

## Mapping T. S. Eliot 1917–1923

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*[Henry Adam's] very American curiosity was directed and misdirected by two New England characteristics: conscientiousness and scepticism. . . . [The New England Puritans] want to do something great; dogged by the shadow of self-conscious incompetence, they are predestined failures.*

——— T. S. Eliot, "A Sceptical Patrician"

In this study of T. S. Eliot's early criticism, I intend to map T. S. Eliot's critical programme by closely analyzing his reviews and essays on various topics — both published and unpublished in book forms — in the years 1917–1923. I thus hope to explore the roads taken and not taken in this subject. Section I is concerned with the deep structure of this mapping. I begin by arguing against the commonly articulated truism that Eliot in his early, "formalist" phase restricted the scope of his criticism to a purely internal reading of literary texts. In fact, a close reading of his early critical writings will show that Eliot, while strategically emphasizing his primary concerns with literary form in order to achieve individual "distinction", applies an extraliterary critique to evaluation of individual literary works, by positing the concept of such extraliterary determinants as the "temper of the age" and the "framework". Since Eliot's extraliterary critique is always yoked to his [eschatological] historicist perspective that the modern world has lost *significance*, its logical conclusion is the impossibility of a significant artwork in the modern world, which situation I term the "contamination" of / by History. My claim here is, in short, that the deep structure of Eliot's early critical programme consists of the two contrary semes: History and the Individual Talent. Section II is, in turn, concerned with the superficial (surface) structure. Just as in Eliot's diagnosis of Henry Adams' dilemma in my epigraph, Eliot's own "conscientiousness" in seeking individual "distinction" through achieving literary significance was "dogged by the shadow of self-conscious incompetence" as to the possibility of such significance. Although Eliot may be thus embarking on "predestined failures", his "curiosity" allows him to make various artistic observations on various topics — from Marie Lloyd to Ben Jonson — and those observations constitute the superficial (surface) structure. With this mapping in mind, Section III is concentrated on reading Eliot reading *Ulysses*. I maintain that this is the most meaningful test case, since Eliot has to find a way to recognize the undeniable "distinction" of *Ulysses* after all his sceptical observations on the possibility of contemporary art. My claim here is that the often cited "'Ulysses', Order and Myth" is not in fact representative of Eliot's reading of *Ulysses* and the concept of "the mythical method" introduced in that article is far from being the norm of his critical programme. This claim is supported by reading Eliot's other readings of *Ulysses*, as well as by those of his close associates like Ezra Pound, Gilbert Seldes, John Middleton Murry, and Richard Aldington. In Chapter IV, finally, I suggest a reading *against the grain* of "the mythical method", throwing light upon a less well-known "historical method", which would be grafted onto the portrait of the Artist as a Collector.

I realize that my project may seem paradoxical: this study is aimed at rescuing the “extraliterary” moments in Eliot’s early critical writings, but it is, as I acknowledge in the two closed Greimasian rectangles in my Appendix, a purely internal reading. I would defend my procedures simply by quoting the following remark that ends Eliot’s preface to the 1928 edition of *The Sacred Wood*, which would, I believe, serve as an apt preface to my present study as well:

On the other hand, poetry as certainly has something to do with morals, and with religion, and even with politics perhaps . . . And in these questions, and others which we cannot avoid, we appear already to be leaving the domain of criticism of “poetry.” So we cannot stop at any point. The best that we can hope to do is to agree upon a point from which to start, and that is, in part, the subject of this book. T.S.E. (*SW*. x)

## I. History and the Individual Talent

### 0. “essential problems of form”

Pierre Bourdieu often refers to *The Sacred Wood* as an example of “a purely internal reading that excludes all references to determinations or historical functions, which are seen as reductive” (*Field*. 177; *Rules*. 194). This is commonly acknowledged as a truism, but seems embarrassingly far from Eliot’s own “scheme” of the book. Eliot told Sydney Schiff in a letter of 12 Jan. 1920: “I want to discuss 1) the modern public 2) the technique of poetry 3) the possible social employment of poetry” (*L*. 355). This third item, a combination of the first and the second, is, as I hope to show, the *fulcrum* of Eliot’s critical program, while Bourdieu’s denunciation as well as the New Critical / pedagogical appropriation is, roughly speaking, based merely on the second.

Such reductive emphasis on the side of “the technique of poetry” is, however, not without its reasons, for it was Eliot himself who deliberately insisted on such emphasis. But it should not be overlooked here that such emphasis on “poetry as poetry” was made as a calculated contradiction — if not “calculated overkill” (Menand. *Discovering*. 126) — in order to absolve literary texts from the current codes of Victorian-Georgian criticism, rather than as mere “absolutization of the text” (Bourdieu. *Field*. 177). Such a polemical moment is well documented by Gilbert Seldes, managing editor of *The Dial*<sup>(1)</sup> and champion of literary modernism as well as American popular culture “across the great divide”<sup>(2)</sup>:

At the present moment [i.e., Dec. 1922] criticism of literature is almost entirely criticism of the ideas expressed in literature; it is interested chiefly in morals, economics, sociology, or science. . . . Their creative interest is in something apart from the art they are discussing; and what Mr. Eliot has done, with an attractive air of finality, is to indicate how irrelevant that interest is to the art of letters. (“T. S. Eliot”. 76–7)

On the other side of the Atlantic, more specifically, this critical moment is given a catchphrase “Back to Aristotle” in a book review in the *Athenaeum* made by Leonard Woolf (signed: L. W), to whom Eliot immediately sent a letter of gratitude for his getting “what I am after, whether I have succeeded or not” (*L*. 427):

These two quotation [from *The Sacred Wood*] will perhaps explain why Mr. Eliot seems to cry aloud to us, "Back to Aristotle," and why, after falling through the fluid emotionalism and ego-centralized psychology or moralizing which passes for criticism, he brings us up with a shock against the satisfying, if painful, hardness of the intellect.

("Back to Aristotle": 835)

Eliot's emphasis on Aristotelian "technical" criticism is thus made against "the specter of psychologism" (Jay: 98-9) and is itself a direct polemic to such a "humanist" interpretation of Aristotelian criticism as is made by Irving Babbitt and John Middleton Murry, who find in Aristotle the "moral law" and the "practical ideal of human life", respectively (Goldie. 62). Such emphasis on the literary technique is, in other words, not a mere symptom of Eliot's "purely internal reading", but indeed the very *strategy* of his "formalism" in order to seek what Bourdieu calls "distinction". In the time when Prof. W. P. Ker<sup>63</sup> had to begin his celebrated London Lectures on Form and Style in Poetry (1914-5) by saying that "Form. . . is almost as ambiguous and dangerous as the word Nature" (137), it was indeed, as Eliot remarked, "bound to have a cleansing and purifying effect, to recall the attention of the intelligent to essential problems of form" ("Modern Tendency in Poetry". *Shama'a* (April 1920). qtd. in *IMH*. 404).

### 1. modern art as "the patient analysis"

As Eliot's emphasis on "the technique of poetry" is to contradict "the fluid emotionalism and ego-centralized psychology or moralizing", so is his emphasis on "the possible social employment of poetry" to contradict the opposite side of that "which passes for criticism", namely, Aestheticism. Here his attention to "essential problems of form" does not lead to simply privileging "form" over "matter"; on the contrary, it leads to a critique of a Paterian metaphysics of "style" whose entailment is "a refuge, a sort of cloistral refuge, from a certain vulgarity in the actual world" ("Style". 18). Eliot's critique is, in short, to denounce an aesthetics dissociated from "the actual world" — "language" dissociated from "object", or "form" from "matter". This criteria is applied, in fact, not only to the late-nineteenth century Aestheticism, but also to the whole "tradition" accepted thereby — a tradition of poetic diction "whose style, far from 'preserving' the content, appears to survive and seduce quite apart from the content. . . [and which] is language dissociated from things, assuming an independent existence" ("Prose and Verse". *Chapbook* (April 1921): 7). Eliot posits the "essential problems of form" to counter Aestheticist formalism — such an apparent paradox is also acknowledged by Georg Lukács: "The advocates of 'form' have killed the form; the high priests of *l'art pour l'art* have paralysed art" (149), which corresponds to Susan J. Wolfson's recent claim in a wider context that "[t]o read for form was to read against formalism" (3). To counter such "formalism", the pendulum swings to extraliterary concerns.

In order to elaborate this critical point, let me analyze two early reviews: Eliot's critique of Swinburne's "morbidly" and of Saintsbury's "Balzacity". In the review of Swinburne's poetry ("Swinburne". *Athenaeum* (16 Jan. 1920). Rpt. as "Swinburne as Poet". *SW*. 144-150), Eliot concedes that "[the world of Swinburne] has the necessary completeness and self-sufficiency for justification and permanence" (*SW*. 149). Yet, soon in the same paragraph, Eliot denounces it for

its “morbidity” of language, and then comes a celebrated sentence that expresses the central thesis of Eliot’s poetics: “Language in a healthy state presents the object, is so close to the object that the two are identified” (*SW*. 149). This sentence should not be hastily stigmatized as a “metaphysics of presence”, or an echo of the Paterian dictum of the “perfect identification of form and matter”. Walter Benn Michaels, criticizing such a misinterpretation by way of juxtaposing this sentence with Eliot’s doctoral thesis in philosophy, shows that “Eliot thinks, words and objects are interdependent in such a way that to have one already involves having the other” (182). In fact, the immediately following sentence can be read as a direct critique of the Paterian imaginary synthesis: “They are identified in the verse of Swinburne solely because the object has ceased to exist, because the meaning is merely the hallucination of meaning, because language, uprooted, has adapted itself to an independent life of atmospheric nourishment” (*SW*. 149). Here Eliot does not insist on “identity” of form and matter as an absolutely positive goal, but, instead, criticizes “uprooted[ness]” of such an imaginary synthesis as is nothing but a purely literary “absolutization of texts” guaranteed by a “cloistral refuge” from — or ignorance of — the extraliterary.

Eliot’s review of George Saintsbury’s *A History of the French Novel* (“Beyle and Balzac”. *Athenaeum*. May 30. 1919) goes further than a mere critique and makes some significant comments on the relations of the literary to the extraliterary. Eliot, by criticizing Saintsbury’s “Balzacity”, raises Stendhal and Flaubert, who “stand completely apart from all the rest” (392; left column). The significance here lies in his reasoning that “[t]here is something that [Stendhal and Flaubert] have in common, which is deeper than style and is the cause of style” (392; left column) — here “style” is not *autotelic* but requires a “deeper” base, or an extraliterary determinant. Eliot’s critique of “Balzacity” exactly corresponds to that of Swinburne’s “morbidity” discussed above: “Balzac, relying upon atmosphere, is capable of evading an issue, of satisfying himself with a movement or a word” (393). Beyle [i.e., Stendhal], by contrast, “begins with the real world” (392; right column), which stands as antithesis to Swinburne’s “hallucination” or Pater’s “cloistral refuge”. Thus comes a remarkable proclamation:

the patient analysis of human motives and emotions, and human misconceptions about motives and emotions, is the work of the greatest novelists, and the greatest novelists dispense with atmosphere. (393)

That “which is deeper than style and is the cause of style” is, indeed, this “patient analysis”, and the basic assumption here is “the awful separation between potential passion and any actualization possible in life” (393). The significance of this “patient analysis” is made clearer if it is compared with the imaginary synthesis professed in Pater’s essay on “Style”, in which such key terms as “mind”,<sup>(4)</sup> “that vision within”, “original unity”, recur almost on every other page. Such a basic assumption of “original unity” naturally requires “a flood of random sounds, colours, incidents, [which] is ever penetrating from the world without” to become “the visible vesture and expression of that other world [the mind] sees so steadily within” (31). This formula of expressive causality leads to what may be called impressionistic subjectivism, to which what matters is “an expression no longer of fact but of his sense of it . . . changed somewhat from the actual world” (8–9). Eliot, by refusing such a tautological synthesis as starts from the “original unity” only to reach the “perfect identification”, was capable of recognizing the alienated human

conditions in the modern world, which “drove [Flaubert and Stendhal] to art and to analysis” (393). In short, he recognizes the extraliterary moment in literary maneuverings and goes as far as to juxtapose “art” with “analysis”. It is then not surprising to read such a seemingly “moralizing” statement: “[Beyle is], in the profoundest sense, the more *moral* of the two [i.e., Beyle and Balzac]” (392 ; right column). Once Eliot emphasizes a purely literary aspect to contradict the current codes of “moralizing” criticism, now he recognizes the extraliterary moment “in the profoundest sense”, that is, the sense that he recognizes a kind of modern art as “analysis” of — rather than the imaginary synthesis to — the contradictions of “the actual world”.

## 2. “contamination” of / by History

Eliot’s acute sense of modern art as “the patient analysis” of modernity opens a path for crossing the yet undemarcated borders of the as yet uninstitutionalized “literary studies”. In fact, Eliot’s seemingly literary critique of such “self-sufficient” works as are “uprooted” from the actual world is often applied to various other fields than literature: for instance, Eliot as a student of philosophy denounces “the Bergsonian world” in a typically [William] Jamesian manner<sup>6)</sup> by claiming that “our world of social values is at least as real as his” (“TSE’s paper on politics and metaphysics” (1913?). qtd. in *IMH*. 409), while Eliot as a literary reviewer “divagate[s] from literature to politics”, smelling the complicity between Romantic imagination and Imperialistic ideology — the complicity by way of employing curiosity “romantically, not to penetrate the real world, but to complete the varied features of the world he made for himself” (“A Romantic Patrician”. *Athenaeum* (2 May 1919): 266). It is not only Eliot’s wide knowledge but also such flexibility of his early criticism that enables him to “divagate from literature” to other fields like philosophy, politics, and history.

It is in this context that Eliot sets the literary-extraliterary axis in a historicist perspective. Eliot’s historicist schemes such as “a dissociation of sensibility” are, of course, nothing but an ideological act of what Fredric Jameson calls “existential historicism”<sup>6)</sup> and are thus difficult to evaluate after the post-structuralist onslaught on historicism *in toto*. Nevertheless I want to emphasize here that Eliot is not simply what John Crowe Ransom calls “a historical critic” who “uses his historical studies for the sake of literary understanding” (139), but instead more like one of those “good literary historians” who always remember that “literary interpretation. . . is in fact literary history”, thus “steadily put[ting] its own ontological status into question” in terms of history (de Man. “Literary”. 165, 164). The effect that Eliot’s awareness of, or obsession with, history as a frame of reference places upon his evaluations of individual works — after all, most of his early critical works are reviews of individual works of art — is of great significance in that such a perspective enables the critic to extend mere reviews of individual works to a sort of genre-critique: the ego-psychological logic of denouncing *Hamlet* as “most certainly an artistic failure”, owing to its failure of finding “the formula of that *particular* emotion” (*SW*. 98, 100) can be extended to the mass-psychological one of pronouncing the “death” of a certain genre, that is, a genre’s inapplicability to a particular structure of feeling in the course of history. For example:

*Comus* is the death of the masque; it is the transition of a form of art — even a form which

existed for but a short generation — into “literature,” literature cast in a form which has lost its application. Even though *Comus* was a masque at Ludlow Castle, Jonson had, what Milton came perhaps too late to have, a sense for living art; his art was applied.

(“Ben Jonson”. *TLS* (13 Nov. 1919). *SW*. 122.)

Such a historicist scheme cannot be underestimated, for here the historical question of a certain genre’s applicability is posited before purely literary appreciations, thus foreclosing any ontological, atemporal reasoning.

It is also interesting to notice that this historicist scheme is not evolutionist like the prevalent nineteenth-century historicism, but degenerative and even eschatological. What the above case of the masque effectively suggests is that the art-form can lose its “application” when it comes “too late” in the course of history, in other words, a “living art” can lapse into mere dead “letters” according to a specific socio-historical situation. It is, in fact, safe to say that Eliot’s genre-critique is, all in all, a series of death sentences. This reveals a fundamental epistemological position Eliot’s critical programme is based on, and here I want to call our attention to its elective affinity with that of Georg Lukács.<sup>(7)</sup> I do not here intend to elaborate this elective affinity particularly, but instead refer to David Carroll’s explication of Lukács’ concept of History, which I regard as pertinent to that of Eliot:

At the origin of history is an ideal, a-historical origin which governs history by its absence. . . . The novel is “historical” in so much as it searches for but never ultimately finds the sense and form of the totality. History here is the difference between the “lost,” ideal origin and the “representations” which supplement its absence. (209–10)

It is such “contamination” of / by History that they strive to resolve or transcend, and as long as it is impossible and must remain a wager, Lukács’ as well as Eliot’s critical programmes can be historical: “it is in fact the ‘contamination’ constituting representation that is truly historical” (205). This is what Paul de Man calls “the dead-end of formalist criticism” where “there is left but the sorrowful time of patience, i.e., history” (“Dead-End”. 245). Those critics patiently lay a wager that they might put an end to History, while they always realize they cannot but stay at a dead-end as long as they refuse to accept ontological reconciliation. It is, I contend, this wager that constitutes Eliot’s critical strength as well as his creative impulse:

He who was living is now dead  
 We who were living are now dying  
 With a little patience  
 (“The Waste Land”, ll.328–30. *CP*. 76)

The poetical subject (“We. . . now dying”) is obsessed by the “lost” origin (“He. . . now dead”), aware of the present “contamination” (“now dying”), and given no choice but the “patient analysis” (“With a little patience”). These lines are indeed the Image of Eliot’s critical programme.

### 3. the impossibility of a poetic drama

I have so far tried to carve a matrix of Eliot's critical programme out of his reviews and essays written in 1917-23, by discussing two "contrary semes"<sup>(8)</sup>: Eliot's acute sense of, or obsession with, the general "contamination" of / by History, which is impossible to resolve or transcend, on the one hand and his desire to gain individual "distinction" by acquiring a "possible social employment of poetry" on the other. The problematics is, in short, concerned with a question of "possibility", a direct treatment of which can be found in his essay, "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama" (*Dial*, Nov. 1920). Although this is one of the minor essays collected in *The Sacred Wood* and collected once only, it bears great significance in this study — and is indeed *representative* of Eliot's critical programme in that period — together with an uncollected twin review, "The Poetic Drama" (*Athenaeum*, 14 May 1920), since they deal with a particular literary genre (poetic drama) in terms of an extraliterary context in a historicist perspective, and then questions its "possibility" in the modern world "contaminated" by History.

In this review ("Possibility"), Eliot posits the concept of a "framework" — what may be called "the form of forms"<sup>(9)</sup> — so that he may avoid a mere formalism (i.e., an aesthetic proposition which regards form, or mere "style", as the self-sufficient object of art):

To create a form is not merely to invent a shape, a rhyme or rhythm. It is also the realization of the whole appropriate content of this rhyme or rhythm. The sonnet of Shakespeare is not merely such and such a pattern, but a precise way of thinking and feeling. The *framework* [Eliot's italics] which was provided for the Elizabethan dramatist was not merely blank verse and the five-act play and the Elizabethan play-house; it was not merely the plot — for the poets incorporated, remodelled, adapted or invented, as occasion suggested. It was also the half-formed  $\vartheta\lambda\eta$ , the "temper of the age" (an unsatisfactory phrase), a preparedness, a habit on the part of the public, to respond to particular stimuli. (*SW*. 63-64)

Here, two points are made clear: the "form" is not merely a self-sufficient "style", but the "realization of the whole appropriate content"; the "framework" is not merely a physical scaffold, but also the "temper of the age". This quoted phrase, "temper of the age", should not be confused with an Idealistic *Zeitgeist* here, for this sentence does not provide any evidence of the proposition that the "Geist" expresses itself. In fact, the Geek term  $\vartheta\lambda\eta$  means "matter", presumably taken from Aristotle, whom Eliot had just read intensively at Oxford and whom he designated as "the perfect critic" *par excellence* to counter Hegelian "emotional systematization" (*SW*. 9). Although I cannot identify exactly where Eliot quotes this "unsatisfactory" English translation ("temper of the age") from, it is possibly meant to contradict Oscar Wilde's explication of Paterian aesthetics in "The Decay of Lying" :

Cyril. . . . surely you would acknowledge that Art expresses the temper of its age, the spirit of its time, the moral and social conditions that surround it, and under whose influence it is produced.

Vivian. Certainly not! Art never expresses anything but itself. This is the principle of my new aesthetics; and it is this, more than that vital connection between form and substance,

on which Mr. Pater dwells, that makes music the type of all the arts. (44- 5)

Whatever the source may be, the point I intend to make here is that Eliot posits the concept of “framework” — an historical entity — as an extraliterary determinant of a literary form, so that he can employ this concept in the actual “comparison and analysis”.<sup>(10)</sup>

Of course, there must needs be some reservation to call this “public” an historical entity. This idea of “the public” is far from “historical” but just an imagined community constructed by a homogeneous, empty time, “almost dispensing with tradition” (“Possibility”. *SW*. 62). This is, indeed, a timeless topos of a prelapsarian state — the “lost” origin — where the relations of the art-forms and the “framework” are so transparent that even “tradition” seems to vanish. Here the formation of artistic production can never be problematized: “one might imagine the good New growing naturally out of the good Old, without the need for polemic and theory; this would be a society with a living tradition” (“Reflections on *Vers Libre*”. *SP*. 32). Yet it is rather too hasty to attribute this formula to an “Anglican myth”. True, it happens to be the golden age of Anglo-Catholicism in this essay, but such an idea certainly comes later to Eliot<sup>(11)</sup> and, in fact, this topos moves freely from Athens to Florence, and even to the London music hall. The point is, then, that Eliot’s topos of a prelapsarian state is not so much dogmatic as arbitrary — and here it is helpful to refer to Raymond Williams’ *The Country and the City*. At the beginning of this book, Williams gives us a metaphor of an “escalator”, which moves down, with the prelapsarian “Old Englands” as customers, never stopping till it reaches Eden (Ch.2). In other words, a topos of a prelapsarian state is not a substance but a reference which always “start[s] to move and recede” (12). The wager here is not the verisimilitude of Classical Athens or Elizabethan England, but the frame of reference Eliot employs in his critique, as Williams suggests : “What we have to inquire into is not, in these cases, historical error, but historical perspective” (10).

The actual “comparison and analysis” using this frame of reference is directed at John Middleton Murry’s poetic drama in “The Poetic Drama” (*Athenaeum*. 14 May 1920), which review contains almost the same sentence as the above-quoted one concerning the “temper of the age”.<sup>(12)</sup> This review is of special interest, since it deals with a specific writer “who might be, or might in a happier age have been (according to our hopeful or pessimistic humours), a poetic dramatist”. In other words, this is a tragedy of a Prufrockian “patient like Mr. Murry extended on the operating table” who suffers from the dilemma of the tradition’s absence (i.e., the “contamination” of / by History) and the individual talent: “He has virtues which are his own, and vices which are general”. The individual talent is doomed to failure where the organic community with “a living tradition” is absent, since “what is needed is not sympathy or encouragement or appreciation [by the possible patrons and audiences] . . . but a kind of unconscious co-operation” (635). Thus, the formation of artistic production is problematized in the modern age, as the formation of reception is in crisis. John Middleton Murry’s tragedy is not of himself but of the “contamination” of / by History, where “the social employment” of *significant* art is impossible regardless of the individual talent. This is indeed a “general” tragedy of modernity where “the unique importance of events has vanished”.<sup>(13)</sup>



## II. Marie Lloyd and Other Observations

### 0. "How is Humpty-Dumpty to be mended?"

The previous Section has shown that the fundamental semantic categories of "Mapping T. S. Eliot 1917- 1923" may be ascribed to the two contrary semes: History (a loss of Tradition) and the Individual Talent. As long as the critic patiently remains conscious of the "contamination" of / by History at the dead-end of formalism, the individual talent is predestined failure. This is indeed a general tragedy of modernity, a typical case of which is that of the "patient like Mr. Murry extended on the operating table". In this context, it is of great interest that John Middleton Murry, in his own journal *Adelphi* ("The 'Classical' Revival", Feb. & March 1926), describes Eliot's (and Virginia Woolf's) "fault" in a similar logic:

It is not their fault, they are children of the age against which they rebel. Above all, they are serious. They wish to express their real experience. And it happens that their real experience is such that it gives rise to classical velleities and defies classical expression.

For there is no *order* in modern experience, because there is no accepted principle of order. (179)

This article is remarkable for it is written by one of the closest associates of Eliot, and is all the more remarkable for the fact that its typescript "has been heavily annotated by Eliot" and that, "ironically, it is made more cogent by the opportunity for revision given by Eliot's comments" (Goldie. 156, 158). Murry goes on describing Eliot as cracked Humpty-Dumpty, rather sarcastically but none the less forebodingly:

How is Humpty-Dumpty to be mended? There seems to be but two ways. The one more obviously indicated is that he should make a blind act of faith and join the Catholic Church: there he will find an authority and a tradition. The other is that he should make a different act of faith, trust himself, and see what happens: a principle of authority may come to birth. (182- 3)

The latter way should not be taken, as Eliot has, already in "The Function of Criticism" (*Criterion*, Oct. 1923), launched into a diatribe against Murry's idea of "the inner voice", whose "absence must bar the American Eliot from that company, however successful had been his elocutionary exertions over the years in sedulous pursuit of the English 'outer voice'" (Hawkes. 308). This latter way is, above all, to nullify one of the fundamental categories I have so far elaborated (History) and to unify the dialogic diagram into the monologue of the other (the Individual Talent). On the other hand, the former way "[t]o order such an experience on classical principles . . . by an act of violence, by joining the Catholic Church" (Murry. 180) is to be actually taken in 1927 and has in fact been glimpsed at already in "The Function of Criticism" as "the further possibility of arriving at something outside of ourselves, which may provisionally be called truth" (SE. 34), together with "'Ulysses', Order, and Myth" in the same year. This former way is indeed "an act of violence" by which Eliot "will find an authority and a tradition", that is, in effect, an imaginary (re)solution to the "contamination" of / by History either by putting an

end to it or by returning to a prelapsarian state, which will be discussed in Section III.

In this Section, however, I want to tarry in the question of “failure”. According to Murry, it is a question of seriousness:

It is precisely because Mrs. Woolf and Mr. Eliot *are* more serious than their fellow-classicists that they fail. For to be serious is not to be cynical; and not to be cynical is to be lacking in the attitude which gives the possibility of perfection to contemporary classicism. (“Classical”. 178–9)

It is this seriousness, or sincerity, to refuse a “cynical”, easy-going “possibility” that allows Eliot the critic to make various observations on the semantic field of “History and the Individual Talent”.

### 1. “the expressive figure of the lower classes”: Marie Lloyd and the decay of the music-hall

As has been discussed in the last Section, “The Possibility of a Poetic Drama” is, in fact, nothing but a pronouncement of “the impossibility of a poetic drama” in the modern world. At the end of this review essay, however, we find a curious statement: “Perhaps the music-hall comedian is the best material. I am aware that this is a dangerous suggestion to make” (*SW*. 70). This “dangerous suggestion” of taking popular culture seriously is later elaborated in an obituary essay for Marie Lloyd, “the greatest music-hall artist”, first written as a “London Letter” (Nov. 1922) to *The Dial* (Dec. 1922) and then reprinted, with revision, as “In Memoriam: Marie Lloyd” (Jan. 1923) in one of the earliest numbers of— in fact, it was the very first essay Eliot contributed to— his own *Criterion*. This short piece needs serious consideration, since here Eliot claims that “her death is itself a significant moment in English history” (*Dial* : 659),<sup>(14)</sup> while his next contribution to the *Dial* is “‘Ulysses’, Order, and Myth”, a manifesto to declare the advent of “a new epoch”.

This historical significance of Marie Lloyd in Eliot’s historicist perspective is explained by his observation that Marie Lloyd and her audiences are the last residue of a prelapsarian state in a particular section of the present social formation, namely, “the lower classes”. She re-creates a prelapsarian “organic”, “intime”<sup>(15)</sup> community of the artist and the audience stitched together, with her “capacity for expressing the soul of the people that made Marie Lloyd unique and that made her audiences, even when they joined in the chorus, not so much hilarious as happy”. Furthermore, she is not merely a representative, “giving expression to the life of that audience”, but her genius lies “in raising it to a kind of art” (661). In short, she is a perfect kind of artist who fully realizes “the possible social employment of poetry” and so is comparable to the Athenian or Elizabethan dramatists in Eliot’s view.

Here again Eliot applies the logic of his extraliterary critique, by not stopping at the mere apotheosis of a single prominent figure, but discussing “a moral superiority” of the lower classes created by Marie Lloyd:

I have called her the expressive figure of the lower classes. There has been no such expressive figure for any other class. The middle classes have no such idol: the middle

classes are morally corrupt. That is to say, it is themselves and their own life which find no expression in such a person as Marie Lloyd; nor have they any independent virtues as a class which might give them as a conscious class any dignity. (662)

What Eliot means by “a moral superiority” is the “dignity” that can only be achieved by a properly expressed class-consciousness. This idea is curiously resonant with a contemporary Western Marxist account that only the proletariat can potentially achieve class consciousness, in which the bourgeoisie is ultimately impotent (Lukács. “Class Consciousness”. 1920).<sup>(6)</sup> Although Eliot’s observation is concerned only with the “expression” of the “life” or the “soul” of people and does not reach the mode of production, Eliot’s point here is clear: the prime requisite for “a moral superiority” is a significant social “framework”, to which the artist must give a significant “expression”. In other words, the significant social “framework” is necessary but not sufficient — what is also necessary is the *agent* of its expression — and this is the kernel of “possibility”. The possibility of such a prelapsarian state — the co-existence of the significant formation of reception and production at the same time and the same place — seems to exist even in this corrupt society, even though Eliot himself could hardly identify himself with its agent. Having thus depicted a “possibility” in the midst of “impossibility”, however, it is soon to be observed that Eliot’s persistent eschatological vision prophesies that even this last residue is also doomed:

The lower class still exists; but perhaps they will not exist for long. . . With the dwindling of the music-hall, by the encouragement of the cheap and rapid-breeding cinema, the lower class will tend to drop into the same state of amorphous protoplasm as the bourgeoisie. . . [The working-man] will now go to the cinema. . . and he will receive, without giving, in that same listless apathy with which the middle and upper classes regard any entertainment of the nature of art. He will also have lost some of his interest in life. Perhaps this will be the only solution. (662)

Perhaps it should be the only solution in Eliot’s eschatological point of view: the trades-unions, regular wages, cheap cinemas — virtually anything *modern* — contrive to make the declassed<sup>(7)</sup> mass altogether alienated from “life”. Although the music-hall might be counted as a topos of a prelapsarian (pre-Historical) state along with the Athenian and the Elizabethan age, there is, after all, no aseptic room against the “contamination” of / by History.

## 2. “a unique picture of a very chaotic world”: Novel, minor poets and second-order minds

If there is no aseptic room to escape into, one possibility of art-works to be significant in the “contamination” of / by History is to be as “contaminated” as History, or — to borrow a Lukácsian term — to “reflect” the “contamination” of / by History, as Eliot later recollects that he “learned first [from Baudelaire] a precedent for poetical possibilities . . . of the more sordid aspects of the modern metropolis” (“What Dante Means to Me” (1950). *TCTC*. 126). In this context, the significance of “The Metaphysical Poets” (*TLS*. 20 Oct. 1921) lies not in the mystified / mystifying catchphrase — “dissociation of sensibility” — but rather in the following

demand that the historically-given materials should “play upon” the poets:

It is not a permanent necessity that poets should be interested in philosophy, or in any other subject. We can only say that it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. (*SE*. 289)

This is precisely what Yvor Winters most ferociously attacks as “the most dangerous and nearly the least defensible”, calling it “the now commonplace theory that modern art must be chaotic in order to express chaos” (163). Here Winters’ evocation of Henry Adams, “whose influence on Eliot’s entire poetic theory is probably greater than has been guessed” (162), must be justified, since Adams’ argument towards the end of *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres* is strikingly similar in form — if not in content — to the [eschatological] historicist perspective of Eliot’s extraliterary critique: the Medieval unity where “[s]cience and art were one” was lost and “the universe has steadily become more complex and less reducible to a central control”, whose end result was that “[a]rt had to be confused in order to express confusion; but perhaps it was truest, so” (692–3). Winters’ overreaction to the phrase, “must be difficult”, may have been caused by his interpreting the modal auxiliary “must” as imperative rather than as indication of inevitability. Following the logic of Eliot’s extraliterary critique in his [eschatological] historicist perspective, however, the purport of this phrase is nothing but deplorable inevitability of chaotic art in a chaotic society, where art upholds *a kind of* significance by being as chaotic as the society — as “contaminated” as History — for it is at least “truest”.

It follows that Novel as a genre matters as the “truest” representational art-form, or, in other words, as *representative* of the art-forms possible in the overall “contamination” of / by History. However representative Novel may be in theory, Eliot never wrote one, nor did he write much on that subject. In his “London Letter” (August 1922) to *The Dial* (Sept. 1922 : [329]–331), Eliot makes a short, and very rough, assessment on contemporary novels as a whole, designating “three main types of English novel”: “the old narrative method, the tale”, “the psychoanalytic type”, and “Dostoevsky type”. What is significant about this crude typology is not the difference among those types — “Only in detail is comparison possible” — but the similarity, or the shared defects: the first is “satisfied to write about what he knows, not complicating it with any striving to attain a point of view not his own”; in the second, “because the material is so clearly defined (the soul of man under psychoanalysis)[,] there is no possibility of tapping the atmosphere of unknown terror and mystery”; and the third’s “method is only permissible if you see things the way Dostoevsky saw them”. In short, they all fail to acquire the “impersonal point of view”. Thus Eliot again pronounces the death-sentence — “[w]hether any one type has a future is doubtful” — while bearing in mind, of course, Joyce’s *Ulysses*, “not a work which can be compared with any ‘novel’.”

As long as Novel reflects the “contamination” of / by History, it can not avoid the death-sentence, but it must retain *a kind of* significance as a representational / representative art-form. In fact, Eliot’s comments on the limitations of the apparently most retarded “old narrative” type sound all in all favourable: a writer of this type, Compton Mackenzie for example, has “an accurate knowledge of a social *milieu*”, “lays on, not so much sentiment, as coloured detail”, and

after all “is better worth reading than many more pretentious and sophisticated writers”. This ambivalence can be paraphrased as follows: the novel of this type has no future as well as any other type, but is at least *significant* in the modern age as “an interesting or even valuable document”, in other words, as the “truest” reflection of the age.

This ambivalent evaluation of a novel as a “document” of the age corresponds to Eliot’s peculiar idea of “minor poets” and “second-order minds”, which should not be confused with their common pejorative use. In fact, Eliot remarks that they “are necessary for that ‘current of ideas,’ that ‘society permeated by fresh thought,’ of which Arnold speaks”, and he continues that “[i]t is a perpetual heresy of English culture to believe that only the first-order mind, the Genius, the Great Man, matters; that he is solitary, and produced best in the least favourable environment, perhaps the Public School” (“The Second-Order Mind”. *Dial* (Dec. 1920): 588). In short, those “minor poets” and “second-order minds” *do* matter, since they are “useful” (589) as *agents* reflecting a historically-given “framework” of a particular society. In other words, they are “significant”, precisely because they are as “bad in a significant way” as the society “contaminated” by History:

An anthology of contemporary verse can be a document of great importance for future generations. It ought not to contain many good poems, but a few; and it ought to embalm a great many bad poems (but bad in a significant way) which would otherwise perish. . . The resultant impression is a unique picture of a very chaotic world indeed; a world prevalingly Yanqui, but all the more interesting for that.

(“Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [III]”. *Egoist* (Nov. 1917): 151)

Thus, such a figure as Clive Bell is regarded “not as an individual, but as the representative of a little world of 1914” (“Shorter Notices”. *Egoist* (June/July 1918) : 87).

It is of great significance in my mapping that those “minor poets” and “second-order minds” are regarded not as the individual talents (gifted or not) but as a mass, or — to use Eliot’s metaphor in his introductory essay in *Nouvelle Revue Française* — as a legion in “flank” marching in “the same direction”:

In an epoch like ours, the second order writer [l’écivain de second ordre] . . . must, above all, be taken into consideration insofar as his/her works take the same direction as those of the writers of the first rank [écrivains du premier rang] and are on their flank. This is not an age when we can allow ourselves to speak well of many passable works.

(“Lettre d’Angleterre”: 623; my translation)

The mechanism of this mass-production of “bad” poets and their “passable works” has the same structure as that of those “very good poets. . . such as filled the Greek anthology and the Elizabethan song-books”:

We should see then just how *little* each poet had to do; only so much as would make a play his, only what was essential to make it different from anyone else’s. When there is this economy of effort it is possible to have several, even many, good poets at once. The great ages did not perhaps *produce* much more talent than ours; but less talent was wasted.

(“Possibility”. *SW.* 64)

Then follows a predictable remark on the minor poet today: “Now in a formless age there is very little hope for the minor poet to do anything worth doing” (64). A simple difference is that those mass-produced second-order “passable” art-works are almost automatically “good” in the Elizabethan age and “bad” in the modern age ; a simple but categorical difference — in terms of the “reflection theory” — between a prelapsarian (pre-History) state and the “contamination” of / by History.

### 3. “illuminates the actual world”: Noh, Jonson and ostranenie

Even though it is impossible to escape from the “contamination” of / by History, it is not necessary to face it. There is a way to simply ignore the “contamination” and seek significance through formalistic invention based on the individual logic *as if* there were no such things as “contamination”. Here I discuss two of such cases: the Fenollosa-Pound translations of *Noh* and Ben Jonson’s “creative” satire.

“The Noh and the Image” (*Egoist* (Aug. 1917): 102–3) is a homage to the Fenollosa-Pound translations of *Noh*, which book Eliot regards as “a service to literature, like a good doctor’s thesis, rather than as literature itself” (102). In other words, it serves as a literary, theoretical cure to “that with which we are familiar”. More precisely, this review is aimed at an attack on the “English stage [which] is merely a substitute for the reality we imagine”, by virtue of the “dreamlike” Noh plays, in which “the world of active passions is observed through the veil of another world” (103; right column). This is a formalistic critique — with an Imagistic flavor, as the title suggests — of vulgar mimetic art and seems to give an alternative to the “impossibility” of any existing art-forms by importing a “possibility” from outside. Here it is of great interest that Jacques Derrida regards this Fenollosa–Pound collaboration as “the first break in the most entrenched Western tradition”, drawing attention to “a question of dislocating, through access to another system linking speech and writing, the founding categories of language and the grammar of the *epistémè*” (92). Although both Eliot and Derrida see a kind of breakthrough in this inter-linguistic creation, their fundamental difference is illuminating: Derrida sees in it the moment of deconstruction of Western logocentrism, whereas Eliot sees the moment of “restoring the essentials which have been forgotten in traditional literary method” (“Noh”: 102). Such “essentials” are, of course, the very target of Derridean deconstruction, and, indeed, if such “essentials” were posited, Eliot’s reasoning could easily lapse into the Paterian imaginary synthesis that subsumes anything from outside within the scope of the “original unity”. In fact, phrases like “dreamlike”, “the veil of another world”, or “the reality of ghost” are precariously close to those by which Eliot himself characterized Swinburne’s “morbidity” and Saintsbury’s “Balzacity”. In other words, Eliot, by casually appealing to a purely “literary” cure for the current crisis in literature, falls victim to his own extraliterary critique.

Another review touching upon the question of formalistic invention is “Ben Jonson” (*TLS* (13 Nov. 1919). *SW.* 104–122), in which Eliot defends Jonson’s comedy of humors from the accusation of being “superficial”: “We cannot call a man’s work superficial when it is the creation of a world; a man cannot be accused of dealing superficially with the world which he himself has created; the superficiality is the world” (*SW.* 116). Here Eliot distinguishes two types

of “superficies”: “hollow” and “solid”. The former is attributed to the verses of Beaumont and Fletcher, which exactly corresponds to Swinburne’s “morbidly” or “uprooted[ness]”, as we read a sentence like: “the blossoms of Beaumont and Fletcher’s imagination draw no sustenance from the soil” (116). Jonson’s “solid” world is, on the other hand, “a world like Lobatchevsky’s . . . like systems of non-Euclidean geometry” (116–7). The world of Jonson has “a logic of [its] own”, which is not “uprooted” like that of Swinburne, but which “illuminates the actual world, because it gives us a new point of view from which to inspect it” (117). This is illumination and not fabrication. This is a transformation not of “the actual world” itself, but of the familiar mode of perception of it, just as the “non-Euclidean geometry” transforms the familiar Euclidean perception of the world, with the substance of the world being untouched. All these sound like a formula more of critique than of creation — “Every creator is also a critic” (110) — and it seems safe to compare such a “creative” satire of Jonson to what Russian Formalists call “ostranenie” (i.e., “defamiliarization”) — an authentically formalist critique *avant la lettre* of the vulgar “reflection theory” of Socialist Realism.

But here the question is not the formalist critique as such but the possibility of significant innovation induced by this critique: Can it be possible, and how? To this question, however, Eliot is again ambiguous — in fact, when it comes to the question of how Jonson discovered the new genre, Eliot betrays a taint of determinism: “In discovering and proclaiming in [*Every Man in his Humour*] the new genre Jonson was simply recognizing, unconsciously, the route which opened out in the proper direction for his instincts” (120). Eliot cannot but posit “the route” as an a priori determinant, just like “the original unity” in Paterian aesthetics or the forgotten “essentials” to be revitalized by *Noh*. Those are all symptoms of formalism’s “embarrassment”<sup>(18)</sup> in the face of history, rooted in its incompetence to exercise a self-sufficient determination by virtue of the purely “literary” moments alone, or — to take up the comparison to Russian Formalism again — what Tony Bennett calls “the problem of literary evolution”.<sup>(19)</sup> Formalistic invention based on the individual, self-sufficient logic — the logic of the as-if world — cannot, after all, be positively claimed without appealing to an a priori determinant, which must, in turn, be criticized by Eliot’s extraliterary critique.

### III. The Incoherent Portraits of the Artist

#### 0. incoherence is the norm

Since his contemporaries like Yvor Winters accused Eliot of “merely indulging in incoherence” (154), it seems commonsensical to claim that incoherence *is* the norm in T. S. Eliot’s early critical writings. In fact, many recent readings of them attest to such an effect.<sup>(20)</sup> In my mapping, apparent incoherence in the superficial (surface) structure is indeed a manifestation of the two contrary semes in the deep structure, i.e., History and the Individual Talent, and so there is certain coherence, or an internal logic, in such incoherent manifestations. Most “interested” and indeed most emotional as it may sound, Winters’s diatribe against Eliot has, in fact, some affinity with my mapping: Winters, ascribing Eliot’s incoherence to his personal “illusion of reaction” which contaminates his “essays analyzing qualities of style, which are valuable even when one does not agree with them” (166), attacks this “illusion of reaction” as

“related to the Marxist and Fascist view that the individual lacks the private and personal power to achieve goodness in a corrupt society” (151).<sup>(21)</sup>

The crux here is indeed whether the “individual” artist can or cannot achieve “significant” novelty in the “contamination” of / by History. One of Eliot’s earliest war-cries goes:

The novelty meets with neglect; neglect provokes attack; and attack demands a theory. In an ideal state of society one might imagine the good New growing naturally out of the good Old, without the need for polemic and theory; this would be a society with a living tradition. In a sluggish society, as actual societies are, tradition is ever lapsing into superstition, and the violent stimulus of novelty is required.

(“Reflections on Vers Libre”. *New Statesman* (3 March 1917). *SP*. 32)

Such awareness of “novelty” and “theory” does, in fact, help Eliot keep skeptical of the latest vogue of superficial “experiments”: “We can raise no objection to ‘experiments’ if the experiments are qualified; but we can object that almost none of the [contemporary] experimenters hold fast to anything permanent under the varied phenomena of experiment” (“Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [IV]”. *Egoist* (July 1919): 39). As long as those “experiments” are not qualified as true “novelty”, there is no need for “polemic and theory”, thus no distinct manifestation of incoherence, until the advent of “the violent stimulus of novelty”, that is, James Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Reading Eliot reading *Ulysses* is therefore the best way to reveal the nature of Eliot’s “incoherence” as well as that of my mapping itself.

### 1. the mythical method as an [abnormal] act of violence

Where Eliot’s reading of *Ulysses* is concerned, the object in question is most certainly and almost exclusively “‘Ulysses’, Order, and Myth” (*Dial*, Nov. 1923; hereafter “UOM”). In fact, this particular reading is often regarded as “not only one of the most familiar pieces of early *Ulysses* criticism, but one of the best-known pieces in modernist literary criticism” (Dettmar. 163). However, the fact of the matter is, I want to make sure first of all, that this review essay Eliot contributed to *The Dial* is far from representative of Eliot’s reading of literary texts, if it can be called a “reading” at all. As a book review in a journal, it naturally has the bibliography of *Ulysses* (Shakespeare and Company Limited Ed.) on its head, but there is not a single quotation from the book it is reviewing (although there are two from Thackeray reading Swift). It may be excused, since this review was meant to be a rebuttal of the charge against Joyce made by Richard Aldington, but this charge had been made “several years [before]” (“UOM”. *SP*. 175)! It is indeed a much too tardy polemic.<sup>(22)</sup> The reason for this tardiness is simple:

I am struggling with a notice of *Ulysses* myself which I have promised long since to the *Dial*; I find it extremely difficult to put my opinion of the book intelligently, inasmuch as I have little sympathy with the majority of either its admirers or its detractors.

(letter to Richard Aldington, 8 Nov. 1922; *L*. 594)

And it took Eliot another year to finish this “struggling”. No doubt Eliot did not even think of collecting this piece in his *Selected Essays*.



As a matter of fact, this review does not fit in, in my view, with Eliot's early criticism at all. Even a comparison with the immediately following book review Eliot contributed to *The Dial* ("Marianne Moore", Dec. 1923) will show how un-Eliotic "UOM" is. It is true that they share highbrow views as to literary appreciation: "I agree with Mr Wescott that [Marianne Moore's poetry] is 'aristocratic,' in that it can only please a very small number of people" ("Moore": 595) and "a man of genius is responsible to his peers, not to a studio full of uneducated and undisciplined coxcombs" ("UOM". *SP.* 176). Eliot in "Marianne Moore" is, however, specifically against Wescott's "belief in a kind of 'aristocratic' art drawing no sustenance from the soil" (597) with the same Eliotic rhetoric as is used to criticize Swinburne's "morbidity" and Saintsbury's "Balzacity". In addition, the way he talks of ritual and aristocracy as "a popular invention to serve popular needs" (597) and defines fine art as "the *refinement*, not the antithesis, of popular art" (595) certainly continues in the same vein as "Marie Lloyd", discussed above.<sup>(23)</sup> Contrary to such a generative concept of art, Eliot in "UOM" posits an abstract idea of "classicism" as a goal and does apparently admit a "morbid", "uprooted" manoeuvring: "One can be 'classical', in a sense, by turning away from nine-tenths of the material which lies at hand and selecting only mummified stuff from a museum" (*SP.* 176-7). Then he is trapped into the aestheticist dilemma:

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. (*SP.* 177)

The logic of this "classicist" creation is close to that of Paterian aesthetic ideal: the "perfect identification of form and matter" in the sense that it is not a happy marriage between form and matter with mutual consent but a conquest of matter by form, as we read in the following sentences: form "should become an end in itself", whereas matter is that which form "should penetrate", which "counts for so little", and which "burden[s]" the artists ("Giorgione". 106-7).

Being "un-Eliotic", however, does not necessarily mean that this book review is "original". In fact, reading other contemporary reviews of *Ulysses* such as those filling the list of Gorman shows that Eliot's belated review is nothing but a patchwork — almost a plagiarism — of those earlier ones, but with a "dogmatic" twist in its rhetoric. One of the earliest readers of this review attests to that point: "Mr. Eliot is too dogmatic in the main and he builds from the premise that the novel is obsolescent" (Gorman. 228), which apparently refers to Eliot's suddenly-inserted, unsupported sentence: "The novel ended with Flaubert and with James" ("UOM". *SP.* 177). Compare this sentence with Gilbert Seldes' earlier review in *The Nation* (Aug. 30, 1922):

Among the very great writers of novels only two can be named with [Joyce] for the long devotion to their work and for the triumphant conclusion — Flaubert and Henry James. It is the novel as they created it which Joyce has brought to its culmination; he has, it seems likely, indicated the turn the novel will take into a new form. ("Ulysses": 211)

Even earlier, Pound told his American audience in *The Dial* — Seldes' journal — that *Ulysses* "does complete something begun in Bouvard" ("Paris Letter, May 22". *LE.* 405), and gave his review in *Mercure de France* (June 1) a title "James Joyce et Pécuchet", claiming that Joyce's

*Ulysses* “continues the development of the Flaubertian art which Flaubert left over in his last unfinished book” (307; my translation), which was in turn to be contradicted by Edmund Wilson in *New Republic* (July 5). In short, as Louis Menand would say, the “theoretical content is practically zero” (*Discovering*. 151) particularly in “UOM”, but it is this “dogmatic” tone, perhaps together with the fact that this review “came too late” to join in the *Ulysses* polemics, that guarantees its survival and subsequent apotheosis as *the* champion of Modernism.

The most dogmatic of all is, of course, the concept of “the mythical method”, by which the “classicist” Joyce imposes “order” upon “the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history” (*SP*. 177), in other words, it is an imaginary transcendence of the “contamination” of / by History. Here it is worth quoting again John Middleton Murry’s prophesy that Eliot’s “order” would entail dogmatism:

For there is no *order* in modern experience, because there is no accepted principle of order. . . . To order such an experience on classical principles is almost beyond human powers. It might conceivably be done, by an act of violence, by joining the Catholic Church. (“Classical”. 378)

The concept of “the mythical method” is not totally new, as the above-discussed review, “The Poetic Drama”, has suggested that in a corrupt society where tradition has been lost, the individual talent cannot help being “Promethean”, who “has to supply his own framework, his own myth” (635). Still, a significant difference must be noted here: John Middleton Murry is “Promethean” in that he is a tragic hero “extended on the operating table”, whereas Joyce may also be called “Promethean” in that he is a Titanic legislator — acknowledged by “his peers” — who gives what “others must pursue after him” (*SP*. 177). Eliot’s analogy to “the discoveries of an Einstein” (*SP*. 177) is particularly suggestive, if it is compared with another analogy Eliot has made earlier to Lobachevsky’s “systems of non-Euclidean geometry” (*SW*. 116–7). As we have already seen, the latter “illuminates the actual world, because it gives us a new point of view from which to inspect it” (*SW*. 117), in other words, *defamiliarizes* the familiar mode of perception of the actual world, the substance of the world itself being untouched and thus allowing a “new point of view” to be produced. Einstein, on the other hand, sets the *foundation* of time-space, on which other scientists *must* “pursu[e] [their] own, independent, further investigation[s]” (*SP*. 177). Eliot is here drawing a portrait of the Artist as a Legislator — no longer “dogged by the shadow of self-conscious incompetence”, but mirroring “the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present” (Shelley. 279) — who casts “order” upon the present “chaos”. And this is indeed “an act of violence” to nullify the “contamination” of / by History and to (re)create a prelapsarian state where the minor poets “will not be imitators” (*SP*. 177) just like “very good poets. . . such as filled the Greek anthology and the Elizabethan song-books”.

## 2. a prophet / victim of chaos

The Novel is dead, long live the Mythical Method — this is the purport of “UOM”. Eliot’s autopsy of this already-dead genre reads:

If [*Ulysses*] is not a novel, that is simply because the novel is a form which will no longer serve; it is because the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter. (*SP*. 177)

To regard the novel as “the expression of an age” and the modern age as that “which had not sufficiently lost all form” — the process of degeneration towards the “sufficient”<sup>(24)</sup> formlessness — is very Eliotic in my mapping. But here the inserted phrase, “instead of being a form”, sits uneasily, for it apparently suggests that the “expression of an age” can *not* be a “form”, whereas another phrase, “the novel is a form which will no longer serve”, apparently implies that the novel *did* serve as a “form” even though it “was simply the expression of an age”.

This apparent incoherence is caused by Eliot’s equivocation: Eliot here dogmatically proclaims that “[t]he novel ended”, whereas, on the other hand, he has earlier admitted that the novel retains its worth precisely because it is “simply the expression of an age”, or the “truest” reflection of the “contaminated” History. If Eliot had followed the latter logic, he could have praised *Ulysses* as “a unique picture of a very chaotic world” *par excellence*, just as discussed in Section II Part 2 above. But he couldn’t, partly because it would then effectively have affirmed Richard Aldington’s notion of Joyce as “a prophet of chaos” (*SP*. 175), which label Eliot meant to contradict in this review. Although this label is not actually used by Aldington himself, it well summarizes Aldington’s diatribe against Joyce as being representational and representative of chaos: Joyce acts “a tremendous libel on humanity” by re-presenting “the disgusting vulgarities of daily existence” (“Influence”: 336, 338) on the one hand, and Joyce’s prose style represents “the tendency of modern literature . . . towards vulgarity and incoherence and away from distinction and sobriety” (341) on the other. Those are general questions, but another criticism Aldington raises against *Ulysses* is much more significant, since it is particularly concerned with the artistic method:

Mr. Joyce is a modern Naturaliste, possessing a greater knowledge of intimate psychology, but without the Naturaliste preoccupation with *l’écriture artiste*. He is less conscious, more intuitive than the Naturalistes; if the expression is not too strained, he has made realism mystic. (333)

The difference between Joyce and the French Naturalistes is explained, apparently ironically, by Aldington: “there is also a good artistic reason for the abandonment of all unity of prose tone, a unity always observed by the French Naturalistes” (339). This question of the loss of unity, form and order is the very battlefield of the early *Ulysses* criticisms, and even after Valery Larbaud famously explicates “the plan” — Aldington has written his diatribe before that, and thus Eliot admits that Aldington “fails more honourably” (*SP*. 175) — a strong critic like John Middleton Murry insists that “‘Ulysses’ has a form, a subtle form, but the form is not strong enough to resist overloading, not sufficient to prevent Mr. Joyce from being the victim of his own anarchy” (“Ulysses”. 120), just as Eliot himself has earlier ascribed the “artistic failure” of John Donne’s sermons to the fact that “Donne had more in him than could be squeezed into the frame of this form: something which, if it does not crack the frame, at least gives it, now and then, a perceptible outward bulge” (“The Preacher as Artist”. *Athenaeum* (28 Nov. 1919): 1252). To contradict such a label as “the victim of his own anarchy” is *the* task of Eliot the critic as a

champion of Joyce's *Ulysses* as well as his own *The Waste Land*, especially in the face of such a criticism as directed at his own work by Louis Untermeyer:

As an echo of contemporary despair, as a picture of dissolution of the breaking-down of the very structures on which life has modelled itself, "The Waste Land" has a definite authenticity. But an artist is, by the very nature of creation, pledged to give form to formlessness; even the process of disintegration must be held within a pattern. ("Disillusion vs. Dogma". *Freeman*, 7 Jan. 1923. 81)

This is indeed a difficult task, since Eliot, while agreeing with this artist's "pledge", cannot escape from his acute awareness of the "contamination" of / by History and thus the "impossibility" of fulfilling such a pledge. It is in this context that Eliot in "UOM" makes such a paradoxical statement, which is, in fact, the very *raison d'être* of "the mythical method":

It is, I think, because Mr. Joyce and Mr. Lewis, being "in advance" of their time, felt a conscious or probably unconscious dissatisfaction with the form [i.e., the novel], that their novels are more formless than those of a dozen clever writers who are unaware of its obsolescence. (SP. 177)

Thus the "contamination" of / by History is dogmatically transcended — "dogmatically" in the true sense of the word, that is, the present paradox is resolved by the prophesy that the past is dead ("its obsolescence") and that the advent is near ("in advance").

### 3. the exposure and the burlesque

Although it was Eliot's dogmatic rhetoric with which he proclaimed the advent of a new epoch that transubstantiated his theoretical "zero" into a canonical text of the modernist criticism, this notion of the advent was, in fact, foreclosed by his own earlier essay, "Lettre d'Angleterre: Le style dans la prose anglaise contemporaine", contributed to *Nouvelle Revue Française* (1 Dec. 1922):

The influence of Pater [esp. "On Style"] culminates and disappears, I believe, in the work of James Joyce. . . . It is my opinion that *Ulysses* is not so much a work that opens a new epoch [une oeuvre qui ouvre une époque nouvelle] as it is a gigantic conclusion of a passed epoch [le gigantesque aboutissement d'une époque révolue]. In this work Joyce has achieved a result which is singular, singularly distinguished, and perhaps unique in literature: the distinction consists of having no style at all — and not having one, not in a negative sense, but on the contrary in a very positive sense. I want to say that Mr. Joyce's work is not a pastiche, but that nonetheless it possesses none of those signs which allow us to diagnose the presence of a style. ("Le style": 754; my translation)

In short, *Ulysses* is remarkable not because it invents an entirely new method, but because it achieves a sort of "impersonality" by way of having no style — again an apparent paradox of the artist's singular "distinction" achieved by his/her self-less "impersonality". It must be noted

here that Eliot's witty phrase in French, "having no style at all . . . in a very positive sense", does, in fact, mean that *Ulysses* is an accumulation of *all* styles on a "gigantic" scale, as he has earlier remarked more frankly to his American audience:

Certainly, great works of art do in some way mark or modify an epoch, but less often by the new things which they make possible, than by the old things to which they put an end. . . . So the intelligent literary aspirant, studying *Ulysses* [sic], will find it more an encyclopaedia of what he is to avoid attempting, than of the things he may try for himself. It is at once the exposure and the burlesque of that of which it is the perfection.  
 ("London Letter, Aug. 1922": 329)

Gilbert Seldes was writing of *Ulysses* as "a gigantic travesty" and "a burlesque epic" in the same month as Eliot was writing the above sentences:

It is not surprising that, built on the framework of the "Odyssey," it burlesques the structure of the original as a satire-play burlesqued the tragic cycle to which it was appended; nor that a travesty of the whole of English prose should form part of the method of its presentation. Whether a masterpiece can be written in caricature has ceased to be an academic question.  
 ("*Ulysses*": 211)

Michael North directs his attention to this synchronous use of the term "burlesque" and connects it with contemporary burlesque<sup>(23)</sup>: "The term is, of course, innocent and ancient enough, and yet *The Dial* had, through the writings of Seldes and the drawings of Cummings, made contemporary burlesque an integral part of its aesthetic" (*Reading*. 151). Although North's cultural studies of the term is most interesting, I must take notice here that what Eliot apparently means by the term "burlesque" is that of the whole English prose style, not of *Odyssey*, and so, if those two quotations above are to be compared, the counterpart of "at once the exposure and the burlesque of that of which it is the perfection" should rather be "a [gigantic] travesty of the whole of English prose".

In fact, such a reading of *Ulysses* as "an encyclopaedia of what he is to avoid attempting", i.e., "the whole of English prose", has been first established by Pound's earlier polemic, "James Joyce et Pécuchet" (*Mercure de France*, 1 June 1922):

. . . but Joyce has completed the great collection of follies [le grand sottisier]. In a single chapter he discharges all the clichés of the English language like an uninterrupted river. In another chapter he includes the whole history of English verbal expression since the first alliterative verse (it is the chapter in the hospital where Mrs. Purefoy's delivery is awaited). In another we have the headlines ["en-tête"] of *Freeman's Journal* since 1760, that is to say the history of journalism; and he does that without interrupting the flow of his book.  
 (313- 4; my translation)

In short, Eliot's "encyclopedia", Seldes' "gigantic travesty", and Pound's "grand sottisier" all share the perspective that, while the whole history of the English prose style is contaminated, *Ulysses* successfully puts an end to it by *foregrounding* its nature as a whole. They also share a

critical stance which is purely stylistic, and so the “history” here is that of “style” and has nothing to do with the “contaminated” History discussed above. There are, however, significant differences among them as to on what points their critical emphases are really placed. The other point Seldes raises apart from “a gigantic travesty” in the above quotation is that the “framework” of *Odyssey* must be taken as “burlesque”, just as “a satyr-play burlesqued the tragic cycle to which it was appended”. Seldes, in other words, ascribes the significance of employing *Odyssey* to its (critical<sup>(26)</sup>) effect, rather than its framing power. On the contrary, Pound finds this scaffold [échafaudage] “doesn’t really matter” as long as it “does not restrict the action, nor inconveniences it, nor harm its realism or the contemporaneity of its action” (“Pécuchet”: 314; my translation). What is significant for Pound is “son réalisme” — he praises *Ulysses* as “un roman réaliste par excellence” (317) — and thus the “scaffold” employed in *Ulysses* is not what the work’s real “effect” consists of, nor the first requisite, but simply “a means of regulating the form” (314).

Eliot is ambiguous as usual. He never really “reads” *Ulysses*, but all he does is a sort of general meta-comments here and there without actually referring to any particular passage or chapter. In fact, Eliot could have taken the logic of Seldes and elaborated his appreciation of *Ulysses* by appealing to its defamiliarizing effect, like Jonson’s “creative” satire, by way of employing Homer’s *Odyssey* as “a logic of [its] own”, which “illuminates the actual world, because it gives us a new point of view from which to inspect it” (*SW*. 117). Or, following Pound’s portrayal of Bloom as “the sensual average man, the basis . . . of democracy” (314), Eliot could have appreciated *Ulysses* as the “truest” reflection of the “contemporary history” contaminated by democracy. Those incoherent portraits are expected by my mapping and, in fact, just partly drawn in some passages I have cited in this chapter. It was, however, the dogmatic “mythical method” that Eliot’s long-awaited, much-belated article suddenly proclaimed, and, as is often the case with a dogma, this “mythical method” was to be conceived by its admirers and detractors alike as *the* norm of Eliot’s critical programme, whereas imposing such a dogma is, as I have taken pains to show, nothing but an abnormal “act of violence”.

#### IV. Towards the Portrait of the Artist as a Collector

*I am unpacking my library. Yes, I am. The books are not yet on the shelves,  
not yet touched by the mild boredom of order.*

*the life of a collector manifests a dialectical tension between the poles of  
disorder and order.*

——— Walter Benjamin, “Unpacking My Library”

The “mythical method” is so often conceived not only as the norm of Eliot’s critical program, but also as the very ground on which *The Waste Land* must be read. Thus the influential reading of the poem by Terry Eagleton — “the ‘form’ of that poem is in contradiction with its ‘content’” (148) — is based on such a narrative: “if history is indeed sterility then the work itself could not come into being, and if the work exists then it does so only as an implicit denial of its ‘content’” (149). The first half agrees with my argument that significant art is

impossible in the face of the “contamination” of / by History; but the latter half follows the logic of the “mythical method” — here lies the “contradiction”, but this is not so much a contradiction inherent in *The Waste Land* as that of the “mythical method” to Eliot’s critical (and creative) programme. A more recent, more suggestive case of such a “misreading” of the poem based on the misleading normalization of the “mythical method” can be found in Richard Murphy’s reading of *The Waste Land* in the light of expressionists’ avant-gardism:

T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* is a modernist variation on the avant-garde strategies of montage and re-writing. Although his confrontation with a discursively pre-determined world appears very similar at first glance, in actuality it is motivated by very different interests from those of the expressionists. As Eliot’s essay on “Ulysses” makes clear, he is concerned above all to discover (or impose) a degree of “order” with regard to the chaotic modern world and its “immense panorama of futility and anarchy.” As a consequence his extensive use of quotation constitutes the attempt to *graft* his own discourse onto those classical texts . . . (256; n.16)

If *The Waste Land* is, as I have claimed, not “motivated” — nor “ordered” — by the “mythical method”, it may well be possible to “graft” the poem onto “the avant-garde strategies of montage and re-writing” so that fresh light be thrown upon the poem’s political kernel, as Murphy does upon expressionism.

The way to graft *The Waste Land* onto “the avant-garde strategies of montage and re-writing” is, in fact, prepared by Eliot himself, who has earlier advocated a less well-known, but no less significant “historical method” in “The Method of Mr. Pound” (*Athenaeum*, 24 Oct. 1919). This review claims that, while “[m]ost poets grasp their own time, the life of the world as it stirs before their eyes, at one convulsion or not at all” without any “method for closing in upon it”, Pound, instead,

proceeds by acquiring the entire past; and when the entire past is acquired, the constituents fall into place and the present is revealed. Such a method involves immense capacities of learning and of dominating one’s learning, and the peculiarity of expressing oneself through historical masks. Mr. Pound has a unique gift for expression through some phase of past life. This is not archeology or pedantry, but one method, and a very high method, of poetry. It is a method which allows of no arrest, for the poet imposes upon himself, necessarily, the condition of continually changing his mask; *hic et ubique*, then we’ll shift our ground. (1065)

The basic vision is revelation of the present caused by acquisition of “the entire past” (a sort of “apocatastasis”<sup>(27)</sup>); the requirement is “a unique gift” (“the individual talent”) and “immense capacities” (“great labour”); and the method in practice is “the condition of continually changing his mask”.

Since it is “the method of Mr. Pound”, Eliot possibly had in mind Pound’s “method of Luminous Detail”, which is “hostile” to “the method of multitudinous detail” as well as to “the method of sentiment and generalisation” (“Osiris”. 21):

Any fact is, in a sense, “significant”. Any fact may be “symptomatic”, but certain facts give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law. . . . The artist seeks out the luminous detail and presents it. He does not comment. (22, 23)

This is indeed an “avant-garde strategy of montage”:

Method of this project [the Arcade Project]: literary montage. I needn't say anything. Merely show. I shall purloin no valuables, appropriate no ingenious formulations. But the rags, the refuse — these I will not inventory but allow, in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them. (460; [N1a,8])

Such an attempt to graft Eliot-Pound's “method” onto a radical avant-gardist aesthetics and politics is virtually *foreclosed* by a commonly acknowledged mapping of their critical programme which is regulated — or “ordered” — by the “mythical method”. The consequence is an overall colonization: the “mythical method” has, owing to the admirers and the detractors alike in complicity, colonized the items, such as the “historical method”, in my “Mapping T. S. Eliot”. What is then important and indeed necessary is, I want to claim in conclusion, to read *The Waste Land* — as well as *Ulysses*, the *Cantos*, and what Hugh MacDiarmid calls “The Long Poem” — *against the grain* of the “mythical method”, that is to say a reading discharged of the generalizing dogma and instead charged with full potentiality of “grafting” and dissemination. One notable example is William Spanos' deconstructive reading — or “de-struction” — of *The Waste Land* against the grain of Josef Frank's “impulse to neutralize the terror of radical historicity by annihilating or transcending temporality itself”, which is “the strategy of spatialization [which] takes the form of what Eliot calls ‘the mythical method’” (226). On my part, then, I'd rather “unpack” the poem again and again, always keeping in mind that the poem is “not yet touched by the mild boredom of order”, than package it up and put labels on it — labels such as “the mythical method” or a “Modernist” masterpiece.

## Notes

- (1) In 1920 Seldes became the managing editor, assisted by Kenneth Burke and Sophia Wittenberg, of *The Dial*, which enjoyed “the most exciting [years: 1920 – 22] in *The Dial*'s history, years as exuberant and bold as any in the entire span of literary magazines in the United States” (Kammen. 41). One of the most “exuberant and bold” decisions by Seldes was, of course, the publication of “The Waste Land” after a painstaking negotiation. See Kammen, Ch.2, esp. 58– 61.
- (2) See North. *Reading 1922*. Ch.4.
- (3) Eliot was ready to list Prof. Ker's name together with Remy de Gourmont, “a real master of fact”: “You must know what to compare and what to analyse. The late Professor Ker had skill in the use of these tools” (“The Function of Criticism”. *SE*. 33). It is reported that W. P. Ker gave the courses on “Form and Style” with many variations in 1897– 98, 1902– 3, 1904– 5, 1907– 8, 1914– 5, 1917– 8, and 1920– 1.
- (4) Anthony Ward, in his argument of Hegel's influence on Pater, parallels Pater's “mind” with Hegel's “Geist” (68).



- (5) Cf. "In a point of fact it is far less an account of this actual world than a clear addition built upon it, a classic sanctuary in which the rationalist fancy may take refuge from the intolerably confused and gothic character which mere facts present. It is no *explanation* of our concrete universe, it is another thing altogether, a substitute for it, a remedy, a way of escape." (William James. 15)
- (6) See Jameson, "Historicism": 50-55. It is interesting that Jameson employs a metaphor of "Tiresias drinking the blood" (51) as if actually referring to T. S. Eliot.
- (7) Such elective affinity between the "early" pre-conversion Eliot and the "early" pre-Marxist Lukács is indeed striking and certainly worth another monograph. A possible connection of Eliot with Lukács is first notified by Franco Moretti and then elaborated by Michael North ("Lukács", *Political*).
- (8) See Greimas and Rastier. As for its practical applications, see Jameson. esp. *Political*.
- (9) "Although his concern for literary form and the embracing social form he called a 'framework' is in evidence before *The Waste Land*, after the publication of that poem, and while critics were debating its mood, meaning, and problematical unity, Eliot moved insistently in the direction of exploring 'framework', the form of forms for writers and other wandering pilgrims." (Lentricchia. 279)
- (10) "Comparison and analysis, I have said before, and Remy de Gourmont has said before me (a real master of fact — sometimes, I'm afraid, when he moved outside of literature, a master illusionist of fact), are the chief tools of the critic." ("The Function of Criticism". *SE*. 32-3); "[Mr. Whibley] exercises neither of the tools of the critic: comparison and analysis." ("The Local Flavour". *SW*. 37)
- (11) As for the celebrated myth-maker, i.e., the "dissociation of sensibility", Eliot betrays no trace of "Anglican myth", until he admits his mistake "to lay the burden on the shoulders of Milton and Dryden" and ascribes the dissociation to "the same causes which brought about the Civil War" ("Milton II" (1947). *PP*. 153).
- (12) "by a 'kind of dramatic form' one means almost the temper of the age (not the temper of a few intellectuals); a preparedness, a habit, on the part of the public, to respond in a predictable way, however crudely, to certain stimuli" ("The Poetic Drama". *Athenaeum* (14 May 1920): 635). Notice that here "crude" is a positive value while "intellectuals" is rather negative, which reveals Eliot's primitivist tendency as to his imagined organic community.
- (13) Cf. "With the decline of orthodox theology and its admirable theory of the soul, the unique importance of events has vanished. A man is only important as he is classed. Hence there is no tragedy, or no appreciation of tragedy, which is the same thing" ("Eeldrop and Appleplex, I". *Little Review* (May 1917): 9).
- (14) Cf. "[The death and the funeral of Sarah Bernhardt] mark the termination of an epoch." ("Dramatis Personae". *Criterion* (Apr. 1923): 303)
- (15) Cf. "the Lancashire music-hall is excessively *intime* ; success depends upon the relation established by a comedian of strong personality with an audience quick to respond with approval or contempt." ("London Letter" (May 1921). *Dial* (June 1921): 687-8). Compare this observation with Eliot's organicist view of the Athenian / Elizabethan drama, and the "prelapsarian state" can be understood as the *form* — not the *content* — of communication.
- (16) In fact, Eliot's "middle classes" are more retarded than Lukács' "bourgeoisie", and are closer to the small peasants observed by Karl Marx: "the members of [the small peasants] live in similar conditions, but without entering into manifold relations with one another. . . They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (*Eighteenth Brumaire*. 608).
- (17) One notable aspect of Eliot's concept of History is that the class consciousness plays a distinctive role in it. At one end (or, in fact, the beginning), there is an idyllic retrospect of "[t]he Elizabethan morality" which was "not consciously of one social class alone, [and which] provided

a framework for emotions to which all classes could respond" ("Philip Massinger" [I]. *SW*. 134) — the class consciousness is not yet generated out of fixture of the class distinctions; at the other end, there is an apocalyptic prospect that "there will soon be only one class, and the second Flood is here" — the class consciousness is degenerated into mixture and dilution of the class distinctions. In short, History — between fixture and mixture of the class consciousness — is a certain span where "[a] man is only important as he is classed" ("Eeldrop and Appleplex, I". *Little Review* (May 1917): 9).

- (18) Cf. "Early formalism, we know, was embarrassed enough of the historical subject or Spirit (whether in the avatar of the author's biography or the story of his times) to transform poems into artifacts as seemingly emptied of historical subject as a Grecian Urn." (Liu: 740)
- (19) "even when the [Russian] Formalists explicitly acknowledged the need to take into account social and political factors in order to account for literary change, they proved incapable of proposing a method which would accomplish this." (Bennett. 64)
- (20) For instance, Andrew John Miller discusses Eliot's incoherence by employing Pierre Bourdieu's argument on the profound "ambivalence" of "[i]ntellectuals and artists" caused by their "interest in cultural proselytism" on the one hand and their "concern for cultural distinction" on the other (233), which corresponds to what Louis Menand has earlier phrased "the irony that characterizes the final phase of every professionalist project" (*Discovering*. 127) — this character is now called the "strongest suit as a critic" of Eliot the "controversialist" in Menand's latest essay ("T. S. Eliot". 19). In a less wide but no less significant perspective, David Goldie, by paying much closer attention to the actual polemics in particular literary journals (especially the exchange between Eliot and John Middleton Murry in the *Athenaeum*), points "to inconsistencies in the work of both men, to infelicities, and [to] moments at which they oversold their ideas in the heat of argument" (11).
- (21) Cf. As early as 1916, Eliot as an Extension Lecturer at Oxford claimed that "[b]oth currents [syndicalism and monarchism] express revolt against the same state of affairs, and consequently tend to meet" (qtd. in Moody. 44; also in Schuchard. 164). This claim was, in fact, later proved by Eliot himself, who was to become one of the earliest English critics who quoted Trotsky approvingly — just a decade after its publication — by saying that "Trotsky, whose *Literature and Revolution* is the most sensible statement of a Communist attitude that I have seen, is pretty clear on the relation of the poet to his environment" (*UPUC*. 135). Here the matching is made in terms of the relation of the literary and the extraliterary, on which I focus my present study.
- (22) One of the earliest monograph in book form by Herbert S. Gorman (1924) contains "A Selected List of Articles on 'Ulysses'" (233 – 4), which lists 16 articles. Most of these articles were published in the first half of 1922, and only 2 in 1923 (J. C. Squire's in April and T. S. Eliot's in November).
- (23) Chinitz connects "Marie Lloyd" and "Marianne Moore" in terms of Eliot's relation to popular art. (238 – 240)
- (24) To speak of an age having "not sufficiently lost all form" seems quite peculiar, as it sounds as if losing all form had a positive value. Similar attitudes can be found, however, in most of his socio-historical observations. For example, when he deplores "the defect of [American] society" which made none of the great American writers "so great as they might have been", he writes: "[their world] was not corrupt enough" ("American Literature". *Athenaeum* (25 Apr. 1919): 237). Such a perspective can be understood as a manifestation of Eliot's apocalyptic — thus dialectic — vision of the history, which expects that a complete destruction of the old should *uncover* (apo-calyptse) the truly new.
- (25) ". . . In the USA, though, burlesque is also a disreputable form of comic entertainment with titillating dances or striptease." (*Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*)
- (26) Cf. "In a sense, the term ["burlesque"] suggests a tradition, beginning with the satyr-play, in

which the obscene *is* critical in and of itself.” (North. *Reading*. 152)

- (27) Cf. “. . . And so on, ad infinitum, until the entire past is brought into the present in a historical apocatastasis” (Benjamin. *Arcade*. 459; [N1a,3]). The meaning of “apocatastasis” is “restoration of all things”, derived from “Jewish apocalyptic, Stoic, and Neoplatonic-Gnostic traditions, the concept originally referred to the recurrence of a specific planetary constellation” (989; note 3). John F. Lynen, one of the few critics who place great significance on this method, regards this vision as Eliot’s “mild sarcasm”: “By 1919 Eliot appreciated the need to make every view of the past seem incomplete, so that real time could appear to exist” (377). It is of great interest that in such inevitable incompleteness there lies a moment of dialectics — “As far as the collector is concerned, his collection is never complete” (*Arcades*. 211; [H4a,1]) — just as in the famous sentence in “Tradition and the Individual Talent”: “The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered” (*SW*. 50). Fredric Jameson, in his argument “towards dialectical criticism”, quotes this part, explaining that “[i]t is of course a profoundly dialectical concept”. (*Marxism and Form*. 314)

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*Some contributions, collected but with significant revisions, are included.*

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APPENDIX

