

T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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Call for Papers ALA 2000: Long Beach, Calif.

The annual conference of the American Literature Association will be held from May 25 to 28, 2000, at the Renaissance Hyatt Regency Long Beach. The T. S. Eliot Society will sponsor one or two sessions. Papers must not be longer than 20 minutes. No person may present more than one paper at the conference, and chairs may not present a paper on panels they are moderating.

Members of the Society who have suggestions for organizing a topical session are urged to contact Linda Wyman **immediately**. She may be reached at 621-6 Woodlander Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65101; by phone at (573) 634-5431 or (573) 681-5233; by FAX at 573-681-5040; or by e-mail at wymanl@lincolnu.edu. Members who wish to submit one-page proposals for individual papers are invited to do so by **January 14, 2000**.

Society Bibliographer: At its Gloucester meeting the Board approved the appointment of Dr. Nancy Goldfarb to the honorary position of Society Bibliographer. Dr. Goldfarb will prepare an annual bibliography of published material likely to be of interest to the readers of this *Newsletter*. Members are requested to keep the Bibliographer informed of their publications and any other suitable items that come to their attention. She can be reached at the Department of English, Cherry Hall 16B, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101; or by email at Nancy.Goldfarb@wku.edu

Nominations for Board Position: A position on the T.S. Eliot Society Board of Directors has become vacant because of the election of David Huisman as Secretary. Members of the Society are invited to make nominations to the Board. Members may make multiple nominations; a person must be nominated by at least five members of the Society for her or his name to appear on the ballot. Members of the Board are eligible to succeed themselves.

Nominations may be sent by January 31, 2000, to the Supervisor of Elections, Sanford Schwartz, 465 Park Lane, College Park, State College, PA 16803; fax: 814-863-7285.

REFLECTIONS ON THE ANNUAL MEETING IN GLOUCESTER, MASS.

From the twentieth annual meeting of the Society, the first held outside St. Louis, several bright recollections stand out as I write just one month later:

- the extraordinary vision and exquisite planning by David Huisman, who was responsible for introducing the idea of meeting in Gloucester and for all of the arrangements in that city
- the exceptional co-operation and hospitality provided by the Gloucester Lyceum & Sawyer Free Library; creating events in perfect complement

to those of the Society

- the luminous Memorial Lecture by Helen Vendler, insistent on her debt to "our great editor [of *Inventions of the March Hare*] Christopher Ricks" and providing a model of what a critical imagination informed by close reading can achieve
- the warmth and touching openness of Jerry Weist and Dana Hawkes as they welcomed Society members to their home, "The Downs," built by Henry Ware Eliot
- the presence of nine Memorial Lecturers (Earl Holt, Jewel Brooker, Ronald Schuchard, Grover Smith, Shyamal Bagchee, Christopher Ricks, William Harmon, Marianne Thormählen, and Helen Vendler), whose conversation and collegiality enriched the weekend for all concerned
- the sight of more than 250 persons attending the Memorial Lecture, and the sound of their enthusiastic response to it
- the commitment of nine officers and Board members who came to Gloucester a day early to give time for a three-hour Board meeting
- the abundance of kindness, intelligence, and good cheer evidenced among the participants in the meeting — persons from seven countries (Canada, India, Italy, Korea, Japan, Spain, and the U.S.), newcomers reinvigorating old-hands, old-hands encouraging newcomers
- the deep pleasure and joy deriving from hearing Eliot read aloud — in French and Italian, as well as English — by persons who know his poems with both mind and heart
- the sea "on a halcyon day."

"I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time."

Linda Wyman

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SOCIETY:

The meeting, held at the Ocean View Inn in Gloucester on September 24, was attended by officers Linda Wyman, Shyamal Bagchee, William Charron, Grover Smith and Virginia Phelan and members William Harmon, Earl Holt, David Huisman, Benjamin Lockerd.

- Several persons expressed the hope that the "Society People" feature of the newsletter might be revived.

While news regarding members' significant professional activities and recognition have always been welcome, few items of this sort are received. *The membership is invited and urged to inform the editor*

of activities suitable for the "Society People" feature. (Such an item appears elsewhere in this issue.)

- William Harmon offered to help resolve differences that the Society has had with the American Literature Association; there was general agreement that the Society remain in association with that group.
- Shyamal Bagchee will seek to solve the Society's persistent Website problem.
- Grover Smith, the retiring Secretary, was heartily thanked for his services to the Society as Vice-President (and Editor), President, Supervisor of Elections, and most recently as Secretary.
- David Huisman was elected Secretary, for a term to begin "at 12:01 a.m. On September 27, 1999" and to expire at the end of 2002.
- A.D. Moody, Christopher Ricks, and Marianne Thormählen were elected to Honorary Membership in the Society. Each of the three is a prominent Eliot scholar who has also delivered a Memorial Lecture to the Society.
- The Board unanimously adopted a "strong resolution" as follows: "Resolved that, subsequent to existing arrangements for the 1999 meeting, the Society will not be responsible for any agreements or debts, contracted in its name or otherwise, without prior written authorization by the President or formal ratification by the Board."
- The Board expressed appreciation to David Huisman for his work in planning the Gloucester weekend.
- Earl Holt announced that Dennis Bergin, organist at First Unitarian, St. Louis, who has often provided special music for "Eliot Sunday" in that church, would perform on September 26 three new compositions based on Eliot poems.
- The President announced that the 2000 meeting of the Society would take place in St. Louis on September 22-24.

A HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

Grover Smith has written a history of the T. S. Eliot society for the 1999 Yearbook of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. The 2000-word article "The T. S. Eliot Society: Celebration and Scholarship 1980--1999," tells of the Society's beginnings from its founding by Leslie Konnyu "to fill a want in the cultural life of St. Louis." In 1984, Jewel Spears Brooker became a member of Konnyu's group, "an event," Smith writes destined to transform the Society completely. Two years later, Konnyu, [Earl] Holt, and Brooker incorporated the present T. S. Eliot Society (dropping the phrase "of St. Louis"), executed new bylaws, and opened membership to dues-paying public."

"For 1988, the reconstituted [...] Society faced the special requirements of the centenary year." With Brooker as President "a grand four-day celebration took place in St. Louis." In 1991, Brooker edited a volume including six Eliot Memorial Lectures and eight Centenary Celebration papers, under the title *The Placing of T. S. Eliot* (U of Missouri P).

In 1990, the Society joined the newly formed American Literature Association, "a loose alliance of about seventy author societies," thus providing members with two opportunities to give and to hear Eliot papers each year. In recent years, Society programs in St. Louis have been made available to selected graduate students through the generous funding of St. Louis members Anthony and Melanie Fathman.

The 1999 annual meeting, (with the generous cooperation of the Gloucester Lyceum & Sawyer Free Library) was the first ever held outside St. Louis and set high standards for program, hospitality, and diversity of activity. The theme of the meeting, "T. S. Eliot and New England: Historical Contexts," was addressed memorably by Helen Vender in her Memorial Lecture, "Historical Contexts: Available Discourses."

BOOK REVIEW

Aethereal Rumours: T.S. Eliot's Physics and Poetics. Benjamin G. Lockerd, Jr. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1998. 318 pp. \$48.50.

In this study, Benjamin G. Lockerd, Jr. investigates how Eliot's interest in physics and the philosophy of science impinged on his poetics. *Aethereal Rumours* provides a fascinating look at the development of the modern poet's thinking about the notions of space and time from his days as a Harvard philosophy student to his writing of *Four Quartets*. This new critical perspective yields rich and insightful readings of Eliot's ajor poems.

Lockerd's informative opening chapter underlines the importance of Eliot's background in ancient philosophy, especially the pre-Socratics (Heraclitus) and Aristotle. These thinkers played a crucial role in Eliot's lifelong quest for the point of connection between material and spiritual worlds that culminated for him in the Incarnation. Ancient physics supplied the building blocks for the incarnational and sacramental view of the physical world he later found in Christian theology. On the basis of this incisive analysis, Lockerd counters convincingly, I think, those critics who see in Eliot a proto-deconstructionist interested in "meta-metaphysics" (p. 140).

The correlation between physics and poetics helps to illuminate key aspects of Eliot's early poems, especially "Gerontion." Taking the phrase "fractured atoms" as the key to the poem, Lockerd makes a compelling case for seeing the speaker as a "convinced atomist," or a thorough-going materialist like his ancient counterparts, who becomes the victim of the law of entropy that results in the spiritual emptiness of the "hollow men."

Lockerd's treatment of *The Waste Land* is no less intriguing. While critics, such as Elizabeth Schneider and Northrop Frye, have long noticed that the first four sections of the poem correspond structurally to the four classical elements (earth, air, fire, and water), the structural parallel has not been pursued farther because *The Waste Land* has five sections. Lockerd is the first critic to show that a fifth element (*quinta essentia*, or quintessence), aether, associated in Greek cosmology with the upper air, as well as with lightning, thunder, and Heraclitus's fire, pervades the final pan of Eliot's famous poem and functions as a pivotal recurring idea and image in his later work. It is precisely this air (or Stoic *pneuma*), a quasi-spiritual substance that fills the apparently empty spaces of the cosmos, that the inhabitants of the waste land lack for their survival.

The "athereal rumours" of *The Waste Land* are substantiated in *Four Quartets*. I found this final chapter the most rewarding in a rewarding book. Many critics have noted the relevance of the four classical elements to the thematic structure of Eliot's poem, but none before Lockerd have attempted a systematic reading of the *Quartets* based on the quintessence as the key that unlocks the whole. Each poem, he claims, reconciles the opposing elements in terms of Heraclitus's notion of fire as a spiritual phenomenon, that is, of aether. Even the dynamic interchange, of seasons in each quartet reflects the eternal pattern or Heraclitean *Logos* immanent in the world's flux. Lockerd demonstrates, moreover, that this aspect of old Greek philosophy connects in a meaningful way with the new physics. Both Einstein's theory of relativity and Heisenberg's uncertainty principle reintroduced the idea of mystery into the universe that scientific materialism had discarded. Quantum physicists, such as Heisenberg, even linked the Heraclitean element of fire with the transforming force science today calls "energy" (pp. 196, 243). Lockerd offers an intricate and probing interpretation of the *Quartets* based on this surprising collocation of classical and new physics which I cannot do justice to in a short review. I invite the reader to pay particular attention to the details and freshness of this argument. I have learned much from *Aethereal Rumours* and recommend it highly. It is a book that makes a major contribution to Eliot scholarship.

Dominic Manganiello
The University of Ottawa

20TH MEMORIAL LECTURE

Excerpts from "Eliot's Historical Contexts: Available Discourses"

Helen Vendler
Harvard University

For ordinary people, coming of age means making decisions regarding one's convictions, allegiances, and attachments, but for poets, coming of age requires as well finding one's own distinctive language, one's idiolect. Now that Christopher Ricks has published Eliot's early poems — those written between 1909 and 1917 — we are in a better position to understand how Eliot saw his own writing during those years, and how he trained himself as a poet. In talking about these "Curtain Raisers" — a phrase I borrow from Eliot himself — I don't mean to claim for most of them either greatness or literary permanence. Yet they all show an intense desire to find a set of available discourses through which to present very intractable material. That intractable material troubling the young Eliot's soul would include (in rough summary) a Puritanical suspicion of sex combined with romantic sexual longing, a high sense of the necessary historical conventions of poetry together with a conviction that poetry must belong to its contemporary moment; an intense intellectuality combined with a desire for drama (even melodrama); an inchoate religious sense without attachment to church; and a withering irony. The intellectuality contended against the sexuality, the irony against the melodrama, the conventionality against the romanticism. Though Eliot of course needed to find structures and genres suitable to his material, his first imaginative priority, given his obsession with voice, was to find discourses — extended systems of language — to project the qualities warring within him. Eliot, taking a cue from Browning, sometimes attached these aesthetic, sexual, and intellectual emotions to dramatic characters. Yet the inner lyric self wanted its say too, and that directly personal voice alternates, in the young poet, with the voices projected dramatically [...].

[For Eliot] there were simply no older poets in the English or American scene to adopt as models [. . .]. In Dante (revived in New England by Longfellow) Eliot found a discourse of theology both stricter and more intellectually complex than the discourse purveyed by his Protestant upbringing [...]. But Laforgue gave Eliot the crucial gift of idiom — of actual modern sequences and tones in which words might be satisfyingly assembled.

. . . It is sometimes forgotten that among the chief historical contexts for a young poet are the discourses to which he awakes when he becomes self-conscious about the use of language. First of all, every young writer finds himself historically situated in deep-rooted familial and educational discourses [...]. Eliot does not feel able to dispense entirely with the manner of expression mediated to him by his familial and educational culture; but he finds it especially inadequate — given its stoic reticence and linguistic formality — for the conveying of uneasy relations between the sexes and interior psychological torment. Besides his inherited familial and school discourses, the young writer hears around him the sociolect of his own generation, and has to decide how much of it he wishes to take abroad, individualize, and make his own [...]. Eliot's experiments in language through the *March Hare* poems. . . culminate in the first wholly successful ambitious poem he completes — a strange lyric, pretending to be a dramatic monologue, called "The Love-song of J. Alfred Prufrock [...]" as limiting to Eliot as those of Brahmin social life. . . [Eventually] Eliot — always an echo-chamber for all available discourses — finds inherited adult speech-patterns frustratingly unavailable for his poetic idiom just because they go on so predictably in his head — as the worn gramophone of memory rehearses its too well known aesthetic, social, philosophic, and romantic discourses.

Of course, Eliot could not go on pretending that his importunate problems — both of feeling and of expression — did not exist. If mockery of upper-class conversational veilleities did not suit, if burlesque

via the personae of his Laforguean marionette-clowns did not satisfy, he might turn to discourses, however vulgar, that were being voiced by his own generation. He could try to satirize modernity by experimenting with the catchy rhythm and arrant theatricality of the music-hall, an idiom which had entered his ear as insinuatingly as those of verandah conversations or French verse. . . Just as we have seen Eliot forsake the mannered discourse of a *cavalier servente* (in "Portrait of a Lady") and the empty promises expected of a young suitor (in "Conversations Galantes"), so we will see him forsake the dogmas and interrogations of clown and the jazz idiom of the music hall habitue. He cannot, however, abandon irony and a sense of absurdity, they were constitutive of his sensibility.

[...] [A]s a refuge from parodic irony on the one hand, and explicit bathos on the other, Eliot resorts, more successfully, to a middle discourse, which I will call the oblique. It is serious, but not propositional, instead of making statements such as "the world began to fall apart," it offers exclamations of feeling, or hazards a suggestive image, or turns from irony to reflectiveness [...]. Irony is of no use in the direct lyric representation of one's own pain [...]. Eliot dared, in a 1915 poem entitled "In the Department Store," to close a poem not with Laforguean irony, not even with an oblique image or exclamation, but with a bleak and serious statement [: ...] "Man's life is powerless and brief and dark / It is not possible for me to make her happy." Honesty for Eliot had to reach beyond impersonal philosophical meditation into something for which we have no name but intuition. [...] A moth, dancing in to the flame [in "The Burnt Dancer"], prophesies the eventual metaphysical discourse, and in part even the tetrameters, of the fire in "Little Gidding";

Who then devised the torment? Love.
Love is the unfamiliar Name
Behind the hands that wove
The intolerable shirt of flame
Which human power cannot remove.
We only live, only suspire,
Consumed by either fire or fore.

[...] Eliot... found a discourse... admitting to those aspects of his own experience that are unamenable to irony. His poetic idiom must stretch to encompass those aspects of himself, giving them sympathetic understanding, symbolic representation, and a lyric voice. Eliot's courage lay in evaluating the interminable dialectic of discourses historically available to him, and in deciding finally for modernity of image and diction and voice "thickened" by a historicized series of literary allusions. For him as a young lyric poet there could be, in terms of theme, no other time but now, no other place than here. In transcribing into his own first poetry the tormenting "human voices" that never left him alone, that drowned him when he woke to them, he finally invented, both with irony and without, a contemporary style amalgamating many discourses both given and sought-for. This hard-won and original idiolect becomes fully visible for the first time in "Prufrock" where, to a companion diminished from the Browning auditor to a Cheshire invisibility as ear alone, the protagonist aridly, truthfully, and lyrically, voices the Eliotic love-song — "Let us go then, you and I."

Other Eliot Sites?

Home is where one starts from. Now that the Society has met in Gloucester, a question arises: are there other "Eliot sites" where the Society would like to meet? Specifically, several persons at the Gloucester meeting wondered if a meeting might be held in England. Would members — given, say, three years' notice — journey to England (five members reside there) for the Society's annual meeting? (Would they travel to Stockholm, where Eliot received the Nobel Prize? someone asked.)

St. Louis being the permanent home of the Society, sentiment among Board members is for the annual meetings to continue to take place in St. Louis unless, as with Gloucester, a meeting can be arranged in a location which would enrich the study of Eliot's work.

The Society President would welcome hearing what members think about this matter. Her address appears elsewhere in this issue.

ABSTRACT OF PAPERS, 1999

"What You Get Married For?": Collaboration and Spousal Communication in Vivienne Eliot's "Letters of the Moment"

Richard Badenhausen
Marshall University

This essay places the collaboration of T. S. Eliot and his first wife Vivienne on *The Waste Land* and two "Letters of the Moment" for *The Criterion* in the context of Eliot's larger collaborative impulse, which I have located elsewhere as a central component of the poet's work. While the essay discusses briefly the husband-wife collaboration on *The Waste Land* (1922) to establish the parameters of this alliance, it focuses primarily upon two of Vivienne Eliot's 1924 contributions to her husband's literary journal which act out in print the deterioration of this marriage. While Vivienne Eliot's essays are often dismissed by critics as "flirtatious vignettes," mere "fragments" that seem "gratuitous," or simple "sketches," in the case of the two letters, they appear quite highly wrought, aggressively purposeful, and wrenchingly personal once readers attend to the dramatic structure suggested by the writer and set the pieces against the background of the collaborative dialogue that had existed between the two for a number of years.

First, the letters possess a complex ancestry, for they took shape over a series of drafts, appearing first as a very personal epistle which then became increasingly inventive in subsequent drafts through the addition of fictional details and eradication of all but one reference to actual named associates. Also, although the reports come from the pen of an "F. M.," a necessary camouflage if Vivienne Eliot were to publish in her husband's journal, the second installment of "Letters of the Moment" contains (unattributed) twenty lines by Eliot from an early version of the Popean couplets cut out of "The Fire Sermon" as well as two prose paragraphs actually written by Eliot. Thus the letters carry on multiple dialogues as they unfold. While they both are literally addressed to "my dear Volumnia," they can also be understood as a conversation between husband and wife, both of whom are operating within the confines of a collaborative narrative but doing so in increasingly antagonistic ways as they struggle with their problematic marriage. But in addressing her letters to Volumnia, Coriolanus's eloquent mother, Vivienne also positions herself implicitly in the role of Virgilia, who appears first in Shakespeare's play paired with her mother-in-law engaged in a dialogue in which she gloomily worries over her warrior husband's absence. This context that has gone unnoticed until now, as far as I can determine. I offer a fresh reading of these letters against the proper context of *Coriolanus*, and show how Vivienne's work essentially gives Virgilia a voice denied to her by the circumstances of that drama.

Eliot's own contributions to the essay serve as a jarring intrusion into the co-authored text and reveal each writer working at cross-purposes. His tone is much lighter as he adopts the voice of a female party-goer in a playful exercise of rhetorical cross-dressing. This contrast makes Vivienne's plaintive tone that much more acute. It ultimately shows that while collaborative alliances can serve the different needs of both

contributors, they can result in texts that threaten to break apart under the pressures of those conflicts.

Textual Variants of *The Waste Land*: "Final Authorial Intention" and the Poetics of Impersonality

Joon Bong
Yonsei University, Korea

T.S. Eliot's affiliation with Faber started in 1925 when he became a member of the then Faber and Gwyer's Board of Directors and his work has been published by the same firm since 1926. In spite of this symbiosis, however, the Faber editions of Eliot's work are fraught with textual variants and *The Waste Land* is the most striking example. The transmission of this quintessential modernist poem has produced numerous variants – corruptions, emendations, conscious revisions as well as mere typographical alterations – indicating that a text published in the twentieth century is not exempted from the contingency of the material world.

There is no definitive text of *The Waste Land*. In terms of Eliot's "authorial intention," the 1961 Faber edition – the Mardersteig edition – comes closest to being one, but the publication of this edition did not normalize the text of the poem. The subsequent Faber and Harcourt reprintings of the poem either entirely ignore or only partially incorporate the changes made in the Mardersteig edition. The concept of "final authorial intention" – the well-known editorial principle upheld by W.W. Greg, Fredson Bowers and more recently, G. Thomas Tanselle – does not help resolve the textual indeterminacy of *The Waste Land*; rather, the texts of *The Waste Land* help us see the problematic nature of the three terms – "final," "author(ial)," and "intention" – at more than one level. For example, the Faber edition of *Collected Poems 1909-1962* (1963) does not follow the Mardersteig edition in every detail; and the Mardersteig edition, in turn, undermines the concept of "author" because this "standard text" was published forty-one years after the initial appearance of *The Waste Land*, thus revealing a considerable distance between the Eliots of 1922 and 1963.

Eliot's status as the "author" of *The Waste Land* becomes more unstable when we investigate the poem's embryology registered in the Waste Land manuscripts. Not only the amount of excision but the stylistic and generic diversity of the manuscripts lead us to question the coherence of Eliot's intention; further, the extensive editorial involvements of Ezra Pound and Vivienne Eliot result in a composite or polyphonic text, which includes not only Eliot's lines and revisions, but the two collaborators' suggestions, marginalia and deletions as well. In short, Eliot the "author" is dispersed in a wide range of textual and social network, which always destabilizes the romantic notion of an "autonomous single author." This dispersal of the self is one of the ways in which Eliot's poetics of impersonality is embodied at the material level; it also parallels Eliot the philosopher's epistemology which radically questions the idea of a fixed, unified self.

Dancing in Fire: Love and Loss in "The Burnt Dancer"

Jewel Spears Brooker
Eckerd College

The symbols of dancing and fire run throughout Eliot's poetry, from the student poems of 1909-1915 to *Four Quartets*. Dancing is associated with Eros, with religion, and with wholeness; and fire with Eros, with religion, and with language. Both are associated with poetry. In two early poems, dating from late 1914 and early 1915, "The Burnt Dancer" and "The Death of Saint Narcissus," Eliot uses the two symbols together; in his last major poem, "Little Gidding," he refers to the

refining fire where one must move in measure, like a dancer. Eliot brought to this cluster his studies in primitive religion, in Dante, and in Milton. In all of these sources, the dance and fire are associated with the divine and with love, both carnal and divine.

"The Burnt Dancer" is one of several intense and sensuous religious poems written in 1914-15. In it, the narrator is an insomniac focusing on a moth flirting with a candle flame. As this fragile creature circles in a frenzied dance, singeing its wings as it kisses the flame, the narrator becomes increasingly fascinated. The epigraph, from *Inferno XIV*, associates the dance with primitive rituals and with the circle of desire in Dante's hell. In this circle, the Sodomites, who sinned against fruitfulness in life, are doomed to perpetually dance between falling fire and blazing sand. The first stanza of Eliot's poem is a meditation on love and dancing in a fiery wasteland. In the second stanza, the narrator enters the dance and questions the dancer about his origins and the meaning of his dance. The night-wanderer refuses to explain whence he came and why he dances, but the allusions, in this section of the poem primarily from *Paradise Lost*, reveal that he is a vagrant from Eden. In the third and final stanza, the silent dancer, desiring only the completion of his loss, submits himself to the flame.

The dance, however, does not end. The poem has a refrain in French—"O danse danse mon papillon noir!"—which parallels the dancing moth with the mad, dark thoughts of the narrator. As the acolyte of pain surrenders himself to the flames, the dance in the circle of the brain of the narrator goes on. In "The Death of Saint Narcissus," which could be considered a sequel to "The Burnt Dancer," the dancer on the burning sand becomes a "dancer to God." Speaking retrospectively, one could argue that the burnt dancer in these early poems is a Dionysian or Frazerian precursor of the Apollonian dancer who appears in "Little Gidding."

A Portrait of the Artist as a Bird-Watcher: 'Cape Ann'

Stefano Maria Casella
Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione, Milan

In 1902, T. S. Eliot received Frank Chapman's *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America* from his mother, Charlotte, as a 14th birthday present, now in the Modern Archive of King's College (Cambridge, U.K.). Twenty-six years later he added to his mother's handwritten dedication the following 'gloss': "In my mother's handwriting. A much coveted birthday present on my 14th birthday. T. S. Eliot, 18 June 1928." Within that span of a quarter century so many events—mainly sad ones—had happened to the poet, that one wonders what the then forty year old Eliot may have thought when he wrote that note, at a crucial moment his life as a man, as a husband, and as a poet, critic and man of letters; not to mention as a Christian and as an adoptive English subject. And also by looking at perhaps more famous books now in that same collection (the John Hayward Bequest), such as a copy of the Holy Bible, Apuleius' *Metamorphosen*, Petronius' *Saturae el Liber Priapeorum*, Homer's *Odyssey*, Hermann Hesse's *Blick ins Chaos: drei Aufsätze*, and the Sanskrit *Upanishad XXVIII*, one can surmise at the Chapman volume's fundamental importance to Eliot, the man and the poet.

However, my point is not to indulge in easy Romantic evocations; rather, it is to note how the poet remembered and employed the ornithologist's descriptions, and subjected them to poetic metamorphosis in the little masterpiece that is "Cape Ann," the fifth "Landscape." The importance of Chapman's *Handbook* is thus not limited to the 'note' to l. 357 of *The Waste Land*. Reading "Cape Ann" and the *Handbook* side by side, one discovers how the latter deeply influenced the former. From the very "incipit," ("O quick quick quick, quick hear the song-sparrow") to the penultimate line, with its image of the lonely sea-gull, all thirteen lines of "Cape Ann" are shaped after various passages of Chapman's book. Of course Eliot selects and emphasizes those elements that are

important and rejects those that are superfluous for his poem. Particular stress is laid on the sound pattern and on the music of the birds' songs, all derived from the ornithologist's tentative transcriptions, and from the poet's own memory. 'The music of poetry' (or Pound's 'melopoeia') is fully accomplished in "Cape Ann." Finally, through the *Handbook* and this brief poem, one can better understand the recurring 'bird-imagery' in the entire corpus of Eliot's poetry, both when it is projected into the mythological dimension (as in *The Waste Land*) and when it may be seen as emblematic of the poet's own difficult existence ("East Coker").

The Hawthorne Aspect of the *Coriolan* Poems

K. Narayana Chandran
University of Hyderabad

For T. S. Eliot, Nathaniel Hawthorne's art mattered a great deal for two important reasons. First, Hawthorne represented for Eliot an artist with "a very acute historical sense" ("The Hawthorne Aspect," *The Little Review* 5.4, August 1918, p. 50) which the younger poet considered essential for an artist who has the slightest claim to contemporary relevance. Second, Hawthorne was the first writer in the English tradition, according to Eliot, to exploit the relational dynamics of his characters in action; Hawthorne, argues Eliot, "is the one English-writing predecessor of James whose characters are aware of each other" ("The Hawthorne Aspect," p. 51. Eliot's emphasis).

This paper proposes a collateral reading of *Coriolan* fragments with "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," a reading that points up ideational and thematic convergences of the two texts. What warrants this reading, in my view, is the play on the appearance/reality motif in whose service both writers project the city as both the literal background and the symbolic scene. Furthermore, questions of political alienation and power on the one hand, and democratic passion and rebellion on the other seem to have exercised Eliot much as they had Hawthorne a century ago. To what civic responsibilities and ethical proprieties each text points ultimately may be open to debate, but the fact that the two American writers pondered these issues along much the same dialectic of fact and illusion is of interest to those who seek newer evidence of Eliot's controversial political ideology and of his relatively unexplored interest in Hawthorne's art.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE GLOUCESTER MEETING

Stefano Maria Casella
Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione, Milan

In the splendid late September scenery of Northern Massachusetts (Cape Ann, with the small cities of Gloucester and Rockport), the T. S. Eliot Society celebrated the 20th anniversary of its foundation, after nineteen annual meetings held in St. Louis, birthplace of the poet. The choice of Gloucester, a place with much attached meaning for Eliot's poetry (and life) could not have been more appropriate. The city and its institutions—the Lyceum, Sawyer Free Library and Historical Museum—were kind and warm. Equally unforgettable was the hospitality of Jerry Weist and Dana Hawkes at "The Downs," the house built in 1896 by Henry Ware Eliot on the slopes behind the beach at Eastern Point. There, "from the wide window towards the granite shore" a young boy in the first decade of this century watched the Ocean, listened to its "many voices," and meditated on its lesson.

Included with the customary scholarly sessions (from Friday 24 to Sunday 26 September) were a series of memorable non-academic events: a reception at "The Downs"; a visit to the Historical Museum of

Gloucester, which is mainly devoted to fishery and seafaring; an exhibition at the Sawyer Free Library, which houses some unpublished Eliot letters; a theatrical performance, "Dear Tom," with readings of Eliot's poems accompanied by music and dance inspired by it; and, to conclude the meeting, the much longed for boat tour of the Dry Salvages, where "we had the experience but missed *not* the meaning." However, the literary *clou* of the Twentieth Annual Meeting was the Memorial Lecture, delivered by Helen Vendler, A. Kingsley Porter University Professor of English at Harvard University, which was attended by hundreds of people in the Folly Cove Auditorium of the Historical Museum on Saturday, the 25th.

Professor Vendler expertly traced her "portrait of the artist as a young man" with great tact and sensitivity. Faithful to her title "Historical Contexts: Available Discourses", she stressed both the "historical context" *from* which Eliot came (family heritage of moral scrupulosity and interior torments, problematic relationship with women, often contorted sexual phantasies) and *in* which he happened to find himself --"a New Englander in the South West, and a South Westerner in New England," as he happened to remember in his late years. Among the "available discourses" he had to find and employ/exploit as a *débutant* poet were irony (and self-irony), satire, lyric, disappointment with an already impossible Romanticism, awareness of his own inadequacy, and the examples of his literary sources (French Symbolists, English Metaphysical poets, Robert Browning, Dante Alighieri). Thus his two early poetical collections, *Inventions of the March Hare* and *Prufrock and Other Observations*, number emblematic texts demonstrating the poet's efforts--often successful, sometimes not--in his search of "discourses" and "contexts". But it seems that the two key words in these titles are, respectively, "*Inventions*" (from the Latin "invenire" = to find, and "inventio", the very first step in the classic theory of rhetorics--followed by "dispositio" and "elocutio"), and "*Observations*" (easier etymology, always from the Latin "observare" = to observe, to take note, to pay attention to / to keep one's mind on). The poet needs to find objects, scenes, characters, episodes and ideas to be carefully observed (and sometimes "portayed"), or conversely, carefully to observe them to find ("invenire") the ones most meaningful for his poetry ("Ur-objective correlatives"?). Be as it may, within this dialectic between "Inventions" and "Observations" all his early poetry (his early rhetorical discourse?) finds its articulation and expression.

As regards the six main papers delivered on Friday 24, all were remarkable because of their wide--and really enjoyable--variety, always coupled with masterly critical rigour while remaining within the thematic guidelines suggested in this year's title: "T.S.Eliot and New England: Historical Contexts." Texts and contexts from almost all of Eliot's poetry were carefully examined, from his two groundbreaking works of 1914 and 1922: "The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock" and *The Waste Land*; from his "minor" poetry: "Ariel Poems" ("Coriolan Poems", to be precise) and *Landscapes* ("Cape Ann"); from his early works in *Inventions of the March Hare* ("The Love Song of St. Sebastian", "The Death of St. Narcissus", "The Burnt Dancer", "Suite Clownesque", "Caprices", "Goldfish", etc.) to his final masterpiece *Four Quartets* ("The Dry Salvages" VI and a bit of "Little Gidding"), not to mention "Whispers of Immortality." Attention was also paid to Eliot's non-poetic texts: the literary journal edited by him, *The Criterion*, and his essays and lectures in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* and *After Strange Gods*. And each approach was original, distinct, and deeply serious in its research. Problems of poetical genesis and "studium variorum" (Joon-So Bong on *The Waste Land*); analysis and comparison of the literary sources and influences (Grover Smith on "Whispers of Immortality", Narayan Chandran on the "Coriolan Poems"); wide thematic survey of many of Eliot's early and late poems and their literary connections (Jewel Spears Brooker); close reading of single poems (Stefano M.

Casella on "Cape Ann"); marital troubles and the complex dynamics of collaboration and competition with his first wife Vivienne (Richard Badenhause). These were the main and most memorable features of the papers delivered.

The concluding panel, "T. S. Eliot's Gloucester," offered six brief talks on several aspects of this topic. Nancy Hargrove, sought to reconstruct from various sources (letters from Eliot, Pound and Olson) the likely source of the fourth section of "The Dry Salvages," the short lyric prayer addressed to the "Lady whose shrine stands on the promontory." Is it the "Lady of the Good Voyage" in Gloucester, or "Notre Dame de la Garde" at Marseille? Hargrove suggested that Eliot "merged multiple sources" from his childhood and adulthood and must have thought not of a particular church, but of the Church in general. Shyamal Bagchee dealt with the necessarily slippery passage from Modernism to Post-modernism in connection with Eliot's poetry and criticism in the Mid-thirties. Specifically he commented on the *Landscapes* and the essays of *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, and *After Strange Gods*. Particularly remarkable was Bagchee's fresh interpretation of the last *Landscape*, "Cape Ann," as a troubled emblem of a moment of slippage between different places and stages of the poet's life. Art historian Myriam Braverman discussed a related topic: the presence of American artists in Gloucester in the second half of the Nineteenth century. They included Fitz Hugh Lane, Winslow Homer and above all Stuart Davis and George Singer Sargeant. All these painters presented a particularly idyllic picture of this town, notwithstanding the constant presence of tragic themes, such as shipwrecks, which they completely ignored. Prudence Fish, an expert on local architecture and local geography, spoke of the "time of transition" at the beginning of the century, when "The Downs" was built. Her precise reconstruction of the busy and lively Gloucester of that period, and of its transformations due to the fishing industry and the large-scale immigration of Portuguese and Italians was interesting. The excavation of rock quarries and the cutting of forests to build new houses in those early days of the town recalled the memorable words from "East Coker": "old stones to new buildings, old timber to new fires." Finally Joseph Garland, historian of Gloucester, offered people's recollections of T. S. Eliot as a boy in Gloucester. The young poet established few personal links: therefore much of this reconstruction had to be speculative. The speaker offered his own imaginary portrait of young Eliot, based on the few existing photographs. He was a shy, reserved boy, who tended to be solitary and thoughtful, and walked the moors, fields and the beaches looking for shells and dreaming of the fishermen's perilous adventures. Later, following his long "exile" in Europe, Eliot came to Gloucester briefly in 1958, revisited "The Downs," and found in the Church of "Our Lady of the Good Voyage" an atmosphere similar to that in "Notre Dame de la Garde" at Marseille.

The 20th Annual Meeting in Gloucester was a perfect blend of academic sessions, serious and intelligent cultural events, and moving encounters--emphasizing both this particular anniversary and the close bond between the poet and this place. As Donald Davie wrote at the conclusion of a famous essay on the Provençal landscapes of Pound's poetry, so also for Eliot can it be said that "place and the spirit of place is the inspiration of more poetry than we nowadays like to admit: and to do that poetry justice the critic needs to turn himself into a tourist." (*Paideuma* I,1 (1972) : 62). The truth of this wise remark has been proven also by David Huisman through his sensitive and captivating slide program "If You Came This Way: Landscapes of the Heart in Four Quartets," exploring and interpreting the new and definitive cardinal points of Eliot's final masterpiece.

This quick and highly personal survey is probably guilty of omissions and errors. But, if one is to write an epilogue upon this unique occasion, it seems that the most appropriate words must involve praise

for the scholars, and gratitude for the organizers—from the President to the Secretary to the Board of Directors of the Society, and our local hosts in Gloucester. It is now a time for recollections, for fond memories, and for Eliot's poetry again: to re-read it in the light of fresh interpretations, to meditate on it, to live with it. Let me quote the 'finale' of "East Coker" which points to the New England coast of Massachusetts: "in my end is my beginning." To conclude on a wish for the future, perhaps the Society will manage to meet in the other three places "left to discover," the settings of the other three *Quartets*: Burnt Norton, East Coker and Little Gidding. The successful and memorable precedent set at Cape Ann and the Dry Salvages renders the dream possible: let us all "fare forward."

SOCIETY PEOPLE: Nancy Hargrove has been given Mississippi State University's 1999 Outstanding Humanist Award. The award carries a cash prize of \$ 1000.00, and is cosponsored by MSU and Mississippi Humanities Council. In late October Hargrove delivered the Award Lecture on the topic, "The Great Parade: Interdisciplinary Influences from Paris and London in the Works of T.S. Eliot." > Oxford University Press has recently published Ronald Schuchard's new book, *Eliot's Dark Angel: Interstices of Life and Art*. > In September, *Dictionary of Missouri Biography* published Linda Wyman's 1700-word entry on T.S. Eliot.

"**Gloucester Follow-up**": Jerry Weist and Dana Hawkes, our hosts at The Downs, would appreciate receiving duplicates of photos taken at the reception (18 Edgemoor Road, Gloucester MA 01930). They prefer 4 x 6 prints, to match a set of that size already sent.

The Gloucester Lyceum & Sawyer Free Library has prepared a limited edition of its poster of young Tom reading in a rocking chair on the Downs porch. These computer-generated prints (not Xerox copies) on 8 1/2 x 11 card stock are available for \$5.00 each plus S&H. Send your check (in US funds) for \$5.00 each (+\$1.50 domestic, \$2.50 foreign, for S&H of up to two copies), payable to David Huisman, 1134 Giddings SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506. Any remaining copies will be available at next year's meeting in St. Louis.

Copies of *Highlights from the Julius M. Cruse [T.S. Eliot] Collection*, the catalogue of the exhibition held at the General Theological Seminary, New York, April through October, 1998, are available by contacting Joseph C. Baillargeon, Post Office Box 23099, Seattle, Washington 98102 (telephone 206-322-8852; email - arbjcb@halcyon.com). The 114 page catalogue, prefaced by several essays, describes bibliographically and historically 93 items including Eliot first editions, letters, and other documents, many of which are depicted in the catalogue's numerous photographs, some of which are in color. The quarto-size catalogue is bound in stiff paper wraps illustrated in color with the covers of several of the titles. Price to T.S. Eliot Society members, \$35 all costs included.

Submissions Invited

The Editor invites suitable submissions, proposals for book reviews, notes, and relevant news items for publication in the *Newsletter*. Copy sent in electronic format is particularly appreciated.

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WITH SOCIETY MATTERS**

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