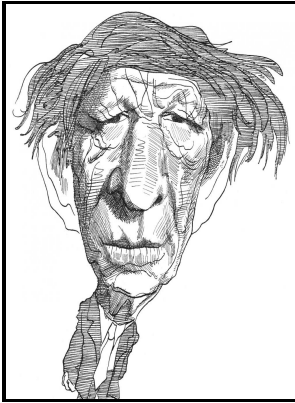


Poetry and plain sense - a note on the poetic method of T.S. Eliot

Folcroft Press - T.S. Eliot



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Eliot, T. S. -- 1888-1965. Poetry and plain sense - a note on the poetic method of T.S. Eliot
-Poetry and plain sense - a note on the poetic method of T.S. Eliot
Notes: Limited edition of 300 numbered copies.
This edition was published in 1969



Filesize: 60.68 MB

Tags: #tools.github.ffxiv.cn

T. S. Eliot

While it must be admitted that Milton is a very great poet indeed, it is something of a puzzle to decide in what his greatness consists. You cannot, that is, understand the Inferno without the Purgatorio and the Paradiso. A long step forward has been taken.

Sand in the Oyster: Auden, Eliot, & the Making of a Poem by Dylan Thomas

In any case, the actual content of the epigraph illuminates the following poem quite usefully, providing a suggestion of just how much one might miss by forgetting the classics.

Dante. T.S. Eliot. 1921. The Sacred Wood; Essays on Poetry and Criticism

Alfred Prufrock, was first published in Poetry, June, 1915; five other poems were originally published in Catholic Anthology, edited by Ezra Pound, 1915, The Egoist London, 1917.

The Waste Land

Now I hear them, —ding-dong bell.

Waste by T.S. Eliot

My friend, blood shaking my heart
The awful daring of a moment's surrender
Which an age of prudence can never retract
By this, and this only,
we have existed
Which is not to be found in our obituaries
Or in memories draped by the beneficent spider
Or under seals broken by the lean
solicitor
In our empty rooms
D A 410 Dayadhvam: I have heard the key
Turn in the door once and turn once only
We think of the key, each in his
prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison
Only at nightfall, aetherial rumours
Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus
D A Danyata:
The boat responded Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar
The sea was calm, your heart would have responded
420 Gaily, when invited,
beating obedient
To controlling hands
I sat upon the shore
Fishing, with the arid plain behind me
Shall I at least set my lands in order? Eliot

appears nowhere, but his fingerprints are on everything. Thunder sounds in the distance; Christ, the slain and resurrected hero whose death effects restoration, walks the land; the mythic hero whose personal trials can secure communal blessing approaches the Chapel Perilous. Little Gidding is a village in Cambridgeshire visited by Eliot in 1936.

Waste by T.S. Eliot

Yet it retains an occasional twinkle of humor. The reproach against Milton, that his technical influence has been bad, appears to have been made by no one more positively than by myself. As a result, past, present, and future are equally immediate, and Prufrock is paralyzed.

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