

XIV

AQ2

Modern Literature

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This chapter has eight sections 1. General. 2. Fiction Pre-1945; 3. Fiction Post-1945; 4. Drama Pre-1950; 5. Drama Post-1950; 6. British Poetry Pre-1950; 7. British Poetry Post-1950; 8. Modern Irish Poetry. Section 1 is by Shawna Ross; section 2(a) is by Chris Mourant; section 2(b) will resume in 2023; section 2(c) is by Tiana Fischer; section 2(d) will resume in 2023; section 2(e) is by Joshua Phillips; section 3(a) is by Katherine Parsons; section 3(b) is by Samuel Cooper; section 4(a) is by Sophie Stringfellow; section 4(b) is by Gustavo A. Rodriguez Martín; section 5 is by Graham Saunders; section 6(a) will resume in 2023; section 6(b) is by Joshua Richards; section 7 will resume in 2023; section 8 is by Jack Quin.

1. General

In 2020, modernist literary criticism, by and large, split its attention between two superficially divergent foci: on the one hand, a renewed scrutiny of the fundamental mechanics of reading and writing, and on the other, an urgent attention to issues of social justice related to gender, sexuality, environmentalism, and human rights. Refreshingly, formalist monographs and collections reanimated apparently tabled debates over close reading, description, irony, annotation, and the like, opening the field for future criticism that combines both threads by tying in these stylistic concerns with social activism. Also flourishing is field-redefining boundary-work that revisits transitions between realism, modernism, and post-modernism, in the process placing a spotlight on mid-century modernism. Counter to the tendency of transnational scholarship in the past twenty years or so to compare works created before the Second World War with those from the 1980s and beyond—effectively creating a large chronological gap that contradicts assumptions that modernism's temporal boundaries have been fully

6. British Poetry Pre-1950

(a) General

Due to Covid-19 conditions it was not possible to produce this section for the previous and current issues of *Year's Work*. The next issue will cover critical work in this field for 2020 and 2021.

(b) T.S. Eliot

While the most public events in the field of Eliot studies in 2020—the release of the Emily Hale letters and the response to the *Cats* film—were not within the domain of published scholarship, T.S. Eliot criticism was still quite robust during the pandemic, despite no publication from *The T.S. Eliot Annual*. The primary activities were a continued and sustained interest in Eliot's religious work, a focus on the mid-2010s #MeToo movement and other topical political interests, and, as might be expected, continued examinations of intertextual connections between Eliot and other authors.

Before launching into these, a brief word on the opening of the Emily Hale letters is necessary. Emily Hale left T.S. Eliot's intimate letters to her to the Firestone Library at Princeton University under condition that they not be unsealed until 2 January 2020. At the release, a slew of journalistic responses flocked through the media. The best source, though, for those unwilling or unable to make the pilgrimage is the sumptuously lengthy discussion of the letters by Frances Dickey in her article 'May the Record Speak: The Correspondence of T.S. Eliot and Emily Hale' (*TCL* 66:iv[2020] 431–62). Dickey's live blog of the letters in the early part of 2020, from which this article grew, was the primary means by which many scholars, myself included, experienced these letters, and regardless of the direction that the correspondence may take in later criticism, it seems likely that this article will always have importance as a tone-setter for all later discussions. Additionally, a number of scholarly early responses were gathered throughout the year in the International T.S. Eliot Society's annual newsletter, but the peer-reviewed versions of these articles, published in *The T.S. Eliot Annual*, will be reviewed in the 2021 *YWES*.

The first primary area, including the only published monograph on Eliot including 2020, was in the field of religion and literature. The criticism in this area shows scholarship increasingly interested—and more enabled by the publication of the *Complete Prose*—in exploring Eliot's theological views in depth. First, the monograph will be discussed before passing to shorter works. As the monograph's author, I have refrained from evaluation and heavy quotation out of decency.

Joshua Richards, *T.S. Eliot's Ascetic Ideal*, published by Brill, charts an intellectual history of T.S. Eliot's engagement with concepts of religious asceticism. The author recapitulates Eliot's own reading on the subject, preserved in Harvard's Houghton library, and uses these Victorian treatises on mystical theology and religious philosophy, the vast majority unmined by scholars, to explore Eliot's oeuvre. The earliest poems show Eliot satirizing his school reading and combining the saints' lives he read into composite, satirical portraits in poems

such as ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’ and ‘The Death of St Narcissus’. As his poetic career continues, Eliot explores the ascetic ideal through both his criticism and poetry. In his critical prose, Eliot’s reading shows a gradual entanglement of asceticism with a desire for artistic, religious, and political order long before his famed 1927 pronouncement of himself as ‘classicist in religion, royalist in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion’ (in Schuchard, Dickey, and Formicelle, eds, *The Collected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, vol. 3 [2015], p. 513). Meanwhile, poems such as ‘Gerontion’, *The Waste Land*, and *The Hollow Men* contain brooding meditations on sin, isolation, and an absent *logos* as an exploration of ascetic failure suggested by his readings on mysticism. This sustained engagement suggests that, long before his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism in 1926, Eliot thought profoundly on asceticism, and that his conversion is not as sharp a break as sometimes thought—something reflected in other 2020 publications like Lockerd and Burdge. After his conversion, his work, both in the theatre and in poetry, shows continued engagement with the ascetic ideal. His first attempts at drama employ an Aristophanic model for drama; as Eliot knew, Aristophanic plays are structured as a battle between competing principles. Partially in *Sweeney Agonistes* and fully in *Murder in the Cathedral*, Eliot dramatizes a world-denying asceticism as the victorious principle. Finally, in *Four Quartets*, he returns to asceticism as part of a Christian mysticism, now fully embraced. In a field where hunting for allusions has never passed from vogue, this work has many contributions, even to scholars uninterested in Eliot and religion. A few of these had already appeared in Ricks and McCue’s 2015 *The Collected Poems of T.S. Eliot*, but most were unpublished. In a wide variety of contexts from the beginning of his career to his end, Eliot bears the influence of his early education on religious mysticism, and elucidative references are detailed throughout.

There are three other major contributions to the study of Eliot’s religious thought published this year. The first, by Martin Lockerd, is ‘T.S. Eliot’s Decadent (Anglo)-Catholicism’ (in his *Decadent Catholicism and the Making of Modernism*, pp. 75–108). This chapter deepens Ronald Schuchard’s earlier research in *Eliot’s Dark Angel* [1999] on Eliot’s connection with the authors of the *fin de siècle*, particularly Aubrey Beardsley and Lionel Johnson. A key aspect of this analysis is seeing their connection to Catholicism and Decadence as interwoven, and Lockerd convincingly argues for Eliot as an extension of this phenomenon. The second is Jewel Spears Brooker’s important article, ‘Good and Evil in Eliot’s Letters to Emily Hale’ (*The Glass* 33[2020] 19–25) on Eliot and Hale’s relationship. Brooker explores the spiritual problems that immediately beset the pair’s resumed relationship in the early 1930s. Beyond biographical references, this details Eliot’s teaching and reading on good and evil as a mechanism for spiritual influence and charts Eliot’s anxiety over his own influence on her and others. It shows, clearly, how religious differences were a key aspect of the failure of the relationship. The third, by Rick de Villiers, is ‘Mr Eliot’s Christmas Morning Service: Participation, Good Will, and Humility in *Murder in the Cathedral*’ (*L&T* 34:ii[2020] 166–83). A rich and detailed analysis of the sermon in *Murder in the Cathedral*, this article situates that within the homiletic tradition. The section analysing Eliot’s in light of Lancelot Andrewes’s sermons is

particularly noteworthy. The comparison between the use of the King James versus the Douay-Rheims Bible translations is both astute and fascinating.

There are also three additional works, more limited in scope, that offer overviews, readings, and explanations of Eliot's religious work and thought. The first is David Martin's chapter 'Eliot and Auden' (in his *Christianity and 'the World': Secularization Narratives through the Lens of English Poetry A.D. 800 to the Present*, pp. 108–17), which is an amiable and accessibly written overview of Eliot and Auden as poetic figures, with a focus mainly on their religious lives. The relation of these primarily biographical overviews to secularization narratives is far from clear within this particular chapter at least. The next is 'Death in Life at Christmas: T.S. Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*' (*Logos* 23:i[2020] 23–34) by Gerald P. Boersma. While primarily formed from antiquated research materials, this is a very nuanced close reading of the poem, and one that offers thoughtful nuggets amid a very serviceable overview. Boersma's work is an eminently teachable article. Then, there is Roger Kojecky's article 'T.S. Eliot's Troubled Spiritual Journey' (*The Glass* 32[2020] 40–8). This thoughtful and effective summary of known public facts about Eliot's spiritual life serves as a handy reference for those looking for a summation, including revelations from the Hale archive.

In addition to these, there were two additional articles published on Eliot's religious thought. Firstly, Edward Upton's article 'T.S. Eliot's *Ars Religiosa*: Transmigration and Faith in Knowledge and Experience' (*JR* 100:i[2020] 103–18), similarly to Lockerd's, sees Eliot's work in the mid-1910s as prefiguring his conversion. In this case, Upton's focus is on the use of religious language and imagery in Eliot's doctoral dissertation. Lastly, there is 'Physics as Spiritual Exercise: T.S. Eliot and Natural Contemplation' (*C&L* 69:iv[2020] 568–86) by Alexander Burdge. This piece shows that the various concerns of Eliot scholarship are not disconnected. Brimming with eclectic sources from Marcus Aurelius to modern theorists, this article seeks to read Eliot's natural imagery as a part of spiritual contemplation. It designs to be both a spiritual and an ecocritical reading.

On particular display in Eliot criticism in 2020 was a long-simmering and anguished exploration of how to integrate a study of modernist poetry, and Eliot specifically, with the political passions and important social justice causes of recent years. Megan Quigley's preface to the republished and re-edited cluster of essays entitled 'Reading *The Waste Land* with the #MeToo Generation' in a special edition of *Modernism/Modernity* serves well to introduce not only that essay, but this entire current in Eliot criticism. In frank honesty, she wonders, on the basis of both his life and writing, whether T.S. Eliot 'now, in the era of #MeToo', should 'be "cancelled"' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020]). Yet, to her admitted surprise, '[m]any of [her] students are becoming more, rather than less, riveted by Eliot's writing', and this cluster of essays as well as the others ponder 'how and in what context' Eliot's work should be investigated.

The actual cluster of essays originated as a panel at the annual meeting of the International T.S. Eliot Society and the essays are focused, for the most part, on *The Waste Land*. As Quigley highlights in her preface, there are essays focused on pedagogy as well as broader responses on the poet himself and other social justice movements. The scholarly and personal feud between Quigley and Sir

Christopher Ricks waged directly in print and indirectly via Rohman's and Delsandro's essays in the cluster is outwith the scope of our review.

The pedagogy grouping is dominated by Anita Patterson's essay 'Confronting Racism and *The Waste Land* in the Era of #MeToo' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020] n.p.). In this thoughtful work she briefly recounts the history of Gwendolyn Brooks's engagement with modernist poetics. Conflating the more recent Black Lives Matter movement with the discussion, she suggests reading Eliot, Richard Wright, Ezra Pound, and Brooks together to 'address the pressing issues of racial and gender violence and inequality, while also teaching empathy'. Another item from the cluster is Cécile Varry's almost poetic meditation "'What is that noise?' / "The wind under the door": *The Waste Land*, Repetition, and Feminist Pedagogy' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020] n.p.). In it, she muses on the role of repetition in becoming attuned to the images of sexual violence in *The Waste Land* and how to use this in teaching. 'Hurry Up Please Its Time' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020] n.p.) by Lesley Wheeler is the last of the pedagogically focused essays, and is a reflection on her attempt to use the original cluster of essays in the classroom while teaching *The Waste Land*.

The second grouping of the cluster reflects on broader concerns. The most germane essay in this is Frances Dickey's 'Give, Sympathize, Control: T.S. Eliot and Emily Hale' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020] n.p.), which builds on her work with the Emily Hale letters. With a genuinely sensitive and even-handed approach to the topic, Dickey provides a succinct summation in light of the prevailing issues of gender apparent in the relationship between Emily Hale and T.S. Eliot. The article neither sanitizes the challenge presented by this relationship, nor is it the sort of public pillorying of many journalistic responses. The next essay of this group is Layne Parish Craig's '#DisabilityToo: Bringing Disability into a Modernist #MeToo Moment' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020] n.p.). Craig's essay, primarily on James Joyce and Flannery O'Connor, only briefly touches on Eliot, highlighting Vivienne's insertion of a line into *The Waste Land* and her role as a figure of disability. Returning to Quigley's initial question, Aimee Armande Wilson, in 'We Need a Movement, Not Just a Moment: Modernism and #MeToo' (*Mo/Mo* 5:ii[2020] n.p.) speculates on the responsibilities of literary critics in light of social justice issues, but there is little direct focus on Eliot's work.

Beyond that specific cluster of essays, Quigley's concerns are represented throughout the field of Eliot studies in ways not simply associated with the #MeToo movement. Firstly, there is a widespread desire to integrate Eliot into current political and social concerns, particularly environmental and gender/sexuality issues. This impulse is most nakedly displayed in Paul Oppenheimer's and Simon During's essays. The first, 'Eliot as Revolutionary' (in his *Poetry and Freedom: Discoveries in Aesthetics, 1985–2018*, pp. 1–6), is a relaxed and informal chapter that seeks not only to distance Eliot from Pound but to claim the politically conservative Eliot as a revolutionary. Oppenheimer's assertion centres on the claim that Eliot 'alters how we listen and read' with his 'deliberately contrived violations of time and naturalism' (pp. 3, 5). Similarly, reflective, if more agonized and anxious, is Simon During's 'A Christian Culture? Thinking about T.S. Eliot's Late Works in these Dangerous Times' (*TJES* 12:i[2020] 10–18), which confronts the challenge posed in reading Eliot's late cultural works in light of the author's perception of anti-democratic forces rising in the world.

Secondly, there were also several chapters that explored *The Waste Land*, in particular from the viewpoint of queer theory. Beginning as a response to Lucas Crawford's reading of *The Waste Land* in the inaugural issue of the *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, Matz's chapter 'Queer Surrealism' (in David James, ed., *Modernism and Close Reading*, pp. 133–51) is a theory- and citation-laden analysis, centring on Tiresias as a transgendered figure. Posthumously edited, Sam See's lecture, 'The Cruelty of Breeding: Queer Time in *The Waste Land*' (in See et al., *Queer Natures, Queer Mythologies*, pp. 258–68), explores *The Waste Land* as a queer text through the appearance of its 'nonreproductive sexual figures' drawn from 'history and myth' (p. 258). Its insights into the mythological backdrop of *The Waste Land* are fascinating beyond its direct thesis. Ben Glaser's chapter, 'Penty Ladies: T.S. Eliot, Satire, and the Gender of Modern Meter' (in *Modernism's Metronome: Meter and Twentieth-Century Poetics*, pp. 56–80), investigates 'Eliot's early association of meter with decadent or effeminate culture' and aligns 'meter, satire, and misogyny' in these early works (p. 60).

Thirdly, there have been many ecocritical investigations of Eliot in recent years including Jeremy Diaper's 2019 monograph; however, this was still a fertile area, to continue the agricultural punning. First is Andrew Kalaidjian's chapter 'Waste Lands: Dark Pastoral in T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden, and Djuna Barnes' (in his *Exhausted Ecologies: Modernism and Environmental Recovery*, pp. 102–39). This chapter, primarily on Djuna Barnes, traces environmental literature through images of the pastoral in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. The information on environmental activism of the period is itself very interesting and detailed. This is not merely an area of investigation for modernism, but ecocritical readings have, evidently, become part of the broader literary tradition. This is exemplified in Constante González Groba's article 'Internal Colonialism and the Wasteland Theme in Ron Rash's *Serena*' (*Atlantis* 42:ii[2020] 119–37). This article analyses the literary allusions in Appalachian author Ron Rash's 2008 novel *Serena*, including a brief discussion of *The Waste Land*, in an ecocritical light. It also highlights the continued afterlife and complexity of Eliot's work, and would be just as at home in the next section.

It is, of course, no surprise that intertextuality is an ongoing area of study on T.S. Eliot. As a procedural matter, I should note that the presentation and evaluation here is centred on those helpful to Eliot studies specifically. Two works are at the forefront; the first is Alex Davis's 'Murders in the Cathedral and the Maze: The Case-Books of T.S. Eliot, J.J. Connington and Others in the Golden Age of Detective Fiction' (*YES* 50[2020] 116–31), which is a fascinating and amply researched excursion into the passion for detective fiction among the high-modernist writers. Beyond simply the documentation of interest, Davis tracks the appearance of genre conventions associated with detective fiction through Eliot's work. The second is Martin Eisner's chapter, 'Dante and the Spectrum of Medieval Vernacular Poetry, or, How Giacomo and Joyce, Brunetto and Eliot, and Bertran and Pound Rhyme' (in Christopher Kleinhenz and Kristina Olson, eds., *Approaches to Teaching Dante's Divine Comedy*, pp. 88–95). As might be obvious from the title, this chapter is primarily focused on pedagogy. However, the brief section on Eliot's use of Brunetto Latini's work, especially his prosody, in *Little Gidding* is fascinating and a seemingly new contribution to a corner of Eliot studies otherwise well trodden.

There are also, seemingly coincidentally, two different articles associating the nightingale and the lyric in Eliot's work published this year, and both feature dizzying swathes of literary history and weighty theorizations of the lyric. The first is Hunter Dukes's 'Jug Songs: Acoustic Enclosure from Ovid to Eliot' (*CL* 72:iv[2020] 418–38). Dukes, in his own words, seeks 'to redeem the nightingale' as a poetic image (p. 419). His sweeping analysis, with *The Waste Land* as opening touchstone, pursues the image of the bird and its song through many appearances. The second, and perhaps more interesting for its tighter focus, is 'What the Nightingale Sings: History, Lyric, and the Modernist Epic' (*ELH* 87:i[2020] 245–72) by Jeremy Stevens. While still with many of the interests shown by Dukes, Stevens centres on modernism, beginning his analysis with 'Sweeney Among the Nightingales' and proceeding to *The Waste Land* and Pound's Canto XX.

The next sort of intertextual work to consider are those pairing Eliot with another author, and 2020 brought a robust outpouring. The first is the chapter 'Between Men: Eliot, Pound, and Fresca' (in *Nancy Cunard: A Perfect Stranger*, pp. 75–100). Jane Marcus's biographical study is an overt attempt to recover Nancy Cunard's reputation, and this chapter details her interaction with Eliot and Pound. Whatever its merits regarding Cunard scholarship, Marcus's sweeping pronouncements about Eliot's attitudes towards women, unfortunately, never have notes attached, and no discussion of Eliot's championing of Djuna Barnes and Marianne Moore is included. Additionally, no Eliot materials definitively postdate the year 2000. At the other end of the spectrum is John Zubizarreta's impressively researched article 'Eliot Intertextualities in Carlos Fuentes's *The Death of Artemio Cruz*' (*StAmCult* 42:i[2019] 112–27), which was published in 2019 but not received in time for last year's *YWES*. Zubizarreta documents extensively Eliot's influence on mid-century Mexican author Carlos Fuentes. There is certainly enough evidence to prove Fuentes's knowledge of Eliot, but direct allusions and strong corollaries are thin; the author draws a convincing web of less tangible ways that Eliot appears in the novel. Another comparative article was Laura Blomvall's "Yet the frame held": Poetic Form and the Bombing of London during World War II' (*JML* 43:iv[2020] 72–90). While the precise justification for it is not readily apparent, this article presents a comparison between images of bombing and poetic formal analysis in the later work of H.D. and Eliot. A more esoteric comparison is found in "Sound, substantial flesh and blood": T.S. Eliot's *East Coker* and Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*' (*TCL* 66:i[2020] 59–78) by Lisa Mullen. This article tests resonances between Eliot's 'East Coker' and the 1943 propaganda film *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*. Detailed, albeit non-religious, readings of 'East Coker', and extensive meditations on theories of poetry and film, extend the applicability of this article, almost to the point of obscuring its primary, and primarily thematic, focus. Then there is Imed Nsiri's article, 'The Question of Tradition between Eliot and Adūnīs' (*JArabL* 51:iii/iv[2020] 215–37), which examines how Eliot, whose 'influence on Arabic modernist poetry cannot be overemphasized' (p. 217), and Adūnīs—the pen name of Syrian-Lebanese writer 'Alī Ahmad Sa'īd—both explore cultural tradition and liminal figures. While Nsiri emphasizes *The Waste Land*, as most intertextual articles do, the primary focus, is on resolving the poets' varying attitudes to cultural

tradition. Last, there are two briefer articles. The first is Christ Williams's 'Fake News: A Note on T.S. Eliot and Byron' (*ByronJ* 48:i[2020] 71). Williams lays out a genuinely insightful allusion to *Don Juan* in 'Little Gidding' despite Eliot's protesting disavowal from Byron's influence. The second is Jeffrey Meyers's 'The Shock of Recognition: Conrad's Influence on Eliot' (*Style* 54:ii[2020] 165–71). Meyers's goal is to contextualize the citations of Conrad found in the 2015 *Collected Poems of T.S. Eliot*.

The second type of intertextual essay is those employing concepts from other authors and disciplines, and there were a smaller number of these. The first considered is Ulrika Maude's brief but interesting article 'Second Nature' (*OLR* 42:ii[2020] 242–6), which employs short selections from Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Joyce's *Ulysses* as exemplars of the uncanniness found in automaticity as defined by Freud from his reading of early twentieth-century psychologist and doctor Ernst Jentsch. The second is 'The Narrative Style and Voices in *The Waste Land*' (*TPLS* 10[2020] 1148–52) by Feiyue Zhang, who employs Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's theory of narrative fiction to suggest that *The Waste Land* is a narrative poem. The third, Scott Freer's 'Remediating "Pruferk"' (*Arts* 9:iv[2020] 104), serves as the author's follow-up to his prior work, a 2019 essay entitled 'Screening Prufrock' (p. 104). This essay looks at depictions of Eliot's poem in five different popular media forms, including short films and a comic strip. The fourth is Raed Dakhil Kareem's 'A Cognitive Poetic Analysis of "La Figlia Che Piange" by T.S. Eliot' (*Al-Adab* 132:ii[2020] 135–48). Kareem applies text-world theory, a relatively recent application of cognitive psychology to literature, with Eliot's 'La Figlia che Piange' as a test case. Similarly interdisciplinary, the fifth is 'A Sartrean Analysis of J. Alfred Prufrock: Presentation given at the Society for Existential Analysis Annual Conference, London, 9 November 2019' (*ExAnal* 31:ii[2020] 286–95) by Jamie Giles. This paper examines how 'Sartre's theories and their psychotherapeutic application' (p. 292) can be applied to the protagonist of Eliot's poem as a pseudo-patient. Last, and most unique, is Alistair Brown's 'How *The Waste Land* Furthers an Understanding of Sustainable Property Management' (*Property Management* 38:i[2020] 142–56). This is an interdisciplinary social-scientific study that finds, throughout the poem, imagery associated with sustainable property management concepts.

The final area of Eliot criticism to explore are those works that do not conveniently fall into any of the aforementioned trends. These works, primarily Eliot-focused chapters in broader studies, are nonetheless rewarding and insightful. First, there are two chapters from *Poetry and the Dictionary*. The first, by Charlotte Brewer, "'When I feel inclined to read poetry I take down my Dictionary': Poets and Dictionaries, Dictionaries and Poets' (in Andrew Blades and Piers Pennington, eds., *Poetry and the Dictionary*, pp. 25–56) is a wide-ranging chapter which explores, from numerous directions, the relationship between poets and dictionaries. Perhaps the most interesting portion is her discussion of the way lexicographers use poetry quotations. While no poet is a major focus, Eliot, MacDiarmid, and Pound are the most examined. The second, by volume co-editor Piers Pennington, is 'Proper Names, the Dictionary, and the Poetry of Experiment' (pp. 151–74) which, with Eliot as a key component, is a survey of the use of proper nouns, particularly personal names, in a variety of poets.

Second, there are two remaining and highly technical articles on Eliot. The first is Michelle Taylor's article "(In)Discreet Modernism: T.S. Eliot's Coterie Poetics." (*Coll* 47:i[2020] 34–64). With the *Noctes Binaniana*, a collection of personal poems by Eliot and his publishing friends, as its core text, Taylor offers an 'examin[ation] of Eliot's understudied private allusions and coterie practices' (p. 36). In particular, this is a fulsome and interesting study on the context of that work. Another, perhaps less rewarding, is 'Exteriority and Interiority in T.S. Eliot's Graduate Work' (*JML* 44:i[2020] 1–19) by Michael Bedsole. In it, he argues for a more nuanced understanding of Eliot's view of subject-object relations derived from nuanced readings of his graduate work and early philosophical prose pieces. He then applies this understanding to Eliot's poetry.

Thirdly, Elizabeth Outka, in her, unfortunately timely, work *Viral Modernism: The Influenza Pandemic and Interwar Literature*, has a chapter, 'A Wasteland of Influenza' (pp. 142–60), which analyses the way that Eliot in *The Waste Land*, consciously or otherwise, 'grants a voice to widespread experiences' of the devastating 1919 influenza pandemic (p. 144). This work was published late in 2019, presumably for that centennial, but not received in time for that year's *YWES*. Her chapter flows in two parts: the poem's form mirrors the experience of the 1919 influenza epidemic and the poem's 'capturing widespread experiences' in its aftermath (p. 145). Fourthly, in the opening chapter (pp. 23–48) of *Literary Drowning: Postcolonial Memory in Irish and Caribbean Writing*, Stephanie Pocock Boeninger utilizes three authors—Shakespeare, Milton, and Eliot—to 'demonstrate the intense anxieties about memorialization that surround drowning in the western literary tradition' (p. 24). These form a background to which postcolonial literature, the primary subject of the book, responds. Finally, there is John Carey's chapter 'Inventing Modernism: Eliot, Pound' (in his *A Little History of Poetry*, pp. 215–21), which brief introduction and overview of Eliot and Pound as poets offers a historical overview focused on what other poets use and, as such, all but ignoring Eliot's work after 1930.

7. British Poetry Post-1950

Due to Covid-19 conditions it has not been possible to produce this section for the current issue of *Year's Work*. The next issue will cover critical work in this field for both 2020 and 2021.

8. Modern Irish Poetry

The *Irish Literature in Transition* series from Cambridge University Press is a welcome addition to Irish studies across prose, drama, and poetry. The six volumes, under the general editorship of Clare Connolly and Marjorie Howes, trace the patterns of transmission and transformation of Irish literature from 1700 to the present. In terms of modern Irish poetry, volume 4 of the series, *Irish Literature in Transition: 1880–1940*, opens with a timely revisionist perspective on the 'Origins of Modern Irish Poetry, 1880–1922' by Alex Davis (pp. 39–54).