Britain. The naturalizing of this contradiction makes an interesting ideological episode in the construction of the gender stereotype—women as insatiable consumers—to suit a new mutation of market society.

In the period when Eliot was a regular reader, the back pages of the paper were devoted to women, both in their features content and the advertising. As a rule, news features and advertising were often co-ordinated (as they are today). The fashions and furnishings writers would highlight a particular style and the merchandisers would supplement these features with the necessary costumes and furnishings. Working class and lower middle class women were encouraged to ape the style strategies of the upper classes by being encouraged to think in terms of purchasing what we would now call a ‘look’ for themselves and for their immediate domestic surroundings. For example, the *Mail* on September 1, 1920 ran a spread on ‘le style japonais’ in cosmetics, clothes, and furniture and complementary decorations like the typist’s ‘bright kimono’ and ‘false Japanese print’ that Eliot included in the earlier and longer version of *The Waste Land* before his collaboration with Ezra Pound. The typist’s ‘drying combinations’ in *The Waste Land* survived the editorial process and may very well have come to Eliot’s notice while reading the *Mail’s* advertising pages where ‘combinations’ and a variety of other women’s undergarments were prominently featured in display ads on a daily basis. These advertisements were very interesting. ‘Combinations’ were an early type of body-stocking and were prominently featured on drawings of girlish-looking, but buxom, women. The combination of the primly innocent glance and the voluptuously ripened body quite obviously appealed to some erotic fashion of the time. Although directed at women consumers, these drawings may also have been of interest to men.

Although scholarship has established Eliot’s debt to the formal literary tradition of
Europe, it has not, until the recent interest in Eliot and popular culture, investigated his borrowings from his reading of popular periodicals and newspapers like the *Mail*. For example, Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant, ‘with a pocket full of currants’ in *The Waste Land* (ll. 209-10) began life in a story in the *Daily Mail* (1 September 1920) on Swiss sanatoria catering to the medical needs (‘A Lung Cure in Switzerland’) of many different nationalities, including ‘a Greek currant merchant’, perhaps recently ethnically cleansed from the Smyrna area by the resurgent Turks under Kemal Ataturk. The *Mail* carried many vivid accounts of the Greco-Turkish War at the time. Eliot must have been awfully impressed with the reporting (which emphasized the bloodshed and the atrocities) because he recalled the paper’s stories with admiration more than two years later in his letter to the editor.

In the September 1, 1920 number of the paper, he would have also read the report on the sex murder of a 17-year-old woman, categorized as a ‘confidential clerk’, by the name of Irene Munro, at Eastbourne in Sussex. The paper reports that attempts were made by a medium to contact her spirit in order to secure a description of the murderer. The medium’s name by the way was not Madame Sosostris. Irene’s spirit in fact did identify someone. Asked where this person was, the medium, interpreting Irene’s communication, said: ‘He is in bed. He is staying at the A . . . Hotel in Soho. I cannot describe just now where it is. It has a dirty white outside, with gold letters’.

In the *Mail* of 1 January 1923, a week before the appearance of Eliot’s letter, there were four sex-related murders reported. Finally Eliot’s own letter to the *Mail* indicates his interest in this side of the paper’s reporting activities by referring to the verdict in the famous Ilford murder trial. This case had been reported in the British papers for months before the verdict on 11 December 1922. The *Mail* lavished a great deal of attention on the investigation and trial throughout the autumn of that year. In the form that has become familiar in the tabloid press, the case mixed a routine *faux* Puritanism with microscopic dissection of every lurid detail of the case on a daily basis. The charismatic character of Edith Thompson, who was accused of murdering her husband in collusion with a weak and compliant lover, aroused much interest. The paper reported that she was curiously beautiful, normally silent, but with a penetrating, knowing gaze, a *femme fatale*, wicked, ruthless, and so on. The paper spared no adjective in constructing her as a fully sexualized character for the readership. Alfred Edge, one of the paper’s more prominent personalities, summed up, in a feature we might now call a ‘think piece’, the *Mail’s* intensely fascinated, but generally harsh and unsympathetic final judgement of ‘that woman’. The piece was headed ‘Wicked Women’.

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There are women who hate their husbands and continue to live with them. Some of these are murderesses at heart if not in actuality. They long for their husbands to die, even though all the time they may be living as smiling and complacent wives.

The ways of the wicked woman are hard to understand. It may be that when she is more than usually demonstrative in her affection that is the time she hates you most.

Eliot would have read that on page 8 on 12 December 1922, the day after a jury arrived at a guilty verdict for both Edith and her younger lover. In the *Mail*’s leader on the last day of the trial, the 13th of December, the *Mail* congratulated the jury for its verdict of guilty and the court’s death sentences. It praised the court’s deafness to the calls for mercy in the liberal press suffering under ‘the sway of a certain type of sentimentality’ (‘Should women be hanged?’ 13 Dec. 1922 8).

Eliot’s letter, characteristically, lashes out at liberal, progressive opinion and goes on to question the representativeness in England of such opinion.

On the Ilford murder your attitude has been in striking contrast with the flaccid sentimentality of other papers I have seen, which have been so impudent as to affirm that they represented the great majority of the English people. (‘Right on all points’, 12)

Later in the same letter, incidentally, Eliot also commends the *Mail* on its series of dispatches from Italy approving of Mussolini’s March on Rome in 1922 and the establishment of a Fascist state. The articles from Italy included detailed descriptions on the imprisonment and torture of communists and socialists opposed to Mussolini’s *coup d’état*.

The Ilford murder was not the only crime that interested Eliot at the time. The famous Crippen murder trial was probably the source, Grover Smith suggests, of the Sweeney character, in the form of the missing witness that Dr. Crippen could not call in his defence because ‘M’Sweeny’ could not be found. [this may also by the source also for that disappearing cat, Macavity in *Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats*]. Closer to home, that is, when Tom and his first wife, Vivienne, lived in Crawford Mansions and later at Clarence Gate, both in Marylebone, near the Edgeware Road, they were only a few blocks from the home of a man named Cecil Maltby. In 1923, the *Daily Mail* and most of the rest of the press in London reported the mysterious death of Alice Hilda Middleton, a former resident of a block of flats called Yale Court. She was the wife of a chief officer in the Merchant Navy. Mr.
Middleton’s duties involved long absences from home. Alice lived in the flat at Yale Court on an allowance of £18/0/0 a month that her husband gave her. She then met Cecil Maltby, a tailor, fell in love, and gave up the flat in Yale Court and the allowance when her husband was next away. She moved into Cecil Maltby’s rooms above his shop in Marylebone a few blocks from Clarence Gate. Maltby allowed his tailoring business to deteriorate as he and Alice spent a large amount of time at the racetrack and they were also drinking heavily. It was in room above the shop that her body was later found. It seems that her new lover, Cecil Maltby, murdered her, ‘did a girl in’ in fact, and kept her corpse in a bathtub covered with planks, on which he took his meals. In 1923 when the police broke down his door looking for the missing Mrs. Middleton, Maltby shot himself with a revolver before he could be arrested and charged. Popular speculation as to whether he cannibalized the woman’s corpse was rife in the sensationalist press at the time, including the *Daily Mail*.

As has been noted in the past, sexual violence occurs disconcertingly often in Eliot’s works, from the early Columbo and Bolo poems, where genital mutilation, in one instance, is a jesting punchline to a doggerel verse, to *Murder in the Cathedral*, where the Chorus of Women refer, at one point, to the unaccountable disappearance of ‘several girls’, probably ‘done in’ by a Sweeney-ish sexual predator. Lyndall Gordon has also brought our attention to Harry’s ‘murderous heart’ in *A Family Reunion* (*Eliot’s Early Years* 62). Did he really do his wife in? Then there’s that curious man ‘Stetson’ in *The Waste Land* who has buried a corpse at the bottom of the garden. A character, one might add, right out of popular British crime fiction. He is warned about the ‘Dog’, man’s best friend, who ‘with his nails’ will ‘dig it up again’ (II.69-75). Incidentally, ‘the bottom of the garden’ is a peculiarly British *topos* in social discourse. In the popular imaginary, all kinds of nasty things end up or happen at the bottom of the garden. It’s a place where you might simply put the rubbish or it may be a regular burial mound of murdered wretches. In *The Waste Land* as well we have the rape and mutilation of Philomel by another Sweeney-ish character, Tereus, the ‘barbarous king’ (II. 99-103), a tale from Ovid, the conclusion of which leads to an episode of cannibalism, Tereus eating unwittingly the flesh of his own son. And in ‘The Fire Sermon’, there are the two further possible ‘rapes,’ of the typist and the Thames daughter. One might mention also Eliot’s interest during *The Waste Land* period in Joseph Conrad’s *The Heart of Darkness* documented in the *Facsimile* edition of the poem’s first draft. Speculations about Kurtz’s possible African misdemeanours range from unspeakable sexual practices, human sacrifice, and cannibalism.

Perhaps the most familiar early poem in which the erotic and violent are entwined
occurs in ‘The Love Song of Saint Sebastian,’ dated July 1914 in the Inventions of the March Hare Notebook [78-9]. The scenes between the saint and the lover are strangely erotic and, obviously, in terms of the public morality of the time, transgressive, or to use Coleen Lamos’s term ‘deviant’:

I would come in a shirt of hair
...  
I would flog myself until I bled,  
And after hour and hour of prayer  
And torture and delight  
...  
I should arise your neophyte  
...  
To follow where you lead  
...  
In the darkness toward your bed.

I would come with a towel in my hand  
And bend your head beneath my knees  
...  
I think that at last you would understand.

...  
You would love me because I should have strangled you  
And because of my infamy;  
And I should love you the more because I had mangled you . . .

There used to be a TV show in Canada called Kink (which may still be around) in which this sort of behaviour would be neither out of place nor considered ‘deviant’. Lyndall Gordon’s reading of these lines is typical of critics who don’t really want to go anywhere near the literal event. Saint Sebastian, she writes, is not real (which is a relief), he ‘represents an idea’. In part, the attenuated reality of Sebastian is put down to the fact that, happily, Eliot is seen as the antithesis of ‘a Saint Sebastian or a Sweeney’ (62). Unable to resolve the conflict between body and soul, i.e. before his conversion in 1927, Gordon writes that ‘Eliot was able to submerge his private experience [of this conflict] within stylized, single-minded actions of allegorical characters’ (62). Eliot’s letter to Conrad Aiken, dated 25 July 1914, on the other hand, acknowledges the erotic element as an active force in the poem, indeed he seems to position it at its very core, and certainly not as a launching pad for an allegorical rocket of other meanings.

In the second section of the poem, Gordon notes the Jekyll and Hyde transformation from abject saint to instinctual man, while the world dissolves in heat and ice. Liberated from
social constraints, the lover proceeds to strangle the woman, with ‘sinister fondness’ (62). From the sensualist side of Sebastian, wielding his towel (strangely erotic murder weapon) Eliot developed, Gordon tells us, his ‘later characters, the brute Sweeney, playful with his razor in the brothel, and Harry [in The Family Reunion], with his murderous heart’ (62). We can understand why Gordon plays down the poem’s carnality and the undercurrent of sadomasochism; in effect, it’s the inevitable critical warp when we note her book’s agenda, namely, to position this and other poems as points on a graph plotting Eliot’s tortured trajectory towards holiness. But then, we should also remember, that when writing her account of this early poem, she didn’t have the benefit of Christopher Ricks’ meticulously edited version of Eliot’s early drafts and poems from the March Hare Notebook.

The base carnality of St. Sebastian’s ‘Love Song’ is more obvious when we take into account lines written by Eliot at the same time as the Sebastian poem. I think it’s possible to conjecture that Ricks’ ‘miscellaneous leaf 12’ was from the same period as the ‘miscellaneous leaf 11’ [where we find the Saint Sebastian verses] in the Notebook. The lines on the next leaf in the Notebook are untitled, but they begin, ‘Do I know how I feel? Do I know what I think?’ (Ricks does note verbal resemblances between the two poems, though the second he leaves undated.) In the leaf 12 poem, the speaker is another version of the Prufrock-type but with a strange twist that comes in the second section of a three part invention.

Do I know how I feel? Do I know how I think?
There is something which should be firm but slips, just at my finger tips. [the Prufrock note]
There will be a smell of creolin and the sound of something that drips
A black bag with a pointed beard and tobacco on his breath
With chemicals and a knife
Will investigate the cause of death that was also the cause of life –
Would there be a little whisper in the brain
A new assertion of the ancient pain
Or would this other touch the secret which I cannot find? (Ricks 80)

Creolin (more commonly creosote): is, Ricks tells us, a powerful disinfectant; in the OED with citations of Jeyes’ fluid and Lysol; in 1891, as ‘creoline.’ in its etymology the word was coined from Greek elements in the 19th-century, the Greek is a bit macaronic but it is supposed to mean flesh (kreas)—preserving or saving, but the Greek word chosen for ‘save’ means to save in the sense of salvation, not physical preservation. In any case, Eliot’s plain sense use of the term probably means something like an ‘antiseptic preservative’.
Ricks goes on to note several detailed allusions to the murder in Wilde’s *Picture of Dorian Gray* (including the use of a chest of chemicals, a knife, and nitric acid). There are also allusions to some phrases in Eliot’s French poem ‘Tristan Corbière’ and Charles-Louis Phillipe’s *Marie Donadieu* (1904). Phillipe, incidentally, was the author of *Bubu de Montparnasse* (1901), the novel for which Eliot wrote a preface for the 1932 English translation. But then to line 19, ‘Will investigate the cause of death . . .’ Ricks quotes the following passage from Eliot’s medievalist fantasy, *Eeldrop and Appleplex* published in 1917: ‘In Gopsum Street a man murders his mistress [. . .] For the man’s neighbours the important fact is what the man killed her with? And at precisely what time? And who found the body? [no doubt items of interest for the avid reader of the *Daily Mail*] For the ‘enlightened public’ the case is merely evidence for the Drink question, or Unemployment, or some other category of things to be reformed [this time grist for the dedicated reader of the *Guardian*]. But the medieval world, insisting on the eternity of punishment, expressed something nearer the truth’ (*Little Review*, iv, May 1917, p. 9). Eliot’s views of what he would call ‘negative liberal society’ in *Idea of a Christian Society*, 22 years later in 1939, are remarkably consistent over the decades.

Let’s turn for a moment to some of the Columbo and Bolo poems and fragments included in Ricks as Appendix A. These were poems excised from the *March Hare* Notebook by Eliot in the early 1920s and given to Ezra Pound. They are now in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. They all date from 1910 to as late as 1916, when Eliot was in his mid-twenties. Many of the excised leaves are undated so it is difficult, in some instances, to ascertain exactly when they were written, but it would probably have to be in that six year period. In the first half of 1915 there was some talk of including two of the poems, ‘The Triumph of Bullshit’ and the ‘Ballade pour la grosse Lulu’, in the War Number of Wyndham Lewis’s *Blast*. In a bantering and undated letter to Ezra Pound but written sometime before July 1915, Lewis has already made the decision not to publish them, noting his ‘naïf determination’ not to have any words ending in ‘–Uck, –Unt, and –Ugger’ in *Blast* (Materer, *Pound/Lewis* 8).

Eliot’s doggerel Columbo and Bolo verses have undergone considerable scrutiny in recent years. Inevitably, as a result of what are taken to be the African American references and sources that find their way into these poems and into some of his more formal published work, they have usually been positioned critically in a racial context. Michael North’s *Dialect of Modernism*, Jonathan Gill’s essays, and others use these poems in getting at the
undercurrent of race. I wonder though if that is the principal critical lever that moves Eliot’s Bolo world. Race is no doubt an important dimension of these works. Perhaps THE most important aspect. However, I’m no longer entirely sure of the final adequacy of this judgement. Perhaps this focus is a feature of the critical and scholarly community in the United States where the matter of race is a pervasive feature of social and political discourse. Yes, race is an issue, but so is class. And this is so perhaps because of the political context of the early twentieth century when revolutionary political activism on the left was on the rise. The working class, the Sweeneys of the world, were on the march in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Let me come back to that fact in a minute.

Let’s think for a moment about the girth of penises. Email spam has made me very sensitive on this issue in recent years. Let me read a much quoted stanza from the Columbo and Bolo verses that begin ‘Columbo he lived over in Spain . . .’ (315-19)

King Bolo’s swarthy bodyguard
Were called the Jersey Lilies
A wild and hardy set of blacks
Undaunted by syphilis.
They wore the national uniform
Of a garland of verbenas
And a pair of great big hairy balls
And a big black knotty penis. (316)

Every element speaks of a racialist sensibility, from the skin colour of King Bolo and the bodyguards to their enormous penises. One can argue that a stanza like this speaks to an unconcealable race panic. Yet is it really a matter of race primarily? The fixation on race in the critical literature has skewed the poem as it’s written. King Bolo and his merry men do not figure large in the Columbo narrative; they are actually a very small part of it. The main action involves a white European who visits sexual violence on a white European woman.

One Sunday morning out at sea
The vessel passed Gibraltar
Columbo sat upon the poop
A-reading in the psalter.
The bosuns wife came up on deck
With a bucket full of cowshit
Columbo grabbed her round the neck
And raped her on the bowsprit. (317)
In the leaf that precedes these verses in the Notebook, we have another rather enormous penis and again without significant African American overtones.

There was a jolly tinker came across the sea
With his four and twenty inches hanging to his knee
Chorus With his long-pronged hongpronged
Underhanded babycatcher
Hanging to his knee --- (‘Fragments’ 314)

A tinker was, strictly speaking, an itinerant mender of pans and kettles. And coming ‘across the sea’ seems to identify the Irish migration in the later twentieth century that changed the political demographics of New England for good. But the OED also gives ‘a rough and ready worker’ as a later meaning for tinker. In any case, the first stanza and chorus make it very clear what we are dealing with. A man with a very large penis. In the next stanza, the tinker’s equipment is even more enormous, ‘eight and forty inches.’ A young woman, the speaker’s ‘daughter’ in fact, falls in love with this tripod of a man and although warned, she persists in consummating her love, with some rather ugly results.

O mother dear mother I thought that I was able
But he ripped up my belly from my c**t to my navel.

A very ugly image. But clearly here we’ve crossed over into Jack the Ripper country. And to quote Ezra Pound on a rather ugly passage, later excised, about the young man carbuncular in The Waste Land, this is a bit ‘over the mark’. There’s perhaps a good deal more work to be done in the area of psychobiography, not just of Eliot alone, but Harvard undergraduates at the turn of century and of the New England Brahminate in general. As ugly as the lines are, they do not necessarily mark the presence of race panic. I’m not denying that we have some kind of anxious, panicky affect at work in these lines, but perhaps race may not be the root cause. In fact, class and the political emergence of the lower orders might have been a very much more effective stimulant for cultural/political panic in a young man of Eliot’s family origins and upbringing in 1910/1911 than matters of race. I’m no expert on the evolution of African American civil and political militancy in the twentieth century but I’d be willing to bet that the Sweeney-ish, that is to say, Irish, push from below as an issue of class conflict constituted more of an immediate threat to a comfortable bourgeois Anglo-American than any perceived threat from African American radicalism or, even, sexuality. I would also
guess that fantasies about enormous, ravaging penises change with time, depending on what kind of concrete civil dangers one faces. And this is so, whether it’s a threat posed by an increasingly pushy working class, of a decided Irish hue in the Boston area in 1910, African American activism in the 1960s and 70s, or even queer militancy in our own time. Perhaps what we need is a new historical sub-discipline: one that examines the fantasy life of dominant classes, groups, or even nations facing specific threats to the maintenance of their power. What kind of genitalia did those French aristocrats dream about as the revolting lawyers, writers, and functionaries of France assembled in that tennis court to take their oath in 1789?

This makes more sense of Eliot’s interest in the sex crime reporting of the Daily Mail that was far removed from any specifically American racialist paranoia. However, the Mail, like so much of English culture in a time of rising Home Rule militancy in Ireland, did perhaps incline towards an Irish paranoia, augmented by deeply ingrained fear of the rise of working class self-assertiveness. As Robert Crawford has argued in The Savage and the City, the savages were not out there somewhere in an anthropological hinterland, but right here in the midst of the city, the epitome of civilization. And they weren’t King Bolos and his verbena adorned bodyguards either. It was the Cecil Maltbys and Irene Munro’s killer and every other Sweeney-ish character Eliot enjoyed reading about in the pages of the Daily Mail. So, to begin a discussion of the Fragment of an Agon (the second part of Sweeney Agonistes) with the comment that ‘Race, rather than national culture, becomes the issue in the second of the poem’s fragments’ (McNeilly 35) seems to me a little wide the mark. In fact, ‘national culture’ is not the point either. The point is the working through of class as the driving force and the peculiar, and ‘errant’ lyricism of what might be called the poetics of class consciousness. Sweeney’s threat to carry Doris off to ‘a cannibal isle’ and to ‘gobble’ her up is part of that affective zone. It turns out of course that the cannibals are not somewhere in the Americas, the South Pacific, or in the heart of Africa, but just down the road from where you live.

SWEENEY: I knew a man once did a girl in
Any man might do a girl in
Any man has to, needs to, wants to
Once in a lifetime, do a girl in.
Well he kept her there in a bath
With a gallon of Lysol in a bath

SWARTS: These fellows always get pinched in the end.
SNOW: Excuse me, they don’t all get pinched in the end.
What about them bones on Epsom Heath?
I seen that in the papers
You seen it in the papers
They don’t all get pinched in the end.
DORIS: A woman runs a terrible risk.
SNOW: Let Mr. Sweeney continue his story.
SWEENEY: This one didn’t get pinched in the end
But that’s another story too.
This went on for a couple of months
Nobody came
And nobody went
But he took in the milk and he paid the rent.
SWARTS: What did he do?
All that time what did he do?
Sweeney concludes his story with some existential speculations about life and death.
SWEENEY:. . .
He didn’t know if he was alive
and the girl was dead
He didn’t know if the girl was alive
and he was dead
He didn’t know if they were both alive
and both were dead
If he was live the the milkman wasn’t
and the rent collector wasn’t
And if they were alive then he was dead.

... Death or life or life or death
Death is life and life is death
and he finishes with what sounds like a direct reference to the Cecil Maltby murder case.
We all gotta do what we gotta do
We’re gona sit here and drink this booze
We’re gona sit here and have a tune
We’re gona stay and we’re gona go
And somebody’s gotta pay the rent (CP 134-35)

Women may run ‘a terrible risk’, as did poor Alice Hilda Middleton, but a whole class runs a terrible risk as well and this was particularly the case in both early twentieth-century America and Great Britain. Those above were being menaced by the new political and social activism from below, but from the higher ground, these threats seemed grotesque and hideous. In the social imaginary of the privileged, these perils were coming from lust-driven monsters, who, as Sweeney tells us, go on for months living with the corpse, taking in the milk and paying the rent as usual, having, as Eliot says of another imagined sex criminal in Eeldrop and Appleplex, ‘crossed the frontier’ (9). Robert Crawford thinks of this in psychological
terms, i.e. particular individuals crossing over into the inner precincts of savagery. But Eliot’s man Sweeney is a generality and a type, and so is Doris, and these represent not only the errant individual, but a more collective errancy. As he writes in his second most important programmatic critical statement, ‘The Function of Criticism’ (1923) it is the working and lower middle class youths who ‘ride ten in a compartment to a football match in Swansea, listening to the inner voice, which breathes the eternal message of vanity, fear, and lust’ (‘Function of Criticism’, SE 16). And perhaps these savages, neither from the American South nor the Caribbean islands nor the heart of darkness in Africa, but right in our midst emerging from the lower depths may even cross the frontier into cannibalism. This is perhaps how a well-brought up, Harvard educated, upper middle class literary man might conceive of and trope the socio-political horror at the centre of modernity.

References (incomplete):

Session 3
Eliot and Other Modernists

Chair
Myung-Ok Kim (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Presentation 1
Anna Weitemeyer (University of Kassel)
Fluctuations of the Self: T. S. Eliot’s and Conrad Aiken’s Early Poetry

Presentation 2
Byung-Hyun Yang (Sangji University)
T. S. Eliot and Hart Crane in Matters of Style

Discussants
Joon-Hwan Kim (Yonsei University)
Jung-Ja Huh (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)
If I claim full justice for my art, it is because it
is an impersonal thing – a thing beyond myself.
[...] You have degraded what should have been
a course of lectures into a series of tales”.
Sherlock Holmes to Dr. Watson
Arthur Conan Doyle, The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

At the beginning of the 20th century, Modernism challenged the Neo-Romantic
tradition in poetry with its individualist psychology, intuitive, or “natural” epistemology and
metaphysical idealism. As Albert Gelpi writes, “The Modernist work of art proceeded not out
of a conviction of organic continuity or even correlation with nature but instead out of a
conviction of the discontinuity between subject and object, and the consequent fragmentation
of self and experience required the tight construction of the art object from the fragments”.
Modernist poets began to perceive a stable identity in a work of art as an anachronism.
“Fluctuations of the Self” became a prevailing theme in the oeuvre of T. S. Eliot and Conrad
Aiken, his student friend at Harvard, but the modes that each of them eventually chose to
explore this theme differed widely.

In his syllabus to the Oxford University Extension Lectures on Modern French
Literature in 1916 Eliot defined the basic tenets of Romanticism: “exaltation of the [...] individual above the typical”; “emphasis upon feeling rather than thought”; “[...] belief in the
fundamental goodness of human nature” and, finally, “depreciation of form” and
“glorification of spontaneity” in art. Modernism was associated with a return to the ideals of
classicism: form, restraint and the necessity for austere discipline in art. These assumptions
only demonstrate the slipperiness of the terms “Romanticism” and “Modernism”, for often
they tend to overlap only to split up again. Aiken’s and Eliot’s work confirms this assumption.

Eliot regarded Romanticism as a cultural malady, because it refused to admit the
fallibility and disintegration of the human psyche and, as Gelpi points out, instead “committed
the sick and mortal individual to his own muddled subjectivity”. With the defragmentation of
personality in his poems, Eliot attempted to establish an objective order of things. Aiken, on
the contrary, saw the continuous exploration of the subjective, or the human consciousness, as
the single theoretical foundation for his poetic oeuvre and regarded it as the way for an ordinary man to achieve qualities of the divine. Both had a sense of the poet as “professor” of divine truth, though Aiken sought his truth within the poet’s mind and Eliot – outside and “above” it.

Eliot and Aiken met at Harvard University in 1907 and worked together on editing the *Harvard Advocate*. Their friendship endured up to Eliot’s death in 1965. The one-year-older Eliot remained “the older brother”, as Aiken recalls, in things that concerned manners and literary taste. At the beginning, he says in an interview shortly after Eliot’s death, their common interests were limited to literature. But with time this friendship “widened to take in everything – [...] “sports, comics, [...] the kidding, bad punning, and drinking, to the end”. They had similar problems and aspirations, read the same books (crucial for both of them were Arthur Symons’s *Symbolist Movement in Literature*, Bergson, Poe, James, Emerson) and were influenced by the same lecturers (George Santayana, Dean Briggs, Irving Babbitt). As to their work, there was a lot of interchange, too, and, as Aiken admitted, “juices went both ways”.

One profound factor unites the biographies of Eliot and Aiken – the Unitarian ministry of their ancestors and their Unitarian upbringing. William James Potter, Aiken’s maternal grandfather, was a minister of the first congregational Society in New Bedford. Eliot’s paternal grandfather was the minister of the First Unitarian Church in St. Louis. Yet at this point it is important to clarify the discrepancy between Eliot’s and Aiken’s religious views. Eliot’s convictions proceed from his sense of original sin, which his forbears did not support. Aiken, in turn, shared the views of his grandfather, who, as a devout Unitarian transcendentalist, believed in the natural goodness of men. Religious convictions definitely shaped literary treatment of the Self by the two men of letters.

Eliot and Aiken maintained a lifelong correspondence and, despite longer periods of silence (due to either mutual negative criticism in periodicals, health or marriage problems), retained their friendship, which came again to full bloom after Eliot’s marriage to Valerie Fletcher.

Both Eliot and Aiken were born and raised in America and later found themselves as expatriate writers in Europe. Eliot stayed and became a British citizen; Aiken returned to Savannah for the last eleven years of his life and died there in 1973. In an interview with *Paris Review* in 1963 Eliot acknowledged his expatriation to be an important factor in moulding the idiosyncrasies of his poetry, but admitted that his work “in its sources, in its
emotional springs, [...] comes from America”. Aiken could have made a similar statement about the essentially American nature of his own poetry.

Aiken played a decisive role in Eliot’s career as a poet. In 1913 he took The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock with him to England and showed it to Ezra Pound, who was, as Aiken puts it, “at once bowled over” and later championed its first publication in Poetry magazine. In 1922, a year that coincided with Eliot’s publication of The Waste Land, Aiken brought out Modern American Poets, a highly selective anthology, which was published in London and included five of Eliot’s poems: Prufrock, Portrait of a Lady, Rhapsody on a Windy Night, Sweeney Among the Nightingales and Whispers of Immortality. Amy Lowell praised Aiken as “the only American resident in Europe who has lifted his countrymen in the eyes of the English”.

Aiken’s body of work is much more voluminous than that of Eliot. It includes a drama, an autobiography, two volumes of criticism, five novels, five collections of short stories and twenty-five volumes of poetry. Aiken’s “Collected Poems”, which excludes some lengthy early pieces, is more than a thousand pages. Except for the Nobel Prize, he seems to have won every coveted literary award including the Pulitzer, and yet today he is almost unknown and forgotten. C. Seigel suggests that the reason for this was Aiken’s theory of expanding consciousness on which his whole creative output was based: a theory which either “lacked philosophical pyrotechnics” or was “too “romantic” for the intellectual climate of the 1920s and 1930s.

His whole life Aiken “recycled” in his writings one episode from his childhood: his father shooting his mother and then killing himself; the eleven-year-old Conrad was to find the bodies. First and foremost, literary work implied healing for Aiken: it secured a possibility of staying alive and an escape from insanity. He was deeply influenced by the deep psychology of the early 20th century and used it to create his own Modernist theory of an exploration of the mind.

As to the basic qualities of their oeuvre, Eliot supported a notion that was contradictory from the Romantic conception of language as an expression and continuation of nature. He insisted on a works’ “autotelic” quality. Poems are their own subsequent ends. Eliot’s language is self-creating and self-sustaining from the start. He consciously took a “typically” realistic image and morphed it into the phantasmagorical. Aiken’s position was the opposite, at least at the beginning of his poetic career. His concern with his audience is evident. His poems were devoted to one supreme task: to teach the reader how to come to
terms with his or her own consciousness. He attempted to depict the long process of self-exploration, and this was reflected in the form of his poems: their excessive length sometimes resulted in an extreme monotony.

Another point about the reading audience separates Aiken and his friend. Eliot was convinced that the proper reading of poetry required immense training, knowledge and self-discipline – that is, it was accessible only to the elite. Aiken, on the contrary, considered consciousness a supreme gift of every man. The poet as an extender of man’s consciousness should be understandable not only to the few – as he put it, “[the genius of a poet] is the common inheritance of all mankind”.

Still, their poetic oeuvre offers some fascinating points of contiguity: their treatment of the fluctuations of the Self, an early and simultaneous endeavour to depict the modern urban environment, the misogynistic streak in their portraits of women, the phenomenon of narcissism, application of musical structures and of Oriental motifs (Aiken being more interested in China and Japan, Eliot in India).

The concern with fluctuations of identity is evident in Eliot’s and Aiken’s early poems. I have chosen two poems, or rather passages from the two poems, for my comparison – Eliot’s The Death of Saint Narcissus and Aiken’s Youth. Both poems appeared at approximately the same time. Earth Triumphant, which included Youth, was Aiken’s first collection of miscellaneous narrative poems of about 250 pages, published in September 1914. The Death of Saint Narcissus was written either at the end of 1914 or beginning of 1915, after Eliot’s move to England, and belonged to a series of poems written during his youth which Eliot never intended to publish.

Aiken’s Youth is a long narrative poem which – in a quite romantic mood – tells the story of a Byronic hero, Jim, whose triumphal procession through life abruptly ends as he falls in love and settles down. Jim is passionate, “selfish, and fierce and strong”. Like a true Byronic hero, he is defiant and haunted by a secret guilt – as a result of his excessive life style, he was once impelled to kill a man. Before the murder he led the life of a cynical, disrespectful and arrogant hedonist and womanizer. After committing his crime he flees from the city to escape punishment and leads the secluded life of a simple farmer. He falls in love with a daughter of his employer and never goes back to the city.

Aiken’s Youth possesses all the qualities of the Genteel Tradition of poetry which Modernism fought against. It is very conventional, written in an affective style – highly charged emotionally – and it is also derivative. In the preface Aiken himself acknowledges his
indebtedness to Masefield, but insists that in writing the first three poems – and *Youth* is one of them – he has made “a deliberate effort to excise all echoes”. The poem offers no innovation with regard to metre, rhyme or stanzaic pattern. All of the lines are neatly rhymed and the stanzas are regular. The language is sometimes archaic, but simple, and the imagery is conventional if not primitive, e.g. the tumult of the functions as a metaphor for life. Presumably the only tangible “modern” feature in this poem is Aiken’s use of a city as setting with its humming “electric motors”, “flashing lights”, and “the bright train” that “speeds through night”.

The passage I have chosen to look at more carefully describes an epiphany. The persona, Jim, suddenly becomes aware of his youthful strength and quasi superhuman abilities and qualities and decides to make the best use of them. He plunges into the abyss which the excessive enjoyment of pleasures leads to and, as a result, collects all kinds of experience, which often exceed human norms of behaviour and morality.

[...]
life had beckoned,
That he must go and live, he cared not how, -
Only to fight, take, kill, and never bow:
Stake all, win all, lose all, - what mattered this?
Fighting for life, even to die were bliss!

This is the Romantic strategy for treating the material: a poetic self-expression of a profoundly egotistical and comfortably subjective persona.

If such a narcissist, self-indulgent resolution of a persona in Aiken’s poem reflects the Romantic personalist psychology, Eliot’s modernist trick evolves out of a rejection of narcissism in his poem *The Death of Saint Narcissus*. This poem belongs to a new cluster in Eliot’s creative output where a saint or a martyr takes place of the baffled philosopher of the 1910-12 poems. Gordon writes: “At the end of his student years, in [...] “The Death of Saint Narcissus”, Eliot toyed with the role of martyr, emphasizing the martyr’s abandonment of the ways of other men”. Whereas Aiken “toys” with a role of hero endowed with a superhuman gift who challenges life, Eliot’s “hero” chooses the escape from a life. The poem begins with an imperative couplet – which was later adopted in *The Waste Land* – which is uttered by an obscure narrative voice. The reader is invited to glance at what is left of Saint Narcissus, or the result of his final metamorphosis. Critics argue about historical prototype of Eliot’s St. Narcissus (three martyrs from Smith and Cheetam’s *Dictionary of Christian Antiquity* or the Bishop of Jerusalem in the second century). But it is primarily the image of a flower which
encircles the poem, and a legend about its origins from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, which fascinated Eliot’s creative genius.

Like Aiken’s Jim, Eliot’s Narcissus is a young man whose epiphany presumes a sudden awareness of his own beauty and, thus, his new abilities which go far beyond those of ordinary men. He is not able to stand such knowledge and becomes a “dancer before God”, a dance presumably symbolising an act of transgression of human limitedness and a union with the Divine. Narcissus abandons people and becomes an ascetic “under the rock”. In his youthful exuberance he sees no way to reconcile the flesh and the spirit: one has to be mortified in order to bestow exultation on another.

Narcissus undergoes a series of profound transformations – he experiences himself as a tree, “twisting its branches among each other”, then a fish, “With slippery white belly held tight in his own fingers”, and finally as a girl violated by “a drunken old man”. Critics such as Miller and Comley view all these metamorphoses in Freudian terms – as sexually charged symbols first of a “primal intermingling of the sexes”, then of masturbation and – finally – of rape. The experience, which presumably takes place in the mind of Narcissus, leads him to a deliberately chosen death. He is purified by the “burning arrows” which “satisfy him”: his “sainthood” is achieved by self-inflicted punishment; the outcome is lethal, but obscurely satisfying. According to the legend, Narcissus was compelled to love no one but himself, or rather his own reflection, and to feel frustration as a consequence of the inability to satisfy his passion. Thus, his “martyrdom” results in a sublimation of sexual energy into an act of sadomasochism. The poem ends with a captivating image of a flower “green, dry and stained /With the shadow in his mouth”.

Eliot’s *The Death of Saint Narcissus* compared with Aiken’s passage from *Youth* can be read symbolically as the Modernist advance over the Romantic tradition – in Gelpi’s words, “away from narcissistic subjectivity toward a resolution of the demands of consciousness and the unconscious, intellect and passion, in the authority and objective reality”. It is, however, necessary to mention that Aiken literally exorcised “his own” Narcissus a decade later in the poem *Changing Mind*, published in 1925. However, Aiken’s exorcism had more to do with Freud and Jung than with any religious or mystical issues.

Another point of contiguity I have chosen is visible in two poems written at approximately the same time – Eliot’s *La Figlia Che Piange* (Cambridge, Mass., 1911 or January 1912) and Aiken’s *Earth Triumphant*. In a letter to Aiken from November 21, 1914 Eliot averred that he thought the title poem, *Earth Triumphant*, was “decidedly the most
successful and unusual”. This title poem, like most of the poems in this collection, accepts the Romantic notion of language, Gelpi writes, “as an expression and extension of nature”. A persona in the poem is seen as an extension of nature – earth, to be precise. His moods reflect the causality of seasonal change. The “dead leaves” in autumn are compared to “old memories” and generate “dead griefs” (Aiken 1914, 2), love is associated with “springtime of [...] life” (25), the rejuvenation of nature in May brings “mirth” (68). With the same predictability the persona mourns the sudden death of his beloved drawing a parallel between his own mental state and the physical loss of a sustaining earthly substance:

He felt the earth dissolving dim
And slipping out from under him,
And dizzily, dizzily he was borne,
And stone and tree from him were torn,-
Nothing to cling to! – Naught but air...

**And then the sunshine in her hair. [...]**

This passage reminds one of certain phrases in Eliot’s *La Figlia Che Piange*. But it functions in a very different way in Aiken’s long narrative poem. The romanticised description of a woman whose loss is unbearable for the poem’s protagonist corresponds to Wordsworth’s definition of a poem as taking its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity. The persona, walking alone on a sunny spring day, visualizes every detail of the physical appearance of the beloved but dead woman and, owing to his powerful imagination, feels as if she were alive. In this way he tries to reassemble loose parts of his dismembered personality through memory. Using imagery from the realm of nature, Aiken – quite within the framework of the Romantic poetic tradition – constructs the subject, which is simultaneously the extension of the object of this poetic meditation. In this way he reconstructs the dispersed Self of the persona, endowing it with wholeness.

In Eliot’s *La Figlia Che Piange* the perspective from which the speaker captures the image of a beloved woman in his memory, is different. Eliot’s utterly modernist strategy implies taking a stock image or emotion from Romantic poetry and exploiting it with irony and mistrust. He deliberately places the event in autumnal setting, as if conforming to the traditional Romantic scenario: parting of lovers – autumn weather – grief. But he does so in order to ridicule the situation, although the irony here is very subtle due to the speaker’s uncertainty about the evaluation of the event – either as a profit or as a loss. *La Figlia* has
been placed by critics into the category of love poems – those of an uncompromisingly lyrical touch; and deservedly so.

The epigraph of the poem, taken from Virgil’s Aeneid I, 327 (Aeneas questioning Venus “O maiden how can I remember you?” or “What name shall I give you?”) suggests that this poem is about memory, or about fixing a memorable moment in the poem. It begins – as in the case of Saint Narcissus – with a number of imperatives, but they resemble the directions of a photographer trying to arrange a perfect scene for a shot. In the second stanza the speaker is divided into “him” and “I” who are actually one. He speculates on his own possible departure and inflicting pain on the girl on the stair. This reflects Eliot’s views on impersonality of a poet in his essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent”, which promotes the separation between “the man who suffers and the mind which creates” in an artist. By this separation the speaker in the poem assumes a role of both the performer of an action (or a small theatrical scene, in this case) and that of a stage director or a reflecting Self which is aware of his own responsibility for the happenings.

Aiken’s persona attempts to resurrect a woman by means of memory, Eliot’s speaker sacrifices a woman in order to immortalize a memorable moment. While Aiken speaks of the evocation of life in memory and art, Eliot speaks of the preservation of artistic beauty by means, or at the cost of, life and experience. In Eliot’s case, the lover departs and leaves a thinker and an admirer of artful scene.

In conclusion, my examples provide only a glimpse into Eliot’s and Aiken’s early work. Despite the similarities in their upbringing and education, their poetry is highly idiosyncratic. By focusing on the fluctuations of the Self in the four early poems of these two Modernist writers, I looked at their idiosyncrasies more carefully. “Since the new art is always the elder old”, as Harriet Monroe put it, Eliot’s newness already at an early stage in his career as a poet proceeds from his recovery of classicist ideals of objective detachment in poetry – he subordinates the persona to the poem as a whole. Aiken in his first published poems still dwells on the conventional – Neo-Romantic – depiction of purely subjective experience of his personae.
T. S. Eliot and Hart Crane in Matters of Style

Byung-Hyun Yang (Sangji University, Korea)

Modern poetry has undertaken Symbolism in the consideration from that French Symbolists had developed in the nineteenth century and that modern English poets, such as Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, found as a new poetic incentive in the early twentieth century. In the nineteen-twenties, Hart Crane had felt the strong influence of French symbolistic poets such as Arthur Rimbaud or Jules Laforgue and also of the American-English poets, Pound and Eliot, who in their earlier poetic lives brought poetic incentives from the French poets.

In a letter to Charmion Wiegand in May 1922, Crane revealed two main influences: “I am mad about Laforgue.... The people I am closest to in English are Yeats, Eliot, Pound” (Weber, Hart 86). By using Symbolism as a literary form to organize his thoughts consistently, Crane, initially in his poetic life, attempted to combine two trends, romantic and classic aestheticisms, relying on basic factors like rhythms, imagery, irony, and metaphors, in his first major poem, “For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen” (hereafter “Faustus and Helen”).

However, early in the twentieth-century poetry, the New Criticism bound literary works within a classical framework, an extreme order and intellectual discipline in poetry. In America, most editors and critics were strongly influenced by Eliot's monumental status which dominated the movement. Eliot's The Waste Land (1922) illustrated the pessimism and nostalgia for the past which prevailed right after Word War I. Crane tried to stand against Eliot's classicism, yet bringing upon himself the ‘wolf pack’ of those men who “tore him to bits” (Cargill 142). When the Dial published The Waste Land, Crane responded, “it was good, of course, but so damned dead” (Weber, Hart 103). Crane seemingly felt suffocated by the New Criticism's dictatorship, the anti-Romanticism of the age.

Crane reconciled the two divergent streams by relying on Symbolism which Pound and Eliot had also found as a new incentive but which the New Critics did not consider a major form. Crane then saw the influences of French Symbolism on Eliot's earliest poems such as “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” Yet, Crane found from Eliot the common features of symbolic words and images that the French Symbolists advocated (Yang 198). Crane confessed, “I must have read 'Prufrock' twenty-five times and things like the ‘Preludes’
Crane, praising imagination as controlling the symbolic words and images, tried to combine his thought and its order in poetry; whereas New Critics went to the extreme pursuit of rationality of poetic forms considered as ordering and organizing human thought.

As William E. McMahon saw, “it is almost certain that Crane, while formulating his aesthetic and philosophic program in the early twenties, would have studied Eliot's collection of representative essays, *The Sacred Wood* (1920), including “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” “Hamlet and His Problems,” “Ben Jonson,” “Blake,” and “Dante” (393). McMahon further said that while “Crane was indebted to Eliot for important philosophic attitudes, the heaviest influence was in matters of style” (393). It can be certainly true that Crane accepted Eliot's impersonal, objective, and anti-romantic stance. Yet, Crane took “Eliot as a point of departure toward an almost complete reverse of direction”; Eliot's “pessimism is amply justified, in his own case” (Weber, Letters 114). Crane felt that Eliot “ignored certain spiritual events and possibilities as real and powerful now as, say, in the time of Blake” (114): “a state of consciousness, an ‘innocence,’ (Blake) or absolute beauty” (Crane 221).

This paper examines that just as Eliot did in “Tradition and the Individual Talent.” Crane tried to fuse the traditional with the new, yet Crane used such a antithetical aestheticism that he would apply as much of Eliot's “erudition and technique as [Crane] can absorb and assemble toward a more positive, or ... ecstatic goal. ...” (Weber, Letters 114). In their poetry, Crane rejected negative symbolic language Eliot usually used in representing 'the unreal city' as featureless and lifeless, such as seen in Eliot's poem, *The Waste Land.* Instead Crane strongly used the tradition of representing 'real' urban Symbolism through language which “has built towers and bridges, but itself is inevitably as fluid as always” (223), such as seen in his major poems, “Faustus and Helen” and *The Bridge.*

Historically, the movement of main literary thought of the twentieth-century praised Irving Babbitt who found “a human self... known practically as a power of control over impulses and desire” and Paul Elmer More who saw a human self “formed only when man controls his impulses by the inner check” (Goldsmith 37, 41). The movement saw them as “the classical elders holding the fort against the romantic rebels led by Mencken and Van Wyck Brooks, while a yet newer and younger group formed under such critics as Allen Tate, Kenneth Burke, and Yvor Winters” (Goldsmith 47). Eliot considered Babbitt a welcome ally, strongly disagreed with his view of humanism, but insisted more on “the impersonality of poetry,” “objective correlative,” and “the dissociation of sensibility.” Eliot has been one of the
guiding lights of the New Criticism that finally developed formalistic system to analyze and interpret modern poetry.

Eliot found modernity in Imagism and music sounds in the poetry that Pound advocated. Yet, Eliot turned to English aestheticism bequeathed mainly from Elizabethan poets in the seventeenth century and Pope representing neoclassicism in the eighteenth century. Eliot liked the precision of meaning and harmony of language with rigid metrical unit for which neoclassicists stood in poetry. Eliot used poetic images, rhythms, and allusiveness early in his work. “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” expresses those characteristics: psychological progress inside Prufrock is expressed by the images revealing the hollowness of modern lives:

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advise the Prince;

Edmund Wilson says that Eliot's poetry “achieved one of the definite expressions of the pathetic-ironic, wordly-aesthetic moods of the fin de siecle temperament” (99). Crane also detected “an absolute impasse” in Eliot's irony and “the vocabulary of damnations and prostrations” developed at the expense of psychologically negative moods (Weber, Letters 90, 89).

Eliot’s poem, “Preludes,” remarkably shows his careful concern about musical sounds with irregular metrical scheme almost line for line:

And short square fingers stuffing pipes,
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world. (IV, 5-9)

Eliot carefully employes alliteration to convey musical effects, but most images are melancholically portrayed in psychological rather than active moods. Eliot did not subordinate his poetic genius to other movements such as Imagism, or Symbolism. But he focused a more intense form widely accepting modern terms - images, rhythms, symbols, and irony. Crane, in “Faustus and Helen,” seems to borrow Eliot's poetic scheme but in more hilarious and active rhythms:
A thousand light shrugs balance us
Through snarling hails of melody.
White shadows slip across the floor
Splayed like cards from a loose hand;
Rhythmic ellipses lead into canters
Until somewhere a rooster banters. (II, 9-14)

Crane discovered a different Jazz music from Eliot. Around 1920, Crane chose a positive direction away from Eliot: “an extreme freshness that has nothing to do with the traditional ‘dew-on-the-grass’ variety conveys something suggestive of my aim. T. S. Eliot does it often” (Weber, Letters 34). Crane felt truly threatened by his contemporary writers portraying the vacuity of modern life in the manner of Eliot. The fact that “Eliot's influence threaten[ed] to predominate the new English” (Weber, Letters 44) consistently bothered Crane:

Our age tries hard enough to kill us, but I begin to feel a pleasure in sheer stubbornness, and will possibly turn in time into some sort of a beautiful crank. (Weber, Letters 48)

Crane must have felt a feebleness for standing alone against the monumental movement. He looked upon the movement as the mere technical mechanics of writing and as foreign to his self-aesthetics.

Crane expressed his troubles in a letter to Matthew Josephson in Jan. 14, 1921: “My main difficulty is at present a kind of critical structure that won't permit me the expression of the old asininities” (Weber, Letters 52). The critical tendency that editors followed helped lead Crane to his somewhat blind refutation against some ridiculous criticism. Crane lost his mental and spiritual status for a year during which he managed to get drunk once a week on wine (Weber, Letters 59). He regretted that some poets felt afraid to use any emotion in their poetry without forcing their own theories into the creative process. Crane tried to put his own stubborn theory into a poem, “Chaplinesque” (1921), with unique words showing some beautiful images that are modern and follow irregular half-rhymes:

The game enforces smirks; but we have seen
The moon in lonely alleys make
A grail of laughter of an empty ash can,
And through all sound of gaiety and quest
Have heard a kitten in the wilderness. (Crane 11)
Chaplinesque pantomime releases the sickness or falsehood of intellectual life. Crane thoughtfully considers words, “smirks,” “laughter,” “empty,” “a kitten,” and “wilderness,” portraying a comic scene that Chaplin acts alone on the stage where moon hangs over his comic actions. “A grail of laughter” that Crane describes sounds like a bunch of dull, or humdrum noises echoing the inner groans masked behind “gaiety.” “A kitten” represents the poet, or “the man... who must duck and camouflage for dear life... to keep himself from annihilation” (Weber, Letters 68). Although Crane uses the symbol of the kitten from Chaplin's comedy connected with his ironic sense of modern intellectual life, he does not choose the dead images such as Eliot uses in “Preludes”:

Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh; The worlds revolve like ancient women Gathering fuel in vacant lots. (Selected Poems 24)

Similar ideas of modern dead life appear in this poem, but Chaplin's ironic actions on the open stage contrast to Eliot's inner struggle for “gathering” freshness from the past. Even the image of Crane's “laughter” differs from that of “laugh” that Eliot characterizes: while the former designates the poet's positive involvement in reality; the latter indicates the poet's flight far from reality. Crane's “a kitten” similiarly contrasts to Eliot's “ancient women” in their actions. “A kitten” becomes an ironic symbol by revealing the falsehood of her society, but by boldly sympathizing with it. Whereas “ancient women” represent the fair symbols who, standing in different time and space, laugh at the absence of intellect that modern society contains. Crane, via the poem, “Chaplinesque,” already charts a different way from intellectual pessimism toward positive action and responsibility for modern life.

Through “Chaplinesque,” Crane stood against Eliot's philosophy, but he did not have firm artistic theories to defend his emotions. Later in 1921, Crane read “Poe, Whitman, Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, John Donne!!!, Li Po, and a host of others” (Weber, Letters 67). American symbolic romantics, English metaphysical, Elizabethan and romantic poets, and romantically oriented French Symbolists, affected Crane's romantic view of art for art's sake. Some critics blames the obscurity of Crane's poetic direction by involving his scant education (he never attended college). Crane complained in a letter to Allen Tate in May 16, 1922.

Certain educated friends of mine have lamented my scant education, not in the academic sense, but as regards my acceptance and enthusiasm about some modern French
work without having placed it in relation to most of the older 'classics,' which I have't read. I
have offered apologies, but continued to accept fate, which seems to limit me continually in
some directions. Nevertheless, my affection for Laforgue is none the less genuine for being
led to him through Pound and T. S. Eliot than it would have been through Baudelaire. (Weber,
*Letters* 84)

Obviously, Crane’s apology for troubling his friends revealed his reliance upon Pound
and Eliot for learning from French poets. His friends ignored Crane's attempts to interpret
contemporary literary minds in ways that fit his assumptions. Crane basically differed from
his friends because while he trusted in the Symbolists’ romantic attitude toward art for art’s
sake, his friends depended more upon the aesthetic tradition that English poetry had
established.

Crane always tried to break away from the strictures that his friends imposed upon his
poetic genius. In June 1922, he countering his friends’ negative attitude to him, already
attempted to create new idioms in the poem, “Faustus and Helen.” The musicality of poetry
common to both French and English poets fused into that of Jazz rhythms properly transposed
into words:

> The poetry of negation is beautiful.... Perhaps this is useless, perhaps
it is silly.... The vocabulary of damnations and prostrations has been
developed at the expense of these other moods, however, so that it is
hard to dance in proper measure. Let us invent an idiom for the proper
transformation of jazz into words! Something clean, sparkling, elusive!
(Weber, *Letters* 89)

In the poem, “Faustus and Helen,” Crane enthusiastically wanted to explore his poetic gift in
new ways. Hence, he hated the entire dependence upon Eliot's poetic status.

Crane’s style, away from Eliot’s perspective of poetry, opened the way to another
convention in poetry: Symbolism as Northrop Frye later systematized it in a historical sense.
Unlike Wilson who confined French Symbolism within modern poetry, Frye widely
connected Symbolism to the whole history of literature, revealing it as a proper term to
interpret its meaning. Frye said that “Symbolism [is] a term which we expand here to take in
the whole tradition which develops with a broad consistency through Mallarme and Rimbaud
to Valery in France, Rilke in Germany, and Pound and Eliot in England” (1123). Frye seemed
not to know that one poet in America had realized the theory of Symbolism in one poem,
“Faustus and Helen.” Unfortunately, Crane stopped his poetic life when only thirty-three
years old, buried by the prominent movement, a contemporary Classicism of Eliot. Early in the twentieth century, Crane, influenced by two traditions from France and England (he also read German philosophers), practiced the systematic theory that Fray later advanced.

However, Crane’s voice echoed more than Symbolism. It is noted that Crane praised the land of America by his own voice which echoed the voices of nineteenth-century American Romanticism. Just as Emerson and Whitman sang the optimistic vision of America, Crane spoke of its future hope newly unified with Western tradition. Crane did not accept that nostalgia toward the past that Eliot advocated; rather he found a new visionary direction, struggling with reality of his age. Crane’s inner struggle was more than mere romantic egoism that Eliot seemingly blamed. For Crane grandly projected a perspective of that vision in his later poetry. The Bridge was built by his grand project as an extension or continuance of his first major poem, “Faustus and Helen.”

**Works Cited**


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Session 4
Eliot and Other Modernists

Chair
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Presentation 1
Chris Wigginton (Sheffield Hallam University)
“Birth and copulation and death”: The Poeties of T. S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas

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Impersonality and Individuality as Inspirational Moments in the Art of Poetry:
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Discussants
Hong-Ki Kim (Kwangwoon University)
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“Birth and copulation and death”: 
The Poetries of T. S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas

Chris Wigginton (Sheffield Hallam University, UK)

Relations between Dylan Thomas and T. S. Eliot were always likely to be mixed, to say the least: it is hard to think of two more different 20thC poets than the roaring boy from Wales ‘famous among the bars’ and a man so formal that it was once said of him that if there were such a thing as a four piece suit, he would have worn it. Yet one could say relations of a sort had been established, unknown to either of them, when, in his essay ‘The Function of Criticism’, an essay written when Thomas was all of six years old, in an attack on Middleton Murray, TSE commented sourly that ‘the possessors of the inner voice ride ten in a compartment to a football match at Swansea, listening to the inner voice which breathes the eternal message of vanity, fear, and lust … It is a voice to which, for convenience, we may give a name: and the name I suggest is Whiggery’. Terry Eagleton, glossing ‘Whiggery’ for some reason in an English context, translates it as ‘protestantism, liberalism, Romanticism, humanism’; but the Anglo-Welsh reference is unmistakeable, and ‘Welsh Nonconformist Dissent’, ‘socialism’ and ‘Celtic emotionalism’ would fit even better. For Eliot, having Vetch Field (or perhaps St Helens) rather than Little Gidding as a destination is a sure sign of the plebeian ‘inner voice’, Swansea equalling Dissent, industry, philistinism and also internal British difference and conflict; a would-be insider’s put-down to distract from Eliot’s self-fashioning as Anglican, classicist and monarchist. However, the slur can equally be said to furnish a starting-point for a consideration of Thomas’s poetry and its relationship to Modernist precursors like Eliot himself. And in this paper I will argue that whilst Thomas’s work was the closest of his generation to The Waste Land and Eliot’s essays on the Metaphysicals and Renaissance dramatists, it work also acts as a surreal form of bodily punishment for High Modernist condescension, embodying as it does the horror expressed in Sweeney Apeneck’s view of human existence as no more (or less) than ‘birth and copulation and death’.¹

And yet there are many things that also link Thomas and Eliot, and make them

brothers beneath the skin. It was Eliot who first wrote to Thomas as the unknown author of ‘Light breaks where no sun shines’ in the Listener in March 1934; Eliot who seriously considered publishing Thomas’s first collection, and then admitted that he should have accepted them without dithering; Eliot who met with Thomas several times during the 1930s for long lunches at which, among other pieces of advice, he recommended to the younger man a brand of haemorrhoid suppositories marketed under the Ease-U brand name, just as DT occasionally ‘borrowed’ the odd tenner from him. And despite claiming that to understand him it was necessary to ‘have an intimate knowledge of Dante, The Golden Bough, and the weather-reports in Sanskrit’, he referred to the older poet as ‘charming, a great man’, with ‘a very splendid sense of form’, as well as, more mockingly, ‘the pontifical Eliot’.

The poems that established Thomas’s reputation, in the ‘process’ style, draw on Lawrentian vitalism and Joycean wordplay, but the chief poetic influences were identified by Desmond Hawkins in a review of 1935: ‘[Dylan Thomas] is grateful heir to Eliot’s magical sense of the macabre and Auden’s textual firmness, but by inheritance rather than imitation’. And any discussion of Thomas’s relationship to Eliot specifically and Modernism more generally must deal with Thomas’s use of language. Thomas, himself, was well aware of its centrality, commenting in his ‘Poetic Manifesto’ that ‘I use everything and anything to make my poems work ... puns, portmanteau words, paradox, allusion, paronomasia, paragram, catachresis, slang, assonantal rhymes, vowel rhymes, sprung rhythm.’ Thomas’s 1930s poetry displays not just the systematic foregrounding of the ‘device’ as a vehicle of estrangement, but also a belief that poetry should work out of words, not towards them. At its most extreme, this produces his attempts to mimic non-referential poems, such as those whose antecedents lie among the Russian zaum poets, the Dadaists, and the Gertrude Stein of Tender Buttons. One point of such exercises is to prove that no writing can completely escape meaning-construction at the hands of a sufficiently determined (or self-deluded) reader. Only two of Thomas’s poems, ‘How soon the servant sun’ and ‘Now’ go so far, and they show the parodic aspect of his poetic practice, foreshadowing in their extremism the shift away from Modernism in his poetry of the 1940s. However, even when not testing limits, Thomas is utterly Modernist in his insistence on the materiality and autonomy of language. As J. Hillis Miller points out, for Thomas ‘words were not signs of something external to themselves, but

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the substance of poetry, in the same way that marble is the substance of sculpture.' And it was in this connection that Thomas insisted he be read literally as, for example, his objection to Edith Sitwell’s well-intentioned explication of the first sonnet of ‘Altarwise by owl-light’ suggests: ‘She doesn’t take the literal meaning: that a world-devouring ghost-creature bit out the horror of tomorrow from a gentleman’s loins … . This poem is a particular incident in a particular adventure, not a general, elliptical deprecation of this “horrible, crazy, speedy life”’. (CLDT, 301)

It can be argued that, in its relationship to the constraints of the poetry’s conservative forms, Thomas’s ‘everything’ and ‘anything’ approach to Modernist practice represents an internalized, imploded Modernism. The plethora of devices replicates the effect of Modernist techniques such as collage, creating textual instability and epistemological uncertainty. In other words, the parodic element which helps constitute Modernist writing is foregrounded in his poetry. Rhyme schemes and stanza patterns are deployed whose elaborate ingenuity is in excess of expressive requirement. ‘I, in my intricate image’, for example, is in three sections of six six-line stanzas (seventy-two lines), each of which contains four end-rhyme variations on ‘l’ or ‘l’s, with the two other lines linked by a different rhyme. ‘I see the boys of summer’ follows an 11 – 7 – 10 – 8 – 8 – 10 syllabic pattern through nine stanzas with only one lapse. Further, throughout Thomas’s work, syntax is sabotaged to the extent that its peculiar version of standard grammar becomes at least as hard to construe as Modernist fragmentariness, usually through parataxis, hypertaxis and the deferral of main verbs:

In ‘When, like a running grave’, for example, there are no fewer than thirty-five subordinate clauses (some as short as a single word) in an opening sentence that stretches for twenty-five lines over five five-line verses.

When, like a running grave, time tracks you down,
Your calm and cuddled is a scythe of hairs,
Love in her gear is slowly through the house,
Up naked stairs, a turtle in a hearse,
Hauled to the dome,

Comes, like a scissors stalking, tailor age,
Deliver me who timid in my tribe,
Of love am barer than Cadaver’s trap

Robbed of the foxy tongue, his footed tape
Of the bone inch

Deliver me, my masters, head and heart,
Heart of Cadaver’s candle waxes thin,
When blood, spade-handed, and the logic time
Drive children up like bruises to the thumb,
From maid and head,

For, sunday faced, with dusters in my glove,
Chaste and the chaser, man with the cockshut eye,
I, that time’s jacket or the coat of ice
May fail to fasten with a virgin o
In the straight grave,

Stride through Cadaver’s country in my force,
My pickbrain masters morsing on the stone
Despair of blood faith in the maiden’s slime,
Halt among eunuchs, and the nitric stain
On fork and face.

Such procedures raise the issue of narrative. Virtually all of Thomas’s poems are organized around a powerful narrative drive, a seemingly irresistible unfolding of event. Narrative is vital because it provides both an armature to which the many devices the poem requires can be attached and a motivation for their deployment. Defending his poetry in a letter to Glyn Jones of March, 1934, Thomas argued that ‘all good modern poetry is bound to be obscure. Remember Eliot: “The chief use of the ‘meaning’ of a poem, in the ordinary sense, may be to satisfy one habit of the reader, to keep his mind diverted and quiet, while the poem does its work upon him.”’ (CLDT, p. 97) Meaning, then, (as Thomas also made clear in ‘Answers to an Inquiry’) refers to narrative. The echo is of The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, in which Eliot likens the phenomenal text of the poem to a bone used by a burglar to distract a guard-dog before he goes about his business; the lived materiality of the poem (as in The Waste Land) acting as a ‘cover’ for, and authentication of, the operations of the ghostly discourse of the mythologies framing it. The narrative of The Waste Land is famously discontinuous, yet its very discontinuity produces a metanarrative that is aided and abetted by Eliot’s knowing annotations. Conversely, in Thomas’s poetry, the local narrative of the poem appears to offer immediate coherence, unity and closure, but is frequently empty, or banal.

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4 See also Terry Eagleton’s comment that ‘The phenomenal text, to use one of Eliot’s own metaphors, is merely the meat with which the burglar distracts the guard-dog while he proceeds with his stealthy business.’ Terry Eagleton, Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory, p. 150.
The discursive meaning-content of Thomas’s poetry is usually associated with the interrelatedness of the human and cosmic, and the inextricability of processes of decay and growth. More to the point is that the drive towards unification (of body, spirit, cosmos) leads directly to a language-use in which the materiality and autonomy of the signifier is a given. Thomas grants images almost the same degree of literalness and autonomy, such that poems are not only not sustained by external reference, but they seem to be generated by the self-evolving dynamic of images, in narratives whose linguistic events frequently exceed any abstractable sense. Thomas’s description of his writing process alludes to this:

I let, perhaps, an image be ‘made’ emotionally in me and then apply to it what intellectual and critical force I possess - let it breed another, let that image contradict the first, make, of the third image bred out of the other two together, a fourth contradictory image, and let them all, within my own imposed formal limits, conflict. (CLDT, 281)

This kind of poem is entirely, or almost entirely, interiorized, moving solely by means of irreducibly literal images that, as Walford Davies observes, ‘nevertheless seem to have the kind of air of significance about them that tempts us (unhelpfully) to unpack the poem like a suitcase.’

Indeed, the main Eliotic intertext, however, are not Eliot’s poems but ‘The Metaphysical Poets’ which DT read in his Selected Essays (1932). Thomas was particularly keen on Eliot’s claim that ‘meaning’ in a poem was something that kept the rational mind happy while a poem was performing its real work on him at an unconscious and somatic level; and his implicit approval for the ‘obscurity’ which ensued when ‘some poets became ‘impatient of this “meaning” … and perceive possibilities through its elimination.’ Similarly, one can see the appeal for Thomas of Eliot’s claim, in an essay on Matthew Arnold, that ‘the auditory imagination’, a feeling for ‘syllable, rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back [fusing] the most ancient and the most civilised mentality’.

Yet Eliot famously recanted his faith in the ‘auditory imagination’ three years later, in 1936, as he grew increasingly conservative. Joyce and Milton, he complained, allowed syntax to be determined ‘by … musical significance … rather than by the attempt to follow actual

speech or thought.’ And this is a reminder of how Thomas also profoundly differs from Eliot; how, in fact, his greatest debt is a parodic one. Thomas’s modernist Metaphysical lyric, like that of Empson, pushes Eliot’s advocacy of the metaphysical mode to mannerist extremes. Thomas thus made a principle of ‘dislocat[ing] if necessary, language into his meaning’. Again, Eliot opined in anti-humanist, anti-Romantic mode, that ‘look[ing] into our hearts and writ[ing] is all very well, but that to write truly modern poetry ‘[O]ne must look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, the digestive tracts’. But one can sense the glee with which Thomas seized on this not-quite convincing attempt to shock and pushed it to his truly shocking, un-Eliotic conclusion, his Welsh modernist gothic surrealism spectacularly upping the ante on Eliot’s tame little ‘bats with baby faces’ with ‘dead [who] undid their bushy jaws, And bags of blood let out their flies’, an embryo ‘smel[ling] the maggot in my stool’ and’ words of death … dryer than his stiff’ for a Christ who may be dead, suffering an erection, or both. And, both 18 Poems and Twenty-Five Poems, Thomas’s first two collections, trail their gothic and bodily properties, and are crammed with, to list a sample, ghosts, vampires, mummies, cadavers, references to ‘Struwwelpeter’, tombs, sores, flies, cataracts, carcasses, cancers, cypress lads, hanged men, mandrakes, gallows, crosses, worms and maggots. Throughout, Thomas’s early poetry exudes a charnel atmosphere of decay and mortality and its libertarian strivings are always inextricably linked to the darker aspects it purports to reject, with the first poem of the first collection exploring the idea that the ‘boys of summer’ are ‘in their ruin’, always in the process of themselves becoming ‘the dark deniers’ (CPDT, 7).

As Maud Ellman notes, The Waste Land is a text of abjection, in which the body is distanced, demonised and expelled as ‘waste’. Rather than the heightened social reportage the Audenesque poets found in it, for Thomas, Eliot’s poem was an abject text requiring a restoration of the grisly poetry of the body—as mucous, skin, teeth, hormones, glands, blood, gristle, semen, milk, ‘the maiden’s slime’—to the body of the poetry. Eliot’s displaced subaltern body, Thomas seems to say in 18 Poems, cannot be so easily displaced; in fact, if we take TSE literally, as in his essay, it should be celebrated, his first collection is surely one of the texts that crawled out of Eliot’s ‘citational abyss’, as she calls it. In the 1930s, then, Thomas not only followed Eliot’s advice but pushed it to a parodic point of self-contradiction, thereby establishing his own kind of originality.

Eliot’s attempt to remove the abject body from his work was not, of course, confined to The Waste Land, but can also be found in his writing on the metaphysical poets. And To the extent that surrealism had affinities with the Metaphysicals’ violent yoking together of
heterogeneous images (the conceit as a distant cousin of Lautréamont’s chance encounter between an umbrella and a sewing machine on a dissecting table) there was also a link between surrealist practice and the climate created earlier by T. S. Eliot and Herbert Grierson. Thomas, an avid reader of John Donne, exploited such similarities to forge a semi-surrealized Metaphysical mode. The metaphysical was, of course, essential to Eliot’s construction of a Modernism that was antithetical to Romanticism, but his reclamation of Donne, at the expense of Milton and Spenser, was carried out by ignoring the bodily aspects and linguistic materiality present also in Donne’s work. It is these aspects of Metaphysical poetry that Thomas wants to foreground. In other words, and my conclusion is that if Eliot attempts to abject abjection in order to stage ‘the mind of Europe’, Thomas, it might be said, foregrounds it in order to stage and reclaim the body as a site of subversion.⁶ And I will leave the final words to Thomas himself:

What you call ugly in my poetry is, in reality, nothing but the strong stressing of the physical. Nearly all my images, coming, as they do from my solid and fluid world of flesh and blood, are set out in terms of their progenitors … Only by association is the refuse of the body more to be abhorred than the body itself … I fail to see how the emphasizing of the body can, in any way, be regarded as hideous. The greatest description I know of our “earthiness” is to be found in John Donne’s Devotions, where he describes a man as earth of the earth, his body earth, his hair a wild shrub growing out of the land. All thoughts and actions emanate from the body. Therefore the description of a thought or action - however abstruse it may be - can be beaten home by bringing it onto a physical level. Every idea, intuitive or intellectual, can be imaged and translated in terms of the body, its flesh, skin, blood, sinews, veins, glands, organs, cells, or senses. (*CLDT*, 38-39)

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⁶ T. S. Eliot, ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’, in Selected Essays (London: Faber and Faber, 1951), pp. 13-22. As Judith Butler points out, the body is discursively constructed, and its very materiality is a product of power. See Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of ‘Sex’ (New York and London: Routledge, 1993). As such, the body is a site for continuing conflict over its meanings and significance within the body politic, the consequences of which have important repercussions for an investigation of the subject and subjectivity. What might be termed the historical deconstruction of Michel Foucault, which attests to historical discontinuities to the same degree that it does historical connections lies behind much of this critical work. See H. L. Dreyfus, and P. Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1982), p. 104-25.
Impersonality and Individuality as Inspirational Moments in the Art of Poetry: The Cases of T. S. Eliot and Yosano Akiko

Aida Suleymenova (Far Eastern Federal University, Russia)

Taking start from the didactic essay of T. S. Eliot *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, the paper considers all aspects of the Eliot’s address to the young poets who are still seeking for the revolutionary approach to the verse and its influential meaning for the later generations of all-the-world poets. The author admits that among the Eliot’s readers there might be a Japanese poetess Yosano Akiko (1878-1942) who already became famous for her really reformist anthology *Midaregami* (*Tangled Hair*, 1901) and who had worked for all her life on the translation of the masterpiece of the Japanese classics *Genji Monogatari* by Murasaki Shikibu (the 11\(^{th}\) century) from the old Japanese to the modern language. The words of T. S. Eliot on “a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality” may be associated with Akiko’s late poetic and fictional writings, but at the same time something in the essay makes the reader to doubt if the impersonality along with the desire to escape from emotion and personal feelings are the guarantee of the poetic success, of the poetic art. If Eliot was not a real heir of Dante and Milton, he would not be able to create such work as the *Waste Land*, and vice versa if he had not got an individuality of T. S. Eliot we would have got the regular imitation to the genial poetry. So, there is some kind of the sophisticated balance between the impersonality and the individuality, they are in current fight and rivalry, one of these elements sometimes wins, the other one gets the loser role. The reader can see the poet in the various stages of the counter-balance positions – from the victory over himself and the return to canonical forms; to the triumph of emotions in the poetry and the poet creates the avant-garde works. Some explanations on the process of the Creation with very close associations with Eliot’s essay could be discussed after reading the parts of Yosano Akiko’s *Uta no Tsukuriyo* (*How to write tankas*, 1915) and *Talks on tanka* (*Akiko kawa*, 1919).

This paper attempts to interpret the artworks and the criticism of the two authors – the English one and the Japanese one – to the different directions in the twentieth century literary thought, to the T. S. Eliot’s, his *objective correlative*, the determination of the modernist poetics after the 1930s, and to the subjectivist lyrics with its passionate and prejudiced attitude to the poetic tradition, the strange and the ambiguous phenomenon of the tractates on *tanka* written by Yosano Akiko.

First, it is necessary to limit the relations between the works of Yosano Akiko and Eliot with regard to the possibilities of their encounter somewhere in the textual space. Indeed, Yosano Akiko was the well-educated Japanese author, she could read mass of translations from English and French in the early 1900s but she was not able to read the works of Eliot because the first translations from the *Waste Land* appeared only in 1920-s (by Noguchi Yonejiro, 1875-1947). We should mention the comprehensive reception of the critical works with regard to the translations made by Nishiwaki Junzaburo (1894-1982), especially in his essay *Surrealist Poetics* (*Chōgenjitsushugi shiron*, 1929). But by this time all the works of Akiko devoted to the *tanka* poetry art were published and even affected some young poets.

The main impact of Eliot’s criticism on the Japanese literature may be demonstrated at the examples of the poets of the so called *Arechi* group (the name borrowed from the *Waste Land*), who actively developed some ideas of the English poet in the late 1930s. The two authors discussed the similar problems at the same period, the late 1920-s, but in the different countries, on the different agenda. This phenomenon of the “sameness” in the writings is out of our discussion but it also plays some role in the literary processes.

But the real surprise for those who are studying the Japanese modernism appeared to be some obvious parallels in the critical thought in the old paradigmatic question: “what approach to the author’s method and to the tradition will win – subjectivity or objectivity?” If we imagine the development of the Japanese literary history since the late 1890-s till 1920-s, the situation around the “fast” Japanese Romanticism (the group *Bungakukai* (*Literary World*, 1893-1898) and its leaders Kitamura Tōkoku (1868-1964) and Shimazaki Tōson (1872-1943)), the ambivalent positions of some writers transferring from translations of the French and German symbolists to the Japanese naturalism fiction like Mori Ōgai (1862-1922), Ishikawa Takuboku (1866-1912), the phenomenon of the Japanese naturalism itself, which may be also called Zolaism. All these writers, their works reflect movements ending with *shugi* (“-ism”),

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but the main question was the relation between the author and the reader, the emotional and the rational, the subjective and the objective. And everything gets more complicated if we take into account that the Japanese writers and poets were tossing over the waves of the westernization which switched the borders of the eastern tradition (Buddhism and Confucianism) and brought the innovations like Christianity into Japan. We can interpret the movement of two trends in the Japanese poetry as the fight between the line of Araragi (Yew) group and the line of Subaru (Pleiades) group. It is rather difficult to criticize the attitudes of both trends toward the traditional, because the most prominent authors of the traditionalist Araragi (Ito Sachio, 1864-1913; Saitō Mokichi, 1882-1953) were men of their time, read in German and in English, learned from many writings on Western Romanticist poetics (Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, Shelling, Fichte, etc), though their works and preferences in the poetry were close to the neutral dispassionate objectivist lyrics. The mainstream of tanka and haiku movement in the twentieth century, this group stated that the moving force of the poetry is sincerity, makoto, with which the poet scrupulously penetrates into the depth of the surrounding world and describes his feelings in the objective plane. Their opponents, the line Subaru (actually they could be called the followers of the literary society Bungakukai, showed a preference to the Romantic-Symbolist tendencies in the art.

The orientation of Yosano Akiko who co-worked with Mori Ōgai, the chief-editor of the magazine Subaru, seems to be worth the following discussion for its idealistic and Romanticist mood. This mood came from the Japanese group of Romantics, the group Bungakukai. Immanuel Kant and the Romantics opened the door into the close paradigm “subject – object” which was transformed into the objective correlative of T. S. Eliot. It crucially differs from the eastern poetics though in the beginning of the twentieth century some Japanese Romantics from the “Bungakukai” group came up too close to the positions on which English Romantics stood. One of the “Bungakukai”’s poets, Kitamura Tōkoku, set the question on the “inner world” in his essays “Naibu Seimeiron” (“Reflections on the Inner Life”, published in the journal “Jogaku Zasshi” in 1893) and “Jōnetsu” (“The passion”, published in “Bungakukai” in 1893). Under the “inner life” Tōkoku understood the creative origin in the organic unity of the whole cosmos that was also consonant with the Coleridge’s ideas on the vitality. But the mainstream of these Romanticism was enchanted with the key point of the English authors – analogies and intersections between the life of the nature and the human life. The phenomenon of the “seimei” (“the life” as an ability to survive and “the life” as a soul) and the force of the life in the Japanese art history have been studied by some
literary critics. This force lets the human being act in a more complicated way than the other creatures do. The ever-penetrating and everlasting vitality touches the Buddhist elements in the Japanese Romanticism which was also under the strong influence of the western philosophy and science (like positivism and psychology).

From this point the line of Araragi can be explained as the wish to review the Japanese art history along with the reconstruction of the old-fashioned poetic language and this exaggerated impassionate tendency of art. Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902), the inventor of the objectivist look at the nature, the so-called shasei (the objective reality), advocated discovering one’s fine feeling through dispassionate observation of one’s surroundings (the cycle from copying nature objectively through copying humanity objectively). Writers of the Shiki’s line and later all Araragi members (and still now!) had tended to sublimate emotions instead of expressing them outright that may lead to copying the fact. Shiki also declared the new approach to the canonical masterpieces of haiku poetry and ostracize anthologies of the great poet Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) for their superficiality and subjectivity. In contrast, he put forward the other artist of the Edo period (1603-1868), Yosa Buson (1716-1783) who, in Shiki’s opinion, kept an unbiased point of view for the depiction. The objectivity became the main criterion for the evaluation of the artworks not only for Shiki but for his successors – Itō Sachio and Saitō Mokichi, the chief editors of the Araragi magazine. Here it is important to stress the parallel line between the thoughts of Eliot from the Tradition and Individual Talent (1917) and the Shiki’s selective approach to the traditional art.

This long prelude to the main part of the paper was necessary to outline the literary contrast between the subjectivity and the objectivity both in works and in the attitudes to the traditional in art. The critical works of Eliot appeared at the same time as Naturalism in Japan shared the obsession with the individual self as Kitamura Tōkoku, Shimazaki Tōson and Yosano Akiko’s verse. The appeal to shasei cast by Shiki, “portray things just like they are”, was supported and combined with some naturalistic ideas of the time. From the comparative point, these thoughts intersect with T. S. Eliot’s objective correlative as the method of the creative work. The poet borrows his beliefs from his environment and in the poem deals with how it feels for me to hold them. A poet need neither create beliefs nor defend them since his concern is not with the beliefs themselves – the poet’s mere raw materials – but with their

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2 The most exhaustive material may be found in the Seimeikan no Tankyū, Jyūzosuru Kiki no naka de (The quest for the view on the life. Under the growing danger, by Suzuki Sadami, Tokyo: Sakuhinsa, 2007).
3 Yosa Buson was known mostly as a Japanese-style painter not only the haiku master. May be, that’s why Shiki paid attention to this classical author.
“emotional equivalents.” As expressed in the poem through their objective correlatives, if the beliefs are puerile and offensive they may block our efforts to respond to the poem but generally the only function of belief in poetry is “to stay out of the way of the emotive aims of the poem.”

In the *Hamlet and His Problems* (1919) Eliot stresses the idea of the objective unprejudiced look at the art: “…the only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an *objective correlative*; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts which must terminate is sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.” Hamlet’s “disgust” exceeds its object (his mother, incestuous remarriage) just at the Hamlet story is an inadequate vehicle for the emotion (“by hypothesis unknowable”). The term *objective correlative* correlates with the Shiki’s *shasei*, as the Japanese poet supposed *shasei* to be both the method and the poem born as a result of such creative work. The elaboration of the particular emotion is the main principle of the *haiku* poetry for its shortness and its laconic structure.

Eliot’s formula reproduces a standard definition of imagism in the twentieth century. In *Ezra Pound: His metric and Poetry* Eliot explains the principle of the imagist technique: “The theory that poetry consists in so rendering concrete objects shall arise in the reader.” Eliot suggests the satisfactory construction of the poem relieves the poet of a psychic distress – a “personal” emotion that need have no connection with the emotions expressed in the poem. The poet “expresses” his own feelings only in the sense of escaping from them by producing the poem.

The idea that naming an object in a poem presents the reader with a concrete sense – experience is the one that structuralist and poststructuralist critics have rejected. But because it names things intuitively felt about art, objective correlative seems to be one of those terms destined to survive their philosophical supersession.

The disinterestedness, the impersonal character of the creator seems to be the main features of the Eliot’s thought. These ideas may be found in the understanding at the meeting of Araragi group with their “portray things just like they are”. But this sharply contrasts with the thoughts and works of Yosano Akiko in her *tanka* tractates *How to write tanka* (*Uta no* ...

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tsukuriyo, 1915) and Talks on tanka (Akiko kawa, 1919). It would be interesting to interpret the Eliot’s theory according the rule of contraries, due to the discussion of the Japanese poetess’s works.

In Akiko’s view, poetry articulates not just feelings but actual feelings, so called jikkan 実感, the real feelings in Japanese (two characters, one meaning “actual” and the other meaning “feeling(s)”). By the word kyogi she declared “deliberately fabricating feelings that one does not actually possess.” As Makoto Ueda points out, “she felt that too many poets of her time fabricated poems because they wished to follow the example of famous masters or to join in fashionable literary movements.” For Akiko, “jikkan are a special type of excited feelings that belong to the realm of poetic emotion. They must make the poet transcend the common sense, experience an entirely new joy, sorrow, or other emotion, and feel the soul overflowed with extraordinary excitement.” The example of the real feelings can be demonstrated with the next poem:

In a tower
Beautifully painted in gold
I have been asleep
For a whole decade,
This woman of dreams.

Yosano Akiko from How to write tanka. Translations by Ueda Makoto (1996)

Akiko contemplates, “This is another poem of fantasy, not a fact. But the fantasy accurately represents the mental state I am in when I let myself indulge in the ecstasy of love. It is the jikkan I have as I live a life of love.”

Yosano Akiko raised the problem of an expressive character of poetry. This approach, with many modifications, had been shared by famous tanka poets from ancient times. At the same time the poetess attacked the major tanka society of the period, Araragi, the followers of Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902). Akiko opposed to this, “selective” realism, as Makoto Ueda points, “a stimulus-response theory of poetry”.

Some poets seem to think there is a specific type of tanka to be categorized under “shasei” or “description of feelings.” I do not agree.

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9 Ibid.
10 Ibid. P. 55.
In my opinion, all *tanka* are lyrics expressing feelings. Some may refer to fruits of flowers or may sing of mountains or forests or landscapes. Like love poems, they too express the poet’s *jikkan*. Translations by *Ueda Makoto* (1996)

For Yosano Akiko, the poem is the record of an emotional response – an acting out of individual impulses, and the movement of these impulses (in other words, vital forces) was caused by the inner drive of feeling and governed by the unique nature of each person’s emotional life. Akiko moves away from naturalistic description toward fantasy and vision. At this point her position is similar to the German and English Romanticism, to the famous Coleridge’s “secondary and primary imagination”.

Shiki meant under the poem “the description of the real life”, which Akiko called *kijyutsutekina uta* (descriptive *tanka*). She also proved that these poems are the evidence of the *haiku* influence and she took a firm stand against the main method of this description *shasei* (the objective reality), even in *haiku*. Unlike *tanka* poets, writers of *haiku* had tended to sublimate emotions instead of expressing them outright that might lead to copying the fact, not truth.

This point is attractive for the analysis of the imagist critique and the suppositions of T. S. Eliot on the *objective correlative*. In the *haiku* poetry the *subject-object* relations are important but namely in the twentieth century Masaoka Shiki and his disciples choose the object as the basic side of this antinomy.

In order to make the distinction between *tanka* and *haiku* in terms of expressive capacity, Akiko divided lyrics into two general categories, “active” and “passive.” *Tanka* became “active lyrics”, which emerge when poet survives emotion too powerful to preserve them inside oneself. Many *haiku* named “passive lyrics,” which articulate the poet’s response to the sight of a man, an animal, the moon, or a plant. The poetess accused the contemporary critics in their substitution of the word “objective” for “passive”. Akiko’s expressive theory included all the arts:

“Art lies deep in the painter’s soul. It does not lie in the subject to be painted. The artist does not live in nature. Rather, nature lives in the artist. A work of art is an image of the self. It needs: first, the self; second, the self, third, the self…. absolutely, the self.” Translations by *Ueda Makoto* (1996)

These words probably cause the protest from the side of T. S. Eliot whose conception of the objective correlative insisted on the dispassionate character of the creative process. But two different authors, with their absolutely different purposes and criterions are coming to the close result, to the description of the feeling by the description of the time (T. S. Eliot, “the great poet writing himself writes his time”\textsuperscript{13}) and to the description of the surrounding life by the description of the feeling (Yosano Akiko citing Dostoevsky in her tractates on tanka art, “I am a realist in the best sense: I express the depths of the self, I express the depths of the human soul”\textsuperscript{14}). This comparison of course needs in checking all factors including the gap between the western and eastern art theories, in the deviate view at the subjectivity and the selective approach to tradition expressed by the later generations of the critics (e.g. Harold Bloom with his Anxiety of Influences).

The authors like Leith Morton (\textit{Alien Within. Representations of Exotic in Twentieth Century Japanese Literature}) try to find the new tradition which was found in the Yosano Akiko’s works. This point comes from the history of \textit{waka} poetry when the intertextuality was the main principle, and as the old and new schools of poets took turns in the Japanese art it was ordinary for the young critics to reprimand the imperfection of their ancestors, particularly in the westernization period. But if one looks thoroughly into some late works of Akiko the feeling becomes sharper that some kind of piece of mind set in her works.

\textbf{Why do you make poems?}

Why do you make poems?
Steadily looking,
Steadily embracing, I make them,
What?
The truth.
Where is the truth?
It is very near by.
It is always with me
Just beneath my searching eyes,
Just before my loving heart,
Within my own hands

Yosano Akiko, translations by Hyllard Phyllis Larson\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} T. S. Eliot, \textit{Selected Essays}, P. 115.
In this free verse poem the poetess keeps aloof from her passionate style of first collections, rereading and experiencing the new herself, which connects with the impersonality characteristic for her middle age.

The lyric hero of the poem “is invulnerably successful in appropriating the cosmic wholeness that is life as the hidden all….” or “The reader in life may instantly embody the Absolute in self-sufficient oneness”¹⁶, as the interpreter N. Takeda is discussing on the “Four Quartets” and their modernist play with images. The dissolution in symbols and allusions is coming to the eastern tradition. Though experience for Eliot has no physical egotistical center. As Lee Oser remarks, “Eliot trends to suppress what Aristotle’s theory of catharsis assumes: a metaphysic of human nature.”¹⁷ The most striking difference between Yosano Akiko and Eliot is in the attitude to the poetic language. For Eliot, the poetic force is based on “a mind that knows reality not through action, but through the flux of language.”¹⁸ It may be illustrated in the next lines of Four Quartets:

There they were, dignified, invisible,
Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves
In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air,
And the bird called, in response to
The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,
And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses
Had the look of flowers that are looked at. (T. S. Eliot, Four Quartets¹⁹)

The critic founds that “words like “leaves” and air like a melody feed an entrancing state of expanded self-consciousness as we ascend the stars of being towards God. And to, 'you are the music while the music lasts.'”²⁰

The Japanese poetess set the principle of the natural personification and subjectivity as the main principle of her poetry, though the theme of ‘words-as-leaves’ and ‘nature-as-soul’ intersects with the words of Eliot. Yosano Akiko never came far from the Asian canon as she kept the experience of her ancestors in her tanka poems. May be, here is the point of the intersection between two poets.

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¹⁶ Ibid. s
¹⁸ Ibid.
²⁰ Ibid. P. 136.
Summary and some results of observations

1. The positions of T. S. Eliot and Yosano Akiko have been shown as the opposite according to the passionate style and the individuality in the art of poetry, though the opponents of Akiko from the group Araragi and the method of the description of the objective reality have some analogies which should be analyzed more carefully than in the present work.

2. The late works of Yosano Akiko written under the modernist influence ought to be studied not only for her revolutionary impact on poetry but for the anxiety of influences and the possible influence of the Eliot’s works should be studied particularly.
Special Talk 2

Akira Nakai  
(Doshisha University, President of the T. S. Eliot Society of Japan)  
Japanese Eliot in Pre-war Years: Perspectives and Issues

Moderator  
Jai-Hwa Kim (Sungkonghoe University)
Japanese Eliot in Pre-war Years: Perspectives and Issues

Akira Nakai (Doshisha University, Japan)

As to the study of Eliot in Japan, a detailed account has been made by Professor Takayanagi in his “‘In the Juvescence of the Year’--T. S. Eliot’s Impact and Reverberations in Japan 1930-2005”. If it is necessary to update it, here are some of the recent publications.

Professor Takayanagi has referred to Sayonara, watashi no hon yo! (Farewell, My Books!), Kenzaburo Oe (1935-) published in 2005. The author closed his novel with three lines of Eliot, ending “We must still and still moving.” As another line quoted on the way, the fragments from Eliot “shored” its theme and structure. His new title of 2009, Sui shi (Death by Water) is, of course, that of Eliot’s. Thus, Eliot still reverberates in the imagination of a novelist in his seventies.

This does not mean, however, that Eliot remains as a source of inspiration at large. Professor Takayanagi rightly put it elsewhere, “[t]he publication of Eliot’s Zenshu (Complete Works) in 1960 ironically marked the end of his active influence on Japanese creative writing.” Eliot has survived among the enthusiasts in the form of study, but the study has not been able to close the gap with contemporary readers.

In November 2010, last year, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of T. S. Eliot Society, Japan, a collection of twenty-three essays, Modern nishite annchi modan: T. S. Eliot no shozo (Modern but also Anti-Modern: A Portrait of T. S. Eliot) was published. The contributors hoped to share their Eliot with young readers to come, and, in doing so, to hand down his messages, if any, to make a breakthrough in the prevailing sense of stagnation.

When it comes to making a beginning, the trouble was that the various kinds of translations of his poems and essays, once abundant by different hands in 1960s and 1970s, had all but gone out of print. The second edition, revised in 1962, of Eliot’s Bungei Hihyoron (Literary Essays) by Sadayoshi Yamoto remained on the catalogue of Iwanami Library edition, but it has often been unavailable.

Meanwhile, the Iwanami Shoten Publishers included two books of poems by Eliot, for the first time, in its library. It was a courageous feat in the midst of the dawning age of digital publication. In August, 2010, the first book by Soji Iwasaki, Arechi (The Waste Land) covered *Prufrock and Other Observations, Poems (1920)*, and its title poem. In April, this year, the second collection followed, entitled *Yottsushi Shijyuso* (Four Quartets), to include later works. And, on the same day, the *Literary Essays* was reprinted after a long interval. Now, if you feel like reading Eliot at all, with just one click, you can begin the next day.

And yet, the situation has drastically changed since the Great Earthquake on the eleventh this March. Eliot will become a new challenge, if he has any impact to rejuvenate the spirit which has lost words, suffering a nightmare of the ruins of civilization.

We begin with the year 1936, when Eliot’s “Burnt Norton” was to develop into *Four Quartets*.

**I. 1936: a divide**

In 1936, *Collected Poems 1909-1935* and *Essays Ancient and Modern* were published, in April and March respectively. Peter Quennell (1905-1993) wrote his review for the 18 April issue of *New Statesman and Nation*, which he began:

> Were a bibliography to be composed of the various critical studies that have been devoted to Mr. T. S. Eliot during the last ten or fifteen years, it would make up a fairly considerable volume. For almost every modern critic has had his say. There are, indeed, very few literary undergraduates who have not, at one time or other, voiced their appreciations of his poems;

He immediately continued:

> and, even in the Far East, solemn spectacled faces are earnestly bent, and round shaven skulls dolorously scratched, over *The Waste Land*, *Prufrock* or *Ash-Wednesday*.

The portrait of undergraduates with a cynical tint was, as we shall see, the Japanese counter-parts the author taught in Tokyo six years before. Though it is hard to find “round shaven” heads on campus these days, we must admit that the spectacles are still common.

*Collected Poems 1909-1935* included the works after the 1925 collection, the latest
being “Burnt Norton” printed for the first time. The poet of *Prufrock* and *The Waste Land*, was now exploring a new plane via *Ash-Wednesday* of 1930. And, his religious stance confirmed in *Essays Ancient and Modern* would urge readers to look back at their familiar literary critic in *The Sacred Wood* (1920 and 1928) and *Selected Essays 1917-1932*. Appreciation of his poems “during the last ten or fifteen years,” and the evaluation of his criticism were to be modified.

The review was one of the first to inform what Eliot was doing abroad. The students in the Far East, as well as their teachers, had to make yet another dolorous scratch on their skulls.

The weekly dispatched by post from London, as was the case with periodicals of the day, must have reached directly to the Japanese subscribers via Siberia within two to three weeks, by the early part of May at the latest (though other copies sent to the foreign bookshops must have appeared on the stalls, sometime later after the censorship).

Fortunately, the review was reproduced with notes and translation by Shigehisa Narita (1907-1986) in four instalments from the 1st August number of *Eigo Seinen (The Rising Generation)*, the most informative bi-weekly for undergraduates and faculties reading English.

Foreign books, as well as periodicals, were still available in 1936. It was possible, if you could afford it, to order them from a bookshop, and they would arrive in due course, after about forty-five days travel on the sea, plus censorship at the port. As for the recent book, *Essays Ancient and Modern*, Narita could refer to it when he wrote the final part of his “Eliot”, which was incorporated into his book, *Igirisu genndai hihyo bungaku (English Literary Criticism of To-day)*, published in mid-December.

From the vintage point of view, the year of 1936 marks a watershed in the history of both Europe and Japan. When the review appeared in London, Tokyo was put on alert after the military coup of young right-wing officers on 26 February. The rebels wanted larger stockpiles of armaments to consolidate the country’s gains against China. They were suppressed and the alert was lifted in July, and yet behind the scenes the hawkish young fascists were taking the reins, which the existing party government eventually turned out to be unable to hold. While people were crazed over the Olympics in the summer, listening to the first live broadcast from Berlin, a civil war in Spain between the popular-front government and the troops led by General Franco was developing into, as Eliot put it in the Criterion
(dated 18 November)3, “an international civil war of opposed ideas.” A week later, on the 26th, the “German-Japan Anti-Communist Treaty” was signed. One year after the outbreak in Spain, the “Sino-Japanese War”, which was called “Incident” at home, broke out in July in the Far East. As the Spanish civil war foreshadowed another World War, the war in China would be expanded into the Pacific War, through the “Tripartite Pact between Japan, Germany and Italy” signed on 27 September 1940.

The wartime economy imposed strict controls on foreign currency. After the Sino-Japanese war, the importation of periodicals and books began to dwindle, and virtually stopped by the end of 1939. The Family Reunion (March 1939) and The Idea of a Christian Society (October 1939) were narrowly available, and it was a sheer luck for East Coker (September 1940) to arrive to be reviewed by Narita in the Rising Generation on the 15 January issue of 1941.

The War ended with the atomic bombs. In March 1946, the next year, the first American edition of Four Quartets (Harcourt, May 1943) happened to be found at a second-hand book shop in Kanda, Tokyo. It is certain, however, that the original owner was an American who came to the Occupied Japan.

In December 1947, Edmund Blunden (1896-1974) made his second visit to Japan on the staff of the United Kingdom Liaison Mission. The books he brought with included a copy of the Faber edition of Four Quartets (October 1944). When Masao Hirai (1911-2005) wrote its review for the March 1949 number of Tenbo (Vista), one of the most influential magazines for the intellectuals of the day, the text he used was his hand written copy of the book Blunden presented to the library of Tokyo University. In April, the next month, currency exchange rates were fixed, and importation of books and periodicals began to come back over time. But even for the students new books of Eliot were still unavailable. Professor Takayanagi remembers his “sense of exhilaration” when he, as second year student, could borrow Four Quartets and The Cocktail Party from G. S. Fraser (1915-1980), who came in 1950 to succeed the mission of Blunden.

Thanks to the new books, and the democratization of universities to accommodate a greater number of students than before, the legacy from the pre-war years prepared the surge for Eliot studies, which, after premonitory rumbles in the early part of the 1950s, was to culminate in the next decade.

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3 T. S. Eliot, “A Commentary,” Criterion, 16: 63 (January 1937), 289. The date is given at the end, which he normally did not for the column.
In the following sections, our focus will be made on the pre-war period. It is because, on their return from the battlefields, those who had “dolorously” scratched their heads would form another generation to disseminate Eliot, as a spiritual guide, rather than a poet or critic, for setting their devastated minds in order.

II. Visitors from the West

Rintaro Fukuhara (1894-1981) witnessed that, up to around 1925, the study of English literature at home lagged about ten years behind, but then came to catch up, with about five years’ difference. This was due to two Georgian poets, Edmund Blunden (1896-1974) and Ralph Hodgson (1871-1962) who came to Japan in 1924, to teach at the Imperial Universities: Blunden at Tokyo, Hodgson at Tohoku, Sendai.

When Blunden came to Tokyo in April 1924, the city had been devastated by the Great Kanto Earthquake of September 1923. Hodgson came at the end of August. After their three-years contract, the two of them returned to England in 1927.

In 1928, the next year, Hodgson came back to Tohoku. In September, while he stayed in Tokyo, he gave a talk, at the English Literary Society of Tokyo Imperial University, on the younger poets he admired, especially Siegfried Sassoon. It happened that, in November, the society decided to expand itself to form a nationwide body, and its Studies in English Literature was to become a journal of the new society, comprised of a little less than 1000 members.

In 1929, the first national conference of the English Literary Society of Japan was held for two days in October. The attendance was about 200. And when the society hosted its second meeting in the following year, at Kyoto Imperial University, there were more than 400 attendants crammed in the hall; the membership had expanded to 1256, and the associations joined counted 39, and there were 29 foreign teachers as well. As a guest, Hodgson delivered a lecture entitled “Christmas Bells,” in which he told the audience, at one point, that the world had all too soon forgotten the horrors of modern warfare and was blindly fumbling towards the precipice once more, quoting lines from John Scott (1731-1783):

I hate the drum’s discordant sound,
Parading round, and round, and round.

4 Rintaro Fukuhara, “1920 nen dai (the 1920s),” Mita Bunraku (Mita Literature) (September 1937), 8-9.
It was against the backdrop of militarism Hodgson warned that the study of English literature was to flourish nationwide in the 1930s. (In 1931, the next year, Hodgson left for London, where Eliot met him for the first time: Eliot found “how delightful to meet” him.)

Also it should be pointed out that the Wall Street Crash of October 1929 was to aggravate the deteriorating economy that had been suffering unemployment and strikes. In the case of the graduates of Tokyo Imperial University, a survey shows, the employment rate as of March was only thirty percent. It was also in 1929 that a philosopher, Nishida Kitaro (1870-1945) wrote in a *tanka* that the name of Marx disturbed his sleep. Among young intellectuals Marxism was one of the prevailing ideas to change the situation.

And again, in April of the same year, to produce more teachers of higher status, two national institutions were newly founded in Hiroshima and Tokyo respectively. The Tokyo Bunrika University (Tokyo University of Literature and Science, now Tsukuba University) was accommodated in the ground of the Tokyo Higher Normal School. Narita, graduating the school, was enrolled as a first year student of the new university in April. He was 22 years old.

It was Fukuhara of Tokyo Bunrika University who was responsible for Quennell’s stay. When he left for London on a sabbatical leave in May, he had a mission.

Fukuhara recollects a day when he was 35 years old: “I was fortunate to meet and talk to Harold Monro at his Poetry Bookshop near the British Museum. I was looking for a young English poet and critic for my own university ... Monro recommended Peter Quennell.”

I asked him to come to Japan and the proposal was accepted. He left London some time in February 1930. His father, C. B. H. Quennell, an architect, was among the people who gathered at Victoria Station to see Peter off. Just before the train came in, the father said half to himself and half to me, ‘How professorial Peter looks!’

He was to teach at the Tokyo Bunrika University full-time and eventually also at the Tokyo Imperial University.

Young as he was, Quennell was qualified as Fukuhara wanted. In the previous year, 1929, his most recent poems, *Inscription on a Fountain-Head*, was published by Faber and

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Faber, as no. 24 in Ariel Poems Series. His essay, “Mr. T. S. Eliot,”
 appeared in the *Life and Letters* in March, and also in the same year the Chatto and Windus published his first book of criticism, *Baudelaire and the Symbolists*, which Eliot reviewed favourably in his *Criterion* in January next year.(In the same issue W. H. Auden made a debut with his “Paid on Both Sides”.) In September, when Quennell got settled in Tokyo, Eliot quoted his passage in the “Introduction” to the translation of *Charles Baudelaire Intimate Journals* by Christopher Isherwood: the introduction was to become “Baudelaire” in his *Selected Essays 1917-1932*.

Quennell, 25 years old, accompanied by his wife, landed at the port of Kobe. And he records “intimidating circumstances” at Tokyo station, in *A Superficial Journey through Tokyo and Peking*, published in 1932:

> The locomotive snorted wearily to rest and, tired out after a long journey and much sightseeing, we stumbled from the high step of the pullman carriage and found ourselves. . . There drawn up in a neat crescent, uniformed, spectacled, all eyes, was a large deputation of young men. Brass buttons, brass badges on peaked caps which were removed with a simultaneous flourish; a spokesman moved forward from the ranks and tendered a gilt basket full of flowers--flesh-pink gladiolæ if I remember right--while pronouncing some tremendous phrase of welcome; at which the solid phalanx in the rear bowed deeply like corn before the wind.

Fukuhara remembers Quennell had said that he would like to keep gold-fish in his Tokyo residence and eat persimmons there, but, the life turned out not to be what he had wished.

> Mud and dust and dirty noisesome corridors; memories of the dismal period spent at school were wafted back with the stench of acid from a laboratory and the stifling fog of chalk-dust in the classrooms. Good-bye to any fantasies I had entertained of the lecture hall, with its slightly Buddhist atmosphere, in which I discoursed to squatting rows of silk-clad acolytes. Desks and an overheated iron stove, fusty uniforms which suggested a congress of youthful tram conductors. . . .

Quennell loved traditional culture of Japan, but, after fourteen months, without fulfilling the three-year contract, he left for China in 1931, the next year, and returned to

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7 Peter Quennell, “Mr. T. S. Eliot,” *Life and Letters*, 2: 10 (March 1929), 179-190.
9 Peter Quennell, *A Superficial Journey through Tokyo and Peking*, (Faber and Faber, 1932), p. 93.
England, making a short stay in Moscow to witness the separate regime on the way.

Quennell entitled his memoir “superficial,” but he did not miss the intellectual atmosphere:

English retains its talismanic value, but chiefly for the unsophisticated and the pedagogic. Intellectuals are nowadays looking elsewhere: French and Russian stars are in the ascendant. And the star with ever so faintly a reddish twinkle can be sure of a large following of young astronomers.

A red star hangs westward above Moscow, and many eyes, some fascinated and some alarmed, glance up in its direction with furtive enquiry; furtive, since to be seen so much as peeping is immediately to be convicted of ‘dangerous thought’, and the student or the schoolboy who thinks dangerously may be expelled without a hearing by the police.

And yet, the dangerous thought is “rampant.” He witnessed: “There are proletarian films, subversive novels, while but a few doors from the Tokyo Imperial University a bookshop has mysteriously escaped suspicion, though crammed from floor to ceiling with communist literature.”

And then there are the ‘Marx-boys’ in the street—students dressed in ancient tattered kimono, unshaven, with shocks of dishevelled hair hanging down greasily across their shoulders, so that they resemble the later Merovingian monarchs. Their slovenliness is the uniform of their convictions, and they swagger past in aggressive twos and threes, haughty and rather pathetic and much alone. A plump student, fresh from reading The Essays of Elia, gives them a wide berth as they go by.

There was no room for Eliot, it appears, to walk between them. Quennell found that Huxley, as well as Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and D. H. Lawrence, was “diligently read by the young avant-garde”, but he does not mention a name of T. S. Eliot, nor even for himself.

In his later years, Quennell records the days he spent with his students:

10 Cf. Peter Quennell, The Marble Foot: An Autobiography 1905-1938 (Collins, 1976), p. 180. Here in his later years, Quennell looks back his series of lectures and talks laid down by “the official programme”: “I have before me a bulky folder of notes, including over eighty closely-scribbled pages. Many appear to have been lost; I can see no mention of Beowulf, Langland, Chaucer, the Romantic poets or the mid-Victorian novelists. But those I preserved range from long lectures on the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages to critical evaluations of Strachey, Aldous Huxley, Wyndham Lewis and the Sitwells. How much did I succeed in conveying? One of the problems I faced was that even the most straightforward English poem might present images that the average Japanese reader found it almost impossible to visualize.”
Japan was preparing for war; during 1931 the Imperial army would drive deep into Manchuria; and there was already a militarist spirit abroad that overclouded the whole social scene. ‘Dangerous thoughts’ (which included every type of twentieth-century liberalism) were savagely repressed by an efficient police force — the slightest mention of Karl Marx caused my audiences ill-concealed alarm; and the shouts of drill-sergeants parading their squads below often penetrated my classroom; to which I retorted by reading aloud from the works of Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen and other disillusioned soldier-poets, who had portrayed the horrors of the First World War.\footnote{Peter Quennell, \textit{The Marble Foot}, p. 192.}

Quennell got back to England, to find that “the intellectual climate had begun to change”: the works of Auden, Stephen Spender, Cecil Day Lewis, and Louis MacNeice were gradually becoming known, and “\textit{Georgian Poetry} was dead; its contributors had vanished or scattered.”\footnote{Peter Quennell, \textit{The Sign of the Fish} (Collins, 1960), p. 39.} Harold Monro, poet, publisher, shopkeeper, and editor of the magazine, died on the 16th March, 1932.

After two years of his absence, Fukuhara returned from London in the summer of 1931, and found that Eliot had become rather famous.\footnote{Rintaro Fukuhara, “A Memoir of T. S. Eliot as my Contemporary,” \textit{Monthly Newsletter}, 17, a supplement to \textit{Eliot} [The Works of World Literature, vol. 26] (Shinchosha, March 1954), 1.} Foreign books were coming in abundance uninterrupted: Fukuhara, who began working as acting editor of \textit{The Rising Generation} in 1932, wrote that you were behind the times if you did not read new books within the year they were published.\footnote{Rintaro Fukuhara, “Commentary,” \textit{Rising Generation}, 84:12 (15 March 1941), 380.} And, by 1934, some of the young faculties came to regard Eliot as being a little out of fashion.\footnote{Rintaro Fukuhara, “1930 nen dai (the 1930s),” \textit{Mitra Bungaku} (September 1938), 48.}

In the summer of 1931, William Empson (1906-1984) came to Tokyo to succeed Quennell. Fukuhara was again responsible for his three years stay. Fukuhara and Sanki Ichikawa of the Tokyo Imperial University, who had received a letter of recommendation from I. A. Richards, had a talk with him in London, and “the young poet was quite ready to come over to Japan.” Fukuhara records:

Mr Empson probably left London in the early part of August of that year, and according to my memory, I shook hands of reunion with him at Tokyo station about the end of the month. Empson came to Japan by the Trans-Siberian Railway, and it took about a fortnight for the overland travel.
Though he was 25 years old, Empson was getting attention at home with his *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, published the previous year. Also, in July he had made a debut in the *Criterion*, with his review of *Studies in Elizabethan Imagery*, by Elizabeth Holmes.

Empson started his work full-time in September at the Tokyo Bunrika University, and at the Tokyo Imperial University part-time, as Quennell did.

The first impact on Empson was not far from what Quennell told him before he left London. But, it was Empson who extolled Eliot and modern poetry, not to mention the new poets of 1932 Michael Roberts collected in *New Signatures: Poems by Several Hands*, one hand of which was Empson himself. And, in May 1933, there came *The New Country: Prose and Poetry by the Authors of New Signatures*, “with the exception of Mr Empson,” as its editor notes, “who is in Japan.”

“Thus,” as Fukuhara witnessed, “Empson became gradually a famous man even among plain readers of English Literature in Japan.”

His lectures on Eliot began at the end of 1933. Though difficult to trace the details, it appears that he had some reservations with Eliot. In his “Introduction” to the first collected translation in Japan, by young scholar, Tsuneo Kitamura, published as early as in August 1933, Empson wonders: “how far, being so traditionalist,” Eliot's views “apply to a quite separate tradition; whether they are any use in Japan.”

I would be sorry to hear of one of my friends becoming either a Buddhist or Christian monk, though I would expect him to be less hurt in bringing his mind to accept his being a Buddhist one. But this is not really a question of applying Mr Eliot's views on tradition to the needs of a Japanese reader bound inevitably to the traditions of Japan; the race of man, largely because of an irrelevant improvement in machinery, is now pooling its traditions.

The first book in Eliot study by Tatsuhiko Arakawa, *Eliot*, came out in November of the same year, 1933. Arakawa, and Kitamura for that matter, acknowledge in their books that some of the texts of Eliot were borrowed from Empson. They were in their twenties, senior to

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18 Rintaro Fukuhara, “1930 nen dai (the 1930s)”, 46.
Empson by just one or two years.

Eliot was not limited to those younger generations. Papers on Eliot began to be read at the general meetings of the English Literary Society, which eventually invited Nishida in his mid-sixties as a special guest. In his lecture entitled “Dento-shugi ni tsuite (On Traditionalism),” at the sixth meeting held in November 1934, Nishida made it clear, quite casually, that Eliot's “historical sense” is not “consciousness” but “perception/sense”. Though he did not know much about Eliot's philosophical background, Nishida could identify the theory of immediate experience, on which his system he had been set up.

While Eliot became familiar in the early part of the 1930s, Japan was heading for the new regime.

When Empson had hardly settled, the “Manchurian Incident” broke out in September, and Japan established the puppet state of Manchukuo in China in March 1932, the next year. Hodgson came back again in Japan in September to find that what he feared had become a reality. In November, Empson wrote in his letter to Roberts: “it is no doubt a bad thing for the League to lose face so wholesale,” adding that “the game will rapidly send Japan bankrupt.” Japan was to choose her isolation in the international community in March 1934, the next year, declaring to walk out of the League of Nations.

At home, the militarism, Quennell had witnessed, encouraged parochial nationalism at large, and the Marx-boys had disappeared from the street: it was in 1933 that the Ministry of Home Affairs inflicted its force on an unprecedented scale to clamp down on “dangerous thought.”

In February 1934, Narita’s translation of “Teaching of Literature” appeared in a monthly journal, Kaizo with an introduction of its author who was due to leave in August.

This was a farewell message of Empson to his colleagues and students who were to become academics.

The independent mind, the feeling that it is worth while to use one’s own reason, that one has a fair chance of seeing the thing for oneself apart from tradition, fashion or caprice, is developed by any process of learning that makes you feel able to understand the things you may have to judge and the world at large.

21 William Empson, “Bungaku wo oshieru koto (An Essay on Teaching Literature),” Kaizo (February 1934), 87-93. It is also worth noting that Fukuhara wrongly gave Bungaku (literary journal) for the magazine, which is followed by John Haffenden
And, in the original version, one paragraph goes:

It has been argued that the modern system of literary education, obviously so powerful an instrument for smothering independence of mind, was actually designed for that purpose by timid but artful minds hoping to escape political change. If this absurdity is the truth they made a mistake; it should be clear by now that the herd-mind is as easily herded into Communism as Fascism; and it takes considerable independence of mind to keep a country at the same level as its neighbours. (Italics and an underline are mine.)

When its translation appeared in print, the phrases in italics given above were substituted by dot-marks, and, the word underlined by seven cross-marks. It was a measure on the part of meticulous editor in order to go through the censorship unchecked. These were not exceptions, and it was not easy for the sophisticated readers to fill in “ko-mu-mi-yu-ni-zu-mu” in the place of seven-marks crossed. It is worth noting here that the editor had a tacit understanding that the Ministry of Home Affairs would not care about the word “Fascism”, but rather, would like it kept in its place.

In 1931, Quennell published his novel, The Phoenix-kind (Chatto & Windus 1931), which he began immediately, once settled in Tokyo, as he wrote elsewhere, “partly as a means of defence against my hostile surroundings, partly in fulfilment of a long-considered plan.”

Another bearing from his stay in the Far East, A Superficial Journey through Tokyo and Peking, was published by Faber and Faber, in 1932. Facing its title page, there is a portrait of the Kabuki actor he loved, with a description underneath: SANDANJI [SADANJI] ICHIKAWA IN ‘KANJINCHO’ AS THE SHOGUN’S OFFICER.

Empson thought it “a good book about his” job, which he himself was doing at the moment, “though he oughtn’t to have done it,” and yet what he experienced was not far from the situation Quennell had undergone.

In May 1935, the Chatto & Windus published Poems of Empson. In October, came out from the same publisher, Some Versions of Pastoral. Five of its chapters out of seven had been published in Japanese journals, New English and American Literature, Studies in

23 Peter Quennell, The Sign of the Fish, p. 57.
English Literature, and The Rising Generation, including “Proletarian Literature” in August 1933.

In August 193726 Empson, boarding the Trans-Siberian Express, set out on another adventure in the Far East, to teach at the National Peking University with a three-year appointment. That was a month after the breakout of the Sino-Japanese war.

In July 1938 Hodgson left Japan, for good. In the same year, John Morris (1895-1980) came to Tokyo. Working as advisor for the Japanese Foreign Office, he began teaching at Tokyo Bunrika University, in November. And then at Keio University, to which, in his words, “I got myself transferred when I could no longer stand the prison-like atmosphere of my first university27.” In July 1942, after six months after the break of the Pacific War, Morris took the last repatriation ship specially arranged for Europe. In February the next year Morris was employed by the BBC for the Far Eastern broadcasting service, where Gorge Orwell and Empson himself had been working28.

In his book Traveller from Tokyo, published in October 1943, the next year, Morris reports on the status of Eliot he observed:

> There is a great interest in all forms of modern poetry, particularly for that of T. S. Eliot. The Japanese would, of course, inevitably have discovered Eliot in due course; but they have a great fondness for linking names together, and T. S. Eliot is inextricably associated in the Japanese mind with my predecessor, William Empson, by whom they were introduced to the former’s work. There is not yet, so far as I am aware, a Japanese William Empson, but a Japanese T. S. Eliot will undoubtedly arise before many more years have passed29.

Indeed, Morris had foretold the rest.

III. Some traits in Japanese Eliot

While the study of English was overcoming the time lag, Eliot began to make his appearance on the Japanese scene in the latter half of the 1920s. There arose some peculiar problems as to his reception, because readers had to catch him up in one scoop.

Among other things, there are two points: the translation for “historical sense”, and the

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29 John Morris, Traveller from Tokyo, p. 65.
unique position given for “Experiment in Criticism”.

The first and the most detailed account on Eliot, as Tatsuhiko Arakawa annotated in his Eliot, goes back to “Matthew Arnold to gendai no hiyoteki seishin (Matthew Arnold and modern critical mind)”, by Motohiro Fukase (1895-1966), published in four instalments from October 1928 to January 1929\(^{30}\), in Muse, a journal of the English Literary Society, Kyoto Imperial University.

It was in the December 1928 issue of the journal where, quoting the passage from “Tradition and the Individual Talent”, Fukase rightly gave “rekishi teki (historical) kankaku” for “historical sense”: “kankaku” was the exact word for “sense” or “perception.” It was a pity that Fukase came to give another word, “ishiki (consciousness)” for “sense” in his writings that followed. Probably he accepted a stock expression that was taking its place. But, as we shall see, when “ishiki” was understood as “consciousness”, it had a different ring.

When Fukase published his essay, the text at hand was, there is no doubt, the 1920 edition of The Sacred Wood, published by Methuen. But its new edition, published in May 1928, would soon arrive. Though its contents stood as they were, there was no familiar Eliot as a literary critic.

In his “Preface to the 1928 Edition”, Eliot stated: “I discovered that what had happened in my own mind, in eight years, was not so much a change or reversal of opinions, as an expansion or development of interests.” And, he came to see that poetry “has something to do with morals, and with religion, and even with politics perhaps, though we cannot say what.” Soon in December, his present position would be given in the general point of view as “classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and anglo-catholic in religion”, in the “Preface” to For Lancelot Andrews. When Eliot was emerging as a new challenge, his “Experiment in Criticism” came out in between, in November of the same year of 1929.

The “Experiment in Criticism” was one of ten essays in Tradition and Experiment in Present-day Literature, published by the Oxford University Press\(^{31}\). There was no canonical tone of “the perfect critic”, for it was originally delivered in the Lent term at the City Literary Institute for adult education.

If you look at “Experiment in Criticism” in the Bibliography Donald Gallup compiled, you would be surprised to find six entries for its translation, all of which are Japanese. The

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\(^{30}\) The essay was based on the talk he gave at the same society, as early as in May 1927, the year before.

\(^{31}\) The essay also came out in The Bookman, in the same month, but it was the Oxford edition that was preferred in Japan.
essay is now almost forgotten, but it was widely read and often quoted.

Though it is not found in Gallup, the first translation of “Experiment in Criticism” dates back, again, to Fukase, published in *Muse*, in July 1930, the next year. The important message Fukase found was that the study of literature inevitably leads to other fields, but, and because of that, its distinction should be made clear more than ever.

In June 1930, the first translation of “Tradition and the Individual Talent” appeared in a quarterly, *Shi to Shiron* (Poetry and Criticism). The text Kitamura had was the second edition of *The Sacred Wood*, published twelve months before. In October the next year, along with the other translation of “Perfect Critic”, the essay was reproduced in a series of pamphlets from Kenkyusha. In its “Preface”, there was a passage referring to “Experiment in Criticism”. Though he did not specify, the original text reads: “The task of criticism will be, [accordingly] not only to expand its borders but to clarify its centre and the insistency of the latter need grows with that of the former.” Kitamura knew, though he would not include it in his book due to come out, that Eliot remained as a literary critic, though he had crossed the border.

In his translations, Kitamura put “ishiki (consciousness)” for “historical sense”, and the title he gave, “Dento to kojin no saino”, was a word to word translation of “Tradition and the Individual Talent”. But when Kitamura included the essay in his first collected translations, *Bungaku ron* (Critical Essays of T. S. Eliot) in August 1933, he changed its title: “Rekishi teki ishiki to konjinn no shometsu”, meaning “Historical consciousness and annihilation of the individual”. This is not of Eliot, of course, nor Buddhist or Christian. Rather the title suggested a Hegelian idea of history, or at least, to put it in the term of the day, that of “sociological”, a euphemism for “Marxist”.

Another young scholar, Arakawa, also gave “ishiki” in his *Eliot*, published in November of the same year. However, he put himself in a dilemma: Arakawa understood

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32 There are, in fact, more than six entries. As to the pre-war period, other than the translation by Tsutomu Ichinohe, in a quarterly, *Shi to Shiron* (Poetry and Criticism), in December of the same year of 1930, which Gallup included as D479, there are two: Hori Daiji's review of the essay in *Review of World Literature*, in November 1930, and the translation of *Tradition and Experiment in Present-day Literature*, by Saburo Akizawa and Tadashi Morimoto, published by Kinseido, in September 1933.


quite rightly that “historical sense” was not “consciousness” but “sense”, on the other hand, what he wanted to see in Eliot was, as Kitamura did, “historical consciousness”. One of the ways-out was to regard that Eliot was on the way to a higher plane. Eliot's “historical sense”, he believed, involved “psychological, personal, and subjective elements”, and therefore the “sense” would develop, in a dialectic process, into the “historical consciousness”, which is “impersonal”.

Indeed, historical sense is not able to make history, nor tradition. If you want history it is the historical consciousness that counts. But they went too far.

Their interpretation of “historical sense”, however, was not necessarily an exception. It was a senior scholar, Kazumi Yano (1893-1988) who deplored this “sociological” tendency he often observed among the young scholars and students. Yano regretted that the conditions imposed by Methuen made it impossible to include “Tradition and the Individual Talent” and “Perfect Critic”, but his Essays by T. S. Eliot: with Introduction and Notes, published in September 1935, was a landmark: undergraduates were able to read his essays in English. And, “Experiment in Criticism” was, of course, one of them.

To demonstrate that Eliot had not discarded his stance as a literary critic, towards the end of a detailed “Introduction”, Yano quoted, with his translation, the passage from the essay concerned:

so long as poetry and fiction and such things are written, its first purpose must always be what it always has been—to give a peculiar kind of pleasure which has something constant in it throughout the ages, however difficult and various our explanations of that pleasure may be. The task of criticism will be, accordingly not only to expand its borders but to clarify its centre and the insistency of the latter need grows with that of the former.

It was true that the critical writings of Eliot crossed the border of literary criticism, reflecting his concerns “with morals, and with religion, and even with politics”, and yet, it was, Yano firmly believed, “an expansion or development of interests”.

Yano gave “ishiki” for “historical sense”. Sadayoshi Yamoto (1909-1990) followed suit, in his translation of “Tradition and the Individual Talent”, which was published in May 1938, along with five other essays, including “Experiment in Criticism”. His Bungei Hihyoron (Literary Essays) of Eliot, in Iwanami Library edition, broke the confines of the classroom and brought Eliot out to the general readership. Eventually, the very passage from “Experiment in Criticism” became one of the most quoted in pre-war years.

In 1962, it was revised, as mentioned earlier at the beginning. The “ishiki (consciousness)” remained untouched, but in its new note for the edition, Yamoto gave “kankaku” for “sense”, which Fukase already did far back in 1928.

Peter Quennell is almost forgotten in Japan. It is rather touching to find his name in the translation of “Baudelaire” in the library edition. Eliot quotes from the book Quennell wrote in 1929, a year before he came to Tokyo.

He [Baudelaire] had enjoyed a sense of his own age, had recognized its pattern while the pattern was yet incomplete, and--because it is only our misapprehension of the present which prevents our looking into the immediate future, our ignorance of to-day and of its real as apart from its spurious tendencies and requirements--had anticipated many problems, both on the aesthetic and on the moral plane, in which the fate of modern poetry is still concerned.

Perhaps he should have stayed longer.

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37 In the revised 1962 edition four essays are added: “The Frontiers of Criticism,” “Religion and Literature,” “Arnold and Pater,” and “The Pensées of Pascal.”
Session 5
Eliot as a Literary and Social Critic

Chair
Kyoong-Won Yang (Daejin University)

Presentation 1
Eriko Hayashi (Gifu University)
T. S. Eliot: The Significance in His Concept of Culture

Presentation 2
Jeo-Yong Noh (Yeungnam University)
T. S. Eliot’s Idea of a Christian Elite

Presentation 3
Joon-Soo Bong (Seoul National University)
The Title Page of The Waste Land

Discussants
Cheol-Hee Lee (Myongji University)
In-Cheon Yeou (Calvin University)
Seung-Hyeok Kwon (Seoul Women’s University)
T. S. Eliot: The Significance in His Concept of Culture

Eriko Hayashi (Gifu University, Japan)

Introduction

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) changed his stance on literary activity in late 1920’s. Before his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism in 1927, he published Poems in 1920, The Waste Land in 1922, and The Hollow Men in 1925. In these works, the idea of ‘art for art’s sake’ was explicitly seen. However, from the end of 1920’s to the end of 1930’s, his literary works came to include political and social thoughts. Ash Wednesday in 1930 begins with “Because I do not hope to turn again”, and it represents a departure from the ‘art for art’s sake’ (The Complete Poems 89). In addition to this, in The Criterion edited by him, Eliot expressed his political and social philosophy from a point of view of the Anglo-Catholicism. Thus Eliot developed his theory with cultural consciousness and Christian belief, trying to construct a new social philosophy as an Anglo-Catholic, while he also released some literary works in quality of a modernist. In his poetry work The Waste Land, Eliot describes the devastation of European society. He examines the necessity of new social philosophy in order to find a way to stop the obvious fall of culture as he looks at the modern society. He reconstructs the principle of culture which can exist and develop beyond the time.

There used to be many researches of Eliot’s poetry works, but scholars started to evaluate Eliot’s social criticism in around 1980. His idea is notably important in these days in which the meaning of culture is called into question. My paper will broadly discuss how Eliot’s cultural theory can be significant in the 21st century society where the globalisation has grown. I will particularly look at his idea about preservation and transmission of culture which is argued in Notes towards the Definition of Culture, focusing on three essential elements: cultural level and religion, stimulation by others, and the role of language.

I. Cultural level and religion

First of all, it will be necessary to explore some arguments on ‘three senses of culture’ and the relation to religion, comparing to the idea of Matthew Arnold (1822-88). Eliot constantly insists that culture is thought in three levels: individual, group or class, or whole
society, and it is important for each level not to be isolated. (i.e. “the culture of the individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class, and that the culture of the group or class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which that group or class belongs” (Notes 21).) It is essential to see the culture of a group or class and of the whole society as a background, when considering the culture of individuals, and not to mix an individual subjective purpose with a purpose of group or society. However, it does not mean to exclude the culture of group and society. Eliot says, “we only mean that the culture of the individual cannot be isolated from that of the group, and that the culture of the group cannot be abstracted from that of the whole society; and that our notion of ‘perfection’ must take all three senses of ‘culture’ into account at once” (24).

The word ‘perfection’ refers to the idea of Arnold, who has a different view of culture from the one of Eliot. Arnold mentions, in his work Culture and Anarchy, that if the individual culture comes close to the ‘perfection’ (that is, if individuals acquire the perfect culture), a group or class or the whole society will develop.

Arnold sees the role of individual culture as a culture bearer of the society. He concludes, in his famous consideration of rank classification (i.e. barbarian, philistine, and populace), that well-educated individuals can stave off anarchy. This cultural theory seems to indicate that individuals can acquire culture unlimitedly. This is because Arnold argues as if an individual goes beyond a group or class or even the whole society, and he says “culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us” (Arnold 829). ‘Culture’ here is defined only at the individual level.

It is important to take into account the period of Arnold’s life to see the background of theory. Romanticism in the 19th century treated a possibility of individuals as an unlimited repository. Arnold substitutes the acquisition of the individual culture with a word ‘perfection’, and admits the unlimited possibility of individual perfection.

Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. (828)

On the other hand, Eliot suggests that the perfect person of culture never exists. He insists that it finds difficulty wanting perfection, which is proposed by Arnold, for individuals
in the first place. Perfection is imperfect unless we consider an individual, a group or class and the whole society simultaneously. “... [W]e shall look for culture, not in any individual or in any one group of individuals, but more and more widely” (Notes 23). It will never be perfect if it is only at the individual level.

Moreover, Arnold argues over an individual culture to transcend the religion. He says, if the culture of individual pursues perfection, individuals are able to acquire the value and fineness of humanity existing inside a spirit and mind. However, Eliot brings up Arnold’s cultural theory to have a problem on the point that he considers culture and religion separately. Arnold gives the impression that Culture (as he uses the term) is something more comprehensive than religion; that the latter is no more than a necessary element, supplying ethical formation and some emotional colour, to Culture which is the ultimate value. It may have struck the reader that what I have said about the development of culture, and about the dangers of disintegration when a culture has reached a highly development of culture and the development of religion, in a society uninfluenced from without, cannot be clearly isolated from each other: ... (28)

Contrarily, according to Eliot, all cultures would not appear if they were not connected with religion, stating that culture is “the incarnation of a religion of a people” (28). He assumes that culture should exist as an embodiment of the truth, which means the truth that is invisible is embodied into a culture that is visible. As for European culture, religious passion has created the arts, and pursuit of truth has made all cultures flourished. Consequently, Eliot concludes that “no culture can appear or develop except in relation to a religion” (27). Although Arnold’s idea about culture was the core thought of the 19th century society, Eliot shattered it and suggested the new theory which leads to the development of society in the 21st century. He excludes the 19th-century-ish thoughts of eternal progress and development of culture, and mentions the necessity of constructing a new perspective of the world.

II. Stimulation by others

Secondly, culture needs stimulation of other cultures in order to be flourished. In the primitive communities, religion, politics, science, and arts were all tightly connected. In that situation, one culture had dominated the whole society. However, once the society becomes complicated, each field becomes independent. After they are segmentalised, the separation goes on without any interaction, and culture itself will be debilitated, Eliot says. If several
occupational abilities become isolated in the society, three cultural levels (individual, group or class, and whole society) are all separated. Then, disintegration of culture might happen. For one culture to develop, a variety of occupational abilities or academic fields have to be connected. Therefore, Eliot assumes that culture is similar to organic living systems on the point that each part needs to function respectively so as to move the body.

This idea is close to the one of A. J. Toynbee (1889-1975), a historian who argued rise and fall of culture in the same period as Eliot. He considers civilisations to be organic living systems, and states about declination of them in his work A Study of History, as follows:

A complete elimination of the barbarism of the external proletariat would warrant no more than a mild elation, since we have convinced ourselves … that the destruction which has overtaken a number of civilization in the past has never been the work of any external agency, but has always been in the nature of an act of suicide. (Toynbee 419)

According to Toynbee, loosing original culture is not ascribable to invasion by external forces (different cultures). Call it humanly or violent, the influence on being invaded is not destructive but rather stimulating. In Notes towards the Definition of Culture Eliot quotes a passage from Science and the Modern World by A.N. Whitehead. The phrase “other nations of different habits are not enemies: they are godsend” indicates that any incursions by different culture lead to growth of original culture (Notes 50). Likewise, a friction between individuals or between groups is also essential to keep stimulating the culture, Eliot assumes. These stimulations are necessary to prevent culture from decadence. As well as Toynbee’s analysis, Eliot understands declination of culture to be a spontaneous deterioration caused by an individual, a group or the society which possess the culture. On that basis, he concludes that “people should be neither too united nor too divided, if its culture is to flourish” (50). If people are too united, they are not able to acquire the stimulation from other cultures for they refuse others. At the same time, if people are too divided, that also means there is no stimulation among each field of work, and culture will be split up in the end. Continuous stimulation urges to develop culture unless it causes excess of unity and excess of division. Then, it links to preservation and transmission of culture.
III. The role of language and elite

Thirdly, the existence of language and elite regards to be significant to maintain and develop the speciality of culture. Eliot takes language as a particularity of regional culture which shows its distinctiveness. Taking example of the effect of Welsh in United Kingdom, he mentions the necessity of unique language for the sake of conveying and maintaining some unique ideas and perceptions. That is to say, regionalism must be taken into account when considering the preservation and transmission of culture. As mentioned before, culture should be stimulated by other unique characteristics in order to develop. As for the culture in United Kingdom, “the direct contribution to poetry by Welshmen and men of Welsh extraction, writing in English, is very considerable; . . .” (Notes 56). Language is the most useful tool for identifying racial character since it is a main tool for communication, which can show “a peculiar way of thinking, feeling and behaving” of people (57). Therefore, its influence on other cultures of different languages can hugely be recognised.

Conversely, if people lose their language, they will lose their racial character as well. Eliot further explains, insisting on the importance of literary language, that “the literature written in that language will not, of course, make any direct impact upon the world at large; but if it is no longer cultivated, the people to whom it belongs (we are considering particularly the Welsh) will tend to lose their racial character” (57). Then one culture stops to be influenced by other racial characters, and the culture can no longer develop in the future. In the case of United Kingdom, according to Eliot, “if the other cultures of the British Isles were wholly superseded by English culture, English culture would disappear too” (57). That is to say, preserving unique language is almost the same thing as preserving culture. As he states, it should be kept in mind that “for the transmission of a culture . . . and for its maintenance, there is no safeguard more reliable than a language” (57).

Conclusion

As discussed before, culture needs to develop with another culture as they keep their uniqueness and stimulate each other. Generosity which accepts various characteristics seems to be significant for creating the affluent society. However, it does not mean that any individual culture should be united as one. Especially, unique languages ought to stay in the culture, not being absorbed by other language, for the culture to be flourished.
Considering Eliot’s idea about culture, I must say that the ‘excess of unity’ has progressed in the present society, which is so called ‘globalisation’. A number of interactions of each culture are important, but that should not be connected to disappearance of culture. For example, though English is required as a communication tool for people all over the world nowadays, other languages should not be diminished by that. If globalisation goes too far, unique cultures will be devastated. In order to prevent the disintegration of culture and construct the peaceful society, it is worth re-evaluating Eliot’s cultural essay even in the 21st century. Keeping various cultures alive will let the whole society be flourished.

Works Cited


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T. S. Eliot’s Idea of a Christian Elite

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In this paper, I do not think I need to define what a Christian is. Especially, when the word “Christian” is applied to Eliot, he is *ipso facto* a Christian. At the age of 39, Eliot is known to have been baptised in the National Church of England by William Force Stead in Finstock, Oxfordshire, on 29 June 1927. His godfathers were two friends of Stead’s, the theologian B. H. Streeter, Provost of Queen’s College, Oxford and Vere Sumerset, a historian, a fellow of Worcester College. The next day, he was taken to be confirmed by Thomas Banks Strong, Bishop of Oxford at Cuddesdon near Oxford, who laid his hands on Eliot’s head and said: “Defend, O Lord, this thy Servant with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine forever” (Gordon 224). Nine months later, he made his first confession in 20 February 1928 (Spurr 134), presumably after finding a spiritual director in Fr Francis Underhill. His conversion to Anglican Church was described as a “genuine” turning from his family religion “Unitarianism”, which does not believe in the formular “in the Name of the Trinity”. Literally, Eliot’s conversion to the Church of England was a new life.

Right after conversion, he wrote chiefly Christian poems and prose such as “The Journey of the Magi”, “A Song for Simeon”, “Animula”, “Marina”, “The Cultivation of Christmas Trees” and *Ash-Wednesday* in 1930. In prose, he wrote “Archbishop Bramhall” (1927), “The Humanism of Irving Babbitt” (1928), *For Lancelot Andrewes: Essays on Style and Order* (1928) in which he declared his triad of personal faiths; “classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and anglo-catholic in religion” (7), “Second Thoughts on Humanism” (1929) and *Dante* (1929) among others. His life was also marked with a distinctive clerical cut, disciplining himself in austere Christian life while serving for St Stephen’s Church as a warden for a quarter of the century.

Eliot’s turning towards Christian drama in the 1930s seems to have been encouraged by a meeting with George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, whose interest was in the reconciliation of the Church and the arts. For many years, Bishop Bell was president of the inter-denominational Religious Drama Society and also a member of the council of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. According to R. C. D. Jasper, the bishop frequently invited artists, poets, and dramatists to the palace for weekend gatherings. Eliot appears to have been invited to the palace in December 1930. On a Sunday evening, Eliot read *Ash-Wednesday* to the party.
which, “though impressed, was none the less a little bewildered” (Jasper 125). From that weekend, the close friendship between Eliot and Bell seems to have continued for many years. Later, Eliot paid tribute to Bell’s influence in his work:

I remember that Dr. Bell travelled up to London with me on the following Monday. Not having consorted with bishops in those days, I found it strange to be journeying with a bishop in a third class railway carriage. On the journey the bishop spoke to me about Dr. J. H. Oldham and his work for the Church and the world; and so that weekend brought about my acquaintance with two men, Mr. Browne and Dr. Old. Oldham with whom I was later to be closely associated in quite different activities. Out of that meeting came the invitation in 1933 to write the church pageant which became The Rock. (125)

Eliot’s encounter with Bishop George Bell appears to have been crucial in the development of his Christian life as a man of letters as well as a Christian social thinker. At the time when Eliot met with the bishop, Martin Brown became the first diocesan Director of Religious Drama and was working with the Reverend R. Webb-Odell on a projected pageant of the history of the church in Britain. Martin wanted the best poet possible. The Chichester week-end meeting with Eliot appears to have left Martin no doubt that Eliot was the best writer he was looking for. Out of the weekend meeting at the bishop’s palace, The Rock was written by Eliot in 1934 and produced by Martin who had subsequently produced all of Eliot’s plays. Years later, Eliot recalled his experience of writing a pageant play (“The Three Voices of Poetry” 91).

After the pageant play Rock, Eliot was further invited by Bishop Bell to write a play for the Canterbury Festival of 1935. Consequently, Murder in the Cathedral was written by Eliot and produced by Martin in June 1935. On the death of Bishop Bell in 1958, Eliot acknowledged his enormous debt to him and wrote in his postscript to the obituary notice:

On a summer afternoon in 1934, walking in the garden of his Palace, Dr. Bell Proposed to me that I should write the play for the next Canterbury Festival. I accepted the invitation and wrote Murder in the Cathedral. To Dr. Bell’s initiative (and subsequently to Mr. Ashley Dukes’s enterprise in bringing the play to London) I owe my admission to the theatre. (“Bishop Bell” 13)

To Dr. Bell’s initiative, Murder in the Cathedral was not only written and it was brought to the London theatre by Ashley Dukes, founder of the Mercury Theatre in London which staged experimental drama and ballet, offered Eliot to bring the play to London.
Another person whom Bishop Bell mentioned to Eliot on their journey to London is Joseph Houldsworth Oldham (1874-1969), who was general secretary of International Missionary Council. He was known as “one of the great ecumenical pioneers of the 20th century” (Keith Clemens xiii). It is not precisely clear when Eliot first met with Oldham. However, at the palace of Bishop Bell, Eliot and Oldham must have been introduced by the bishop at a weekend party in December of 1930. By 1932, it appears that Eliot had known him well when Oldham joined to serve on an advisory group of the BBC to look at its Sunday broadcasting policy. Eliot had already been a member of the advisory group (Faith on the Frontier 286). Subsequently when the world conference on “Church, Community and State organized by Oldham” was held at Oxford in July 1937, Eliot was invited to the conference (Roger Kojecky 156). It brought 425 official delegates, 300 of them appointees of the churches and 125 invited by the Universal Council from 120 churches in forty countries to study, debate and formulate lines of thought and action for the church in relation to contemporary society. At the time when a new world conflict was to erupt two years later, the Oxford conference was in the creation of a sense of universal fellowship in Christ, which was not to be disrupted for racial or nationalistic ends, and was to be furthered in the pursuit of a common mission in the world.

The 1937 Oxford Conference appears to have owed much to J. H. Oldham, who worked as organizing secretary and was regarded as “the chief architect and outstanding exponent of the Oxford project” (Faith on the Frontier 308). The members of each section met two and a half hours each morning, and frequently for an hour and a half in the evening during the fortnight conference. Eliot was a member of a section dealing with the economic order, along with other British members such as John Baillie (1886-1960), professor of divinity at Edinburgh University and minister of the Church of Scotland and a president of World Council of Churches in 1954, V. A. Demant (1893-1983), Regius Professor of Moral and Pastrol Theology at the University of Oxford from 1947 to 1971, Eleanor Iredale (1892-1966), linguist and fund-raiser, Sir Josiah Stamp (1880-1941), prominent British civil servant, and R. H. Tawney (1893-1983), English economic historian and Christian socialist.

Six months after the Oxford Conference, two small conferences were held at Lambeth Palace on 14 January 1938 and on 17 March 1938 to consider the formation of a British section of the proposed World Council of Churches. At the first Lambeth Palace meeting over which Archbishop William Lang (1864-1945) presided, there were representatives from the Church of Scotland, the English Presbyterian, the Methodist, Congregational and Baptist
Churches. Apart from official clergymen, there were lay people such as J. H. Oldham, Sir Walter Moberly, chairman of University Grants Committee, Iredale and Eliot. At the meeting, one of the topics discussed was the idea of forming some sort of order. Based on the minutes of the proceedings, Kojecky quoted the following as what Eliot spoke of:

He [Eliot] was most interested in the suggestion for an ‘order’, which was where the layman could most appropriately come in. He would be alarmed if the ‘order’ were planned on too large a scale and thought in any case it should be predominantly lay. . . . The order should not start too quickly and possibly should be confined at first a small number if those who have deep knowledge of human beings and could be trusted to choose their own future colleagues. It might therefore be a self-perpetuating body, but in this case the original members should not be representative but chosen for their individual value and sagacity. (160)

Apparently, Eliot was very anxious that the right kind of persons should compose such an order. The views he put forward at the first Lambeth Palace meeting seems to have been much reflected when the group called The Moot was formed and launched its first meeting at High Leigh, Hertfordshire, on 1-4 April 1938 under the chairmanship of J. H. Oldham. A group of people who first gathered at the meeting were “nearly all intellectuals and professional people, some of them well known in public life” (163). One of the leading spirits was Karl Mannheim (1893-1947), Jewish Hungarian-born sociologist. He was a professor of sociology at Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main but dismissed by the Nazi regime. In 1933, he fled from Germany and settled in Britain. At the time of his entry to The Moot, he was lecturer in Sociology, London School of Economics. Apart from the first Moot meeting, he never missed a single meeting until the end. The centrality of Mannheim’s role is shown by the fact that, when he died suddenly in 1947, the group stopped meeting. Other members of the group were John Baillie, Kathleen Bliss (1908-1989), assistant to J. H. Oldham, (Sir) Fred Clarke (1880-1952), Director of Institute of Education, University of London, Christopher Dawson (1889-1970), Roman Catholic scholar, Herbert H. Farmer (1892-1981), professor of systematic theology at Cambridge University, Eric Fenn (1899-1995), assistant to J. H. Oldham, (Sir) Hector Hetherington (1888-1965), principal of Glasgow University, H. A. Hodges (1905-1976), professor of Philosophy at Reading University, Eleanora Iredale, Daniel Jenkins (1914-2002) on the staff of Student Christian Movement, Adolf Löwe (1893-1995), lecturer in economics and sociology at Manchester University, Alexander Miller (1908-1960),
Scottish-born Presbyterian minister, (Sir) W. H. Moberly, J. M. Murry (1889-1957), Mary Oldham (1877-1965), (Sir) Walter Oakeshott (1903-1987), assistant master at Winchester College, Michael Polanyi (1891-1976), professor of physical chemistry at Manchester University, Gilbert Shaw (1886-1967), Oliver Tomkins (1908-1992), A. R. Vidler (1899-1991), Anglican priest, theologian, and T. S. Eliot. The group met two or three times a year from 1938 until 1947. It appears at the Moot meetings that Eliot sharpened his idea of a Christian elite through the communication of such luminous intellectual figures.

The Moot, a term which in Old English signified an assembly or meeting-point, met two or three times each year (four times in 1941), almost invariably over a weekend from Friday evening to Sunday evening, generally in a conference or retreat centre within easy reach of London. For each meeting, some members prepared papers for discussion. It was a Christian gathering and there were daily periods of prayer, though some members were would-be rather than professing Christian believers (Alec Viler 116-19). Its existence was known only to very few people and its proceedings were private. Eric Fenn, who was a regular member, acted as scribe and produced summaries of discussions which were afterwards duplicated and circulated to the members.

In his “appendix” to *T. S. Eliot’s Social Criticism*, Kojecky named 17 regular members of The Moot, excluding Mary Oldham, wife of J. H. Oldham, who attended regularly but never participated in the discussions and Alexander Miller (237). However, Keith Clements, who edited *The Moot Paper: Faith, Freedom and Society 1938-1947* in 2010, counted 23 persons as regular numbers of the group until its demise (12). According to Clements, among the 23 members, attendance at the actual meetings seldom exceeded twelve. There were a total of 21 meetings until December 1944 (this is, disregarding the 6th meeting which was evidently aborted). Clements says that “The ‘Sub-Committee’ of the Moot which met on 29 September 1939 suggested that the next full meeting of the Moot take place in late November or early December, in Jordans.” However, there is “no records of such a meeting” (245). The most regular attendees were Oldham, Hodges, Mannheim, Moberly, Vidler and Fenn, each of whom attended sixteen or more times. Mary Oldham, Shaw, Iredale, Eliot and Baillie each attended eleven or more times. Thus eleven people constituted the most solid, regular membership. Around this group were five people who attended less often but were certainly considered by the others to be active members: Middleton Murry and Clark (nine attendance each); Löwe, Hetherington and Oakeshott (five each). In addition, some meetings invited “guests” or visitors who were thought to have some special insight or expertise to
contribute on a particular item under discussion or who appealed to Oldham. Some of those who first came as guests eventually received the accolade of actual membership. Some invited guests who became regular members were Alex Miller, Daniel Jenkins, and Kathleen Bliss. Clements also included Michael Polanyi as a regular member, although he first attended the 20th meeting in June of 1944 (12).

Kojecky noted that Eliot attended The Moot meetings 11 times from April 1938 until December 1944 (238-39). However, Clements recorded 12 times for Eliot’s attendance among 20 total meetings (26). Kojecky further noted that Eliot was absent at the fifth meeting held in February of 1940. However, according to Clements the fifth meeting was held from 23-24 September in 1939 at Annandale, North End Road, London, and Eliot was present at the meeting. Kojecky’s record shows Eliot as an absentee at the fifth meeting. Nonetheless, it was at one of these meetings that Eliot expounded his idea of a Christian elite most succinctly.

In his paper presented to the Moot meeting of December 1944, Eliot who never took a leading role in the group put forward his views on the place of the clerisy and its function in the social structure. In the paper titled “On the Place and Function of the Clerisy,” he wrote:

> The clerisy (if it exists) must be an elite and not a class. The distinction may appear too obvious to need mention, yet I suspect that in discussion the two often confused. An élite is not a substitute for a class, or a class for an élite. This might be put simply by saying that the unit of the class is the family, and the unit of the élite the individual. A man is born a member of a class, but becomes a member of an élite by virtue of individual superiority developed by training; he does not thereby cease to be a member of the class into which he was born, nevertheless he is partially separated from the other members of his class who are not members of the same élite. No man can change his class, but his successful effort or his incapacity may, and often does, result in his children belonging to a somewhat different class from his own. (Kojecky 240)

Then putting elite against the background of class, Eliot maintained that they are mutually interdependent on each other and that the elite do not exist without a division of class. He went on to say that a chief merit of class is an influence for stability, while that of an elite is an influence for change. Therefore, there is an inevitable conflict between class and a clerical elite because the clerical elite is “apt to be critical of, and subversive of, the class in power”, while depending upon “whatever is the dominant class of its time” (241).
contended that this dual relationship can be best seen in such men as Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold in the Victorian upper middle class.

Recognizing some possible danger of confusion in using such terms of “an elite” and “clerisy”, Eliot moved on to define these terms precisely. For him, elite is “any category of men and women who because of their individual capacities exercise significant power in any particular area” (242). However, the clerisy is “those individuals who originate the dominant ideas, and alter the sensibility, of their time” at the top (243). This means that the clerisy is elite at the highest level who generate the new ideas of their time, including the new expression of an old idea, and who alter sensibility as seen in painters, musicians, and writers. Thus, as David Edward observed, Eliot’s use of the term “clerisy” includes clergy and laity as Samuel Coleridge did (36). But Eliot’s “clerisy” is wider than that of Samuel Coleridge whose “clerisy” implies not only a body of the definite vocation but also tends to become “merely a brahminical caste” to Eliot (89). Eliot’s clerisy is even wider than the ‘Community of Christians’, “the consciously and thoughtfully practicing Christians, especially those of intellectual and spiritual superiority” (62-3), which he expounded in The Idea of a Christian Society in 1939.

Eliot did object to the idea that the clerisy springs from a limited number of closely related classes. He contended that if the clerisy breeds the clerisy, “the clerisy would cease to be the clerisy” and it would be “merely be a small and rather isolated class” (243). In other words, he thought that “clerics spring from stock which is itself non-clerical, or not too clerical, but which is capable of producing and rearing clerics.” For him, there are two grades of cleric; the higher grades and the lower grades. The former are those “whether philosophers or artists, who are concerned with the word (the discovery of truth or beauty) rather than with the audience”, but the latter are those “who are more concerned with the audience - either to influence it or to entertain it, or both” (245). Ideally, he envisaged that the cleric should be free from the class into which he is born, mix with all classes as an outsider, and even get out of his own century to look beyond. Above all, the cleric should have a global community of interest with clerics of other nations to fight against nationalism, racialism and class.

This is what Eliot conceived of as the idea of a Christian elite when he presented his views to the Moot members who had a striking feature of the intellectual stature and diversity of interests. There is no doubt that Eliot had enriched his idea of a Christian elite through the dialogues of the Moot members. This conception of a Christian elite seems to have remained
a seminal idea which later he further elaborated, redefined and developed in connection with the concept of culture and class in his *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* in 1948.

**Works Cited**


In *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot* (1969), the title page of *The Waste Land* consists of four peritexts, all familiar to the students of Eliot: the title (“The Waste Land”), the year of publication (“1922”), the Petronius epigraph, and the dedication to Ezra Pound. The title page loudly advertises its status as a self-conscious linguistic construct—it is uncommon to see a poem equipped with an epigraph and a dedication. Lurking behind the poem’s three peritexts are their respective epitexts: a line from Charles Dickens’s novel which was the poem’s title in the manuscripts; a passage from Joseph Conrad’s novella that Eliot initially prefixed to his poem as an epigraph; Eliot’s holograph inscription in Pound’s copy of *The Waste Land* (1922) which eventually found its way into print in *The Waste Land and Other Poems* (1925). In this brief paper, I discuss the critical significance of the epigraphs and the dedications as paratexts.

I

By definition, the epigraph is a quotation, thus embodying an intertextual space in which a voice other than the author’s own can be heard. The epigraph hovers somewhere between the title and the principal text, and it is no other than this isolation or instability that enables the epigraph to preside over the whole text. The quoted text as an epigraph demands more attention than in its original context; and just like most peritexts, the ostracization of the epigraph from the principal text also endows it with a considerable degree of freedom, which, in turn, becomes the reader’s interpretive burden.

Commonsensically speaking, the epigraph is considered as a kind of interpretive signpost, and accordingly, the reader is invited or encouraged to make some kinds of connections between the epigraph and its principal text. In this limited sense, the epigraph represents an authorial desire to explain the principal text—at least at the surface level—and it is worth mentioning that about a half of Eliot’s poems are equipped with one or another, sometimes multiple, epigraphs. Contrary to his reputation as a difficult or obscure poet, Eliot might be thought of as a poet ready to help his bewildered readers. Of course, things are more complicated than this when we start to consider what kinds of passages actually show up as epigraphs in Eliot’s poems. In fact, not all epigraphs are meant to be interpretively helpful. As
Genette says, some epigraphs are more decorative than elucidative. Or some epigraphs are meant to create a sense of weighty presence—epigraph for epigraph’s sake, if you will. Some writers attributed what they wrote to eminent or imaginary authors simply to create an aura of authority (Genette 147).

Now to discuss Eliot’s epigraphs: As can be witnessed in the facsimile edition of Waste Land manuscripts, Eliot’s initial choice for his epigraph was a passage from Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. (Eliot’s line-breaks are reproduced below.)

“Did he live his life again in every detail of desire, temptation, and surrender during that supreme moment of complete knowledge? He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision, – he cried out twice, a cry that was no more then a breath—‘The horror! The horror!’”

CONRAD. (*Facsimile 2*)

Pound was not entirely satisfied with this epigraph and wrote to Eliot: “I doubt if Conrad is *weighty* enough to stand the citation” (emphasis added). Since Eliot was not quite sure what Pound meant, he responded: “Do you mean not use the Conrad quote or simply not put Conrad’s name to it? It is much the most appropriate I can find, and somewhat elucidative.” Obviously, Eliot’s Conrad epigraph was meant to be “elucidative,” but for Pound, the name “Conrad” was not “weighty” enough. As can be seen in the typescript, Eliot did not type “CONRAD” when preparing the typescript. His belated attribution “CONRAD” was added in longhand, probably after Pound’s initial response. If the epigraph is meant to be elucidative first and foremost, the content of the quoted passage is more important than the attributed author because the test of the epigraph is whether or not the quoted passage is interpretively relevant to the poem “proper.” Though Pound did not push his point very hard—“Do as you like about Conrad; who am I to grudge him his laurel crown?” (*Facsimile* 125). Eventually, however, Eliot decided to jettison the Conrad epigraph and settled down with a passage from Petronius’ *Satyricon*:

‘Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego oculis meis vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent: *Σίβυλλα τί θέλεις;* respondebat illa: *ἀπολλανεῖν θέλω.* ([59])

Much ink has been spilled in the Eliot industry about Conrad’s and Petronius’s passages in the overall context of the poem. “Kurtz’s cry of horror at the vision of his wretched life and death
is matched by the Sibyl’s horror at a sterile, changeless state without life, death, love, or loss” (Davidson 125). This thematic reading of the epigraphs is up to the point and most critics offer similar interpretations. However, I would like to suggest a reading focussing on the questions of voices and (inter)textuality simply because they radically characterize the two epigraphs at the ontological level. Just as Conrad’s narrative frames problematize the authenticity of Marlow’s experience with Kurtz—more precisely, his voice deeply buried in the narrative structure itself—the passage from the Satyricon is a textual mosaic generating multiple voices: Petronius’s narrator (Encolpius) quotes from Trimalchio, who in turn quotes the boys’ question and the Sibyl’s response. When quoting from Conrad and Petronius, Eliot was aware that his was a quotation within a quotation within a quotation and it is inevitable, at this point, to raise this simple but nevertheless crucial question: “[W]ho is speaking when we speak in quotation?” (Garber 10). This question is difficult in itself and becomes more difficult when applied to Eliot’s epigraphs because the voices do not exist on the same ontological plane.

II

As a “genre” of writing and as a spatially—that is, visually—distinctive textual unit, the dedication is by and large undefined and undefinable except that it addresses a dedicatee, occasion or cause. Just like the epigraph, the dedication also raises the questions of voice and authority originating largely from its context or a lack thereof. Eliot’s poem “To My Wife” prefixed to The Elder Statesman (1958) can be a useful point of departure in discussing the protean function of dedications:

To you I dedicate this book, to return as best I can
With words a little part of what you have given me.
The words mean what they say, but some have a further meaning
For you and me only. (8-11)

Prosaic as they are, the two concluding lines problematize the borderline between private and public. Eliot is trying to secure a private “enclosure” in the public context in which the poem is placed—more precisely, forced to be placed—as a dedicatory piece. When the poem revised and reappeared as one of the occasional verses in The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot, however, the blurry borderline is given a more explicit emphasis:
No peevish winter wind shall chill
No sullen tropic sun shall wither
The roses in the rose-garden which is ours and ours only
But this dedication is for others to read:
These are private words addressed to you in public. (8-12)

Reading the first three lines in the above quotation, we can do away with the complex notion of “impersonality.” “The rose-garden” is rendered as an intensely private sanctuary where the lovers can defy “peevish winter wind” and “sullen tropic sun” but it is worth noticing that this private world flows into a public realm without any syntactic break or intervention with punctuation marks. In fact, what follows it is obviously self-conscious line: “But this dedication is for others to read.” In fact, “private words addressed [. . .] in public” might serve as a definition of dedication. Here Eliot’s remarkable sensitivity toward different modes of utterance lays bare the problematic mechanism of dedication. Simply put, the supposedly private significance is only part of the constitutive frame of dedication as a genre of discourse; more important, the two poles, private and public, create a broad spectrum, encompassing a wide range of literary and non-literary implications. Needless to say, the dedication engenders a difficult negotiation between private and public.

Generally speaking, the dedication is a discursive sanctuary, its topology isolating it from the principal text. It usually points to one or another extratextual realm–unlike titles, section titles, epigraphs or notes, it does not have to create thematic links to the principal text. However, this same freedom transforms a dedication into a discursive space generating a wild, unpredictable variety of discourses. For instance, the relationship between the author and the dedicatee can be deliberately, that is, arbitrarily, constructed. The dedicatee is at the mercy of the author: the latter may or may not ask, in the first place, for the former’s permission before dedicating a work to him or her; moreover, there can be various motives behind dedications, including less-than-genuine ones. In short, the dedicatee can be posited as the dedicator’s discursive space, and the dedication can become a space entirely dominated by the dedicator’s desire.

It is worth mentioning that the boundary between epigraph and dedication can be blurred when the dedication is combined with a quotation. Eliot dedicated first volume of poetry to Jean Verdenal and the dedication is followed by a passage from Dante. Another example can be found in Eliot’s The Sacred Wood (1919). This book was dedicated to “H. W. E.” A whole lot of psychological issues seem to be embedded in this dedication, in which Eliot, as a troubled son who chose poetry over philosophy, finds himself compelled to hide
his overbearing father’s name behind the initials. Furthermore, the dedication is followed by a Latin phrase “Tacuit et fecit” ([v]). Translating the phrase “He has been silent and he has performed [accomplished],” Miller says:

Eliot had rushed to get his work published in 1920 because he had planned a visit to America and he thought his father would be reassured by seeing his poetry and criticism in print—and no doubt he hoped for some kind of reconciliation with his family. As it turned out, his dedication was a substitute for his original plan, and by using only initials that few could identify and a phrase in Latin that many would not understand, he privately said his farewell to the father he wanted so much to please. (346)

Put simply, Eliot the guilt-ridden son constructs a relationship with his father and the newly constructed relationship turns out to be ambiguous, even subversive.

Eliot’s dedication to Pound can be read in a similar way. Initially, the dedication was Eliot’s holograph inscription on a copy of the Boni and Liveright edition of The Waste Land given to Ezra Pound as a token of gratitude. When the poem was reprinted in The Waste Land and Other Poems in 1925, the hand-written inscription transformed itself into a printed dedication, which became part of the poem’s title page and ever since, it has been prefixed to the poem in every subsequent Faber and Harcourt edition. Eliot’s dedication to Ezra Pound incorporates a phrase from Dante’s Purgatory, and this quotation also raises questions of voice and context. The dedication constructs and places not only Pound the dedicatee, but the poet and his text in a larger literary context—in short, it creates a web of intertextual relationships which transcends the private enclosure conventionally associated with the act of dedication. The two lines in the dedication— “For Ezra Pound / il miglior fabbro” — comment upon each other, negotiating with several levels of discourse at the same time. The first line harks back to the extratextual realm—Pound’s significant involvement in the poem’s composition—but to register one’s gratitude in the conventional form of dedication also means, among other things, partial loss of its singularity as an extratextual event.

The Dante quotation in the second line leads us to define the relationship between Eliot and Pound in literary contexts. The phrase “il miglior fabbro” comes from Canto 26 of Dante’s Purgatory, in which Guido Guinicelli responds to Dante’s praise of him by complimenting his own predecessor Arnaut Daniel:

“O brother,” he replied, “yon spirit which
I point to”—and he showed me one ahead—
“forged with yet greater skill his mother-speech.” (115-17)

It is worth pointing out that Pound translates and discusses the same passage in *The Spirit of Romance*:

This device of praising Daniel by the mouth of Guinicelli is comparable to that which Dante uses in the *Paradiso*, honouring St Dominic and St Francis in the speech of a Franciscan and a Dominican respectively. (14-15)

This discussion occurs in a chapter devoted to Arnaut Daniel and significantly, the chapter title reads “IL MIGLIORE FABBRO.” Pound’s titling is an act of compliment in itself, reproducing both the complimentary phrase and the chain of literary compliments repeatedly used in *The Divine Comedy* and Eliot follows the suit in his dedication to Pound. Not only does he express—that is, conventionally (“For Ezra Pound”)—his gratitude to Pound but also imitates him. Here, again, we need to ask, “From whose mouth does the phrase ‘il miglior fabbro’ come out?” In other words, does Eliot occupy Guido Guinicelli’s position when praising Pound, who is, by extension, put in the position of Arnaut Daniel? Or are we to ignore the context altogether and merely think that Pound is a better craftman of the two modernist poets? Considering the multiple layers of the Conrad and Petronius epigraphs, the Dante quotation cannot be considered out of its original context. Eliot’s dedication registers the private relationship between the two individual poets, but it also transcends its significance by dispersing it in the intertextual connections among Dante, Guido Guinicelli, Arnaut Daniel, Pound and Eliot himself. The phrase “il miglior fabbro” becomes a stock phrase where traces and tracings of literary relations can be found.

All three quotations that we have discussed in this paper enact the problematic phenomenology of voices made elusive and/or subversive in one or another (inter)textual network. Thus, the title page of *The Waste Land* alone is a fit reminder of Eliot the impersonal poet who tends to avoid speaking in his own voice and distrust lyric spontaneity based on a stable self.

**Works Cited**


Closing Ceremony

Moderator
Han-Mook Lee (Myongji University)

Congratulatory Poem
Chang-Soo Ko (Poet)
To Great Poet and Teacher T. S. Eliot

Chang-Soo Ko (Poet, Korea)

As we fumble and stumble through
the multi-layered labyrinths of your poetry,
our visions are illusions that need continual revision.
Your poetry captures the most ethereal and ellusive
with mundane details.
Your poetry often alters the contours of
our landscapes and mindscapes.
Your poetry highlights our agonies and ecstasies.
Time quietly accepts our anguish and pain,
but time, like pain, is entirely our own.
Occasionally we feel we are all dancing
on a cosmic stage falling apart.
Though we cannot clearly discern
your womb rhythms and tomb tunes,
our ears relish the sonorous music of
metaphysical murmurs.
Being somewhat familiar with an ancient Korean way,
we sometimes nod at the shifting faces and places
in your poems.
Our hearts beat at the earth feet, loam feet
lifted in country mirth,
mirth of those long since under earth, nourishing the corn.
In the end, we take great solace
from the maxim ‘all shall be well, and all manner of
thing shall be well.’
Taking courage, we shall not cease from exploration and
the end of all our exploring will be to arrive
where we started and know the place
for the first time.

Note: Quotations from Eliot’s poems are not so marked.