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CRITICAL OPINION

Editing Eliot

JIM McCUE

NOT ENOUGH of T. S. Eliot's writing is in print, we complain, and the editions we have are inadequate because they contain no scholarly apparatus. The only two to have appeared in full academic dress, strangely, are editions of lectures and poems that Eliot chose not to publish. Because he wished there to be no biography his widow has never co-operated with a biographer, and information about him remains scattered, sometimes inaccessible. Publication of his letters has been at a standstill since the first volume in 1988, access to holdings in some archives is denied until distant dates, and requests for copyright permission are routinely refused. Mrs Eliot has squirrelled away untold treasures (including much of Eliot's library), and strengthens her control over material by buying back her husband's letters in the auction rooms. This extreme protectiveness is abetted by Faber & Faber, of which she is a major shareholder.

Now though, we are entering a new era in the publication of T. S. Eliot which may well make us nostalgically grateful for

what Faber and his widow have done for him, and persuade us that their custodianship was prudent after all. *Selected Essays* (first published in 1932), *Selected Poems* (Penguin, 1948; Faber since 1954) and *Collected Poems 1909-1962* (1963) may be old-fashioned, but they are consistently in print, their texts are stable, and they have introduced the work to generations. Because Faber books have looked so inviting, they have appealed to a wide audience, and Eliot is still enjoyed as well as studied. His serious work has mostly been protected from exploitation, and although publication has been glacially slow, books such as Donald Gallup's bibliography, the facsimile edition of the drafts of *The Waste Land*, Helen Gardner's *The Composition of 'Four Quartets'*, the first volume of letters and *Inventions of the March Hare* have, in their different ways, been meticulous and worthy of their subject.

Faber brought Eliot into the mainstream of publishing, and in return he built its formidable poetry list. Gradually, the firm became a useful institutional shell: as the pressures on the most famous poet in the world increased, the front door of 24 Russell Square protected him against invasion. Later volumes of his letters will eventually show how much of the second half of his career was spent selflessly trying to help innumerable literary waifs. Perhaps the evidence of this generosity will correct the widespread but absurd image of him as an anti-Semitic misogynist who should be read only as the supreme example of the unpalatable corruption of intellectual life in the first half of the last century. Eliot valued his privacy, yet as early as 1951 he permitted the revelation of a considerable amount of painful biographical information, not least about his breakdown in the 1920s, in D. D. Paige's edition of *The Letters of Ezra Pound 1907-1941*. Though a Faber book, this contained much candid criticism of the firm itself and impatience with Eliot's 'keerful Criterese'. With Pound by then under attack for his politics, the publication of his early letters showed how crucial he had been in the emergence of a modern literature and was perhaps partly a form of homage by Eliot, partly a means of setting Pound at a distance. There had been a time when Pound spoke for Eliot, but no longer. Yet while Pound proved an impossible colleague and sometimes an embarrassment, as

an editor he was uniquely trusted by T. S. Eliot. And Eliot, although he was a diligent writer of prefaces and introductions and once made *A Choice of Kipling's Verse*, only ever put his name as editor to two books: Ezra Pound's *Selected Poems* and Ezra Pound's *Literary Essays*.

Thanks to the genius of Faber design, readers in Britain have a stronger feeling for what Eliot's books ought to look like than readers in America, and it is in the United States, where the copyright position is different, that unauthorised editions of Eliot have begun to appear. An Everyman selection of *Poems* to 1922 published in 1998 was followed three years later by *The Waste Land' and Other Writings* in the Random House Modern Library, and by a Norton Critical Edition of the poem. Latest into this presumably lucrative field is *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary Prose*, edited, with annotations and introduction, by Lawrence Rainey, published by Yale University Press, and to this bad cause Ronald Bush has lent his good name. 'This book will take its place as the standard edition of one of the most important documents of twentieth-century literature in English', he wrote, not in a judicious review but in a pre-publication jacket puff. Yet this edition of *The Waste Land* is less reliable than the old ones it sets out to displace, and ought to be withdrawn until at least its textual errors have been corrected. The Everyman and the Modern Library volumes have few pretensions, but Rainey's edition is presented as a work of scholarship. It will be a source of confusion and bewilderment for years unless it is challenged in detail now.

With no mention of the longstanding publication of the poem by Harcourt Brace in the US and by Faber & Faber in the UK, *The Annotated Waste Land* makes little effort to pay its dues. Instead there is a colophon claiming 'copyright © 2005 by Lawrence Rainey', *tout court*. When Harcourt Brace published a '75th anniversary edition' of the poem in 1997, it proleptically claimed 'Copyright 1922 Esme Valerie Eliot' – four years before she was born – but it was at least clear what she was laying claim to and why. Rainey's assertion of copyright feels like a legal bluff and a rebuff to the Eliot estate, as though he could do without it. Negligently, his title page manages to give the chosen form of

neither the name of the author nor the title of the poem – ‘not “Waste Land”, please, but “*The Waste Land*”’ (Eliot to Pound in August 1922).¹ Yale’s plan was evidently to package the poem with line-by-line annotation in the style of B. C. Southam’s *Guide*, along with a selection of prose, and with some maps and photographs of City churches and the Hofgarten to entice browsers who like their guidebooks illustrated. But while the introduction speaks of ‘the reader who comes to Eliot’s masterpiece for the first time’, the edition’s minutiae and Lawrence Rainey’s accompanying book *Revisiting ‘The Waste Land’* (also from Yale) are addressed to readers deeply familiar with the poem who may now wish to know about the watermarks in Eliot’s paper or the fount-widths of his different typewriters. Once again, the first approach to a work of literature tries simultaneously to be the last word in scholarship.

Whatever the audience, it is an editor’s first duty to present a reliable text. Yet whether in the poem itself or in Eliot’s notes, in the supporting material from his journalism or in the editorial apparatus, Rainey fails to print the right words. Eliot did not write ‘A poet like Donne, or like Baudelaire or Laforgue, may also be considered the inventor of an attitude’ (p. 146); he wrote ‘may almost be considered the inventor of an attitude’. He did not write ‘But the effect of the portraits of Dryden is to turn the object into something greater’ (p. 177); he wrote ‘is to transform the object into something greater’. He did not write ‘I can say nothing about either of the two new ballets’ (p. 184); he wrote ‘either of the new ballets’. He did not write ‘He has his favourites, and they are chosen by his emotion rather than design’ (p. 185); he wrote ‘and these are chosen’. He did not write ‘Mr. Strachey never seems to impose himself, he never drives towards a theory’ (p. 186); he wrote ‘he never drives a hint towards a theory’. He did not write ‘the poets of the seventeenth century (up to the Revolution) were the direct and natural development of the precedent age’ (p. 196); he wrote ‘direct and normal development’. He did not write ‘if we are to judge of styles of poetry by their abuse, examples may be found in Cleveland to justify Johnson’s condemnation’ (p. 194); he wrote ‘enough examples’.

Enough examples to justify condemnation? Clearly, and these all come from the sixty-five pages of 'Eliot's Contemporary Prose'. Failures in transcription continue throughout the book. As well as in Eliot's prose and poetry, English and French, there are errors in quotations from Augustine, Baudelaire, the Bible, Catullus, John Day, Dryden, Gautier, Goldsmith, Hazlitt, Hesse, Henry King, Kyd, Marvell, Milton, Gérard de Nerval, Poe, Sappho, Shakespeare, Spenser, Tennyson, Verlaine and Webster. Almost anywhere the reader stops to compare a quotation with its original, he will find something wrong with it, and these failings are especially damaging because *The Waste Land* makes so much of quotation and misquotation. It may be a poem about the loss of cultural memory, but an editor need not demonstrate by example.

Most serious are the dozen or so mistakes which appear in the text of the poem itself, despite a ten-page 'Note on the Text' and six pages of 'Historical Collation'. During 1922-3, the poem made four debuts, both in a journal and as a book on each side of the Atlantic. Rainey takes as his copy text the American book-form edition (Boni & Liveright, New York, 1922: *B*) on the grounds that this is what Eliot himself used when the poem was collected for the first time in *Poems 1909-1925* (Faber, 1925). This was certainly more accurate than the Hogarth Press edition (*H*), hand-set by Virginia Woolf, which contained the assertion that 'A crowd flowed under London Bridge' – a ludicrous aquatic vision that Rainey's historical collation fails to record. The British journal appearance, as the star attraction in the first issue of *The Criterion* (*C*), suffered from what Eliot called 'undesired alterations', and among those Rainey has not noticed are 'Telling' for 'Tolling' in line 383, the capital letter on 'What' in line 401, a line space after line 318, a full stop in line 163 and commas at the ends of lines 201 and 209.

Rainey also dismisses the printing in *The Dial* in October 1922 (*D*) as merely 'derived from that of' *B*, though repetition of the phrase 'no independent authority' in consecutive sentences is not quite the conclusive argument he assumes: given that *C* and *D* agree against *B* on more than fifteen occasions, a clearer demonstration might have been advisable. He tells us

that the *Dial* papers do not mention setting copy from Eliot or proofs sent to him, and so takes the *D* text to be second-hand. What is not clear is whether the printers of *B* sent proofs of their setting to the printers of *D*, or sent on the typescript. If they sent the typescript, then the *D* setting is an independent witness to what Eliot typed. Given the difficulty of the text and its layout, and the large number of turned lines in *B* which make the spacing all the harder to follow, any printer could tell that the job would be easier and more accurate from the typescript, and a few clues suggests that this is what was sent. Between lines 365 and 366,

– But who is that on the other side of you?

and

What is that sound high in the air

The Dial printed a blank line, as did *The Criterion*, the Hogarth Press and all Faber editions. The *B* text, however, begins a new page at line 366, so no space between the lines is apparent. Rainey's text therefore has no space (and his collation makes no mention of it). If the *Dial* printer had been following page proofs of *B*, would he not have made the same mistake as Rainey? Conceivably, the *Dial* printer was following galley proofs in which the blank line *had* been set? But then how did he know to insert the blank line after 'Bringing rain' (l. 394) that is also present in all texts except *B*? For this falls in the middle of Boni & Liveright's page, and if a blank line had been present in galley it would have been printed in the book. Finally, at line 42 Boni & Liveright printed 'Od' und leer das Meer', but *The Dial* printed 'Öd' und leer das Meer'. It is possible that the printer knew enough German to recognise that *B* had omitted the umlaut, but the balance of evidence is that he was setting from the typescript.

Rainey's textual analysis is based upon what he claims are eight errors in *B*. Of these eight, he asserts, Eliot corrected five in the Hogarth proofs, and three in the Faber edition. The evidence is open to other interpretations. For instance,

'tonight' at line 111 (*B*) is said to be a definite error for 'what was then current English usage, "to-night"' (*C, D, H*). Yet the facsimile of the drafts shows Eliot typing 'tonight' (p. 16). It could be that when it came to print he insisted upon the hyphen, but it is at least possible that the hyphen was inserted by the printers.² Similarly, we are assured that 'alright' at line 161 (*B, H*) is an error for 'all right' (*C, D*). Yet the typescript has 'allright', which is also found in Eliot's handwriting.³ If that unusual form is what the printers received, it is not surprising that two of them regularised it one way by removing an 'l' while the other two regularised it by making it two words. Yet other discrepancies between the first printings of the poem must be due to differences in the typescripts. No printer would have changed 'From which a golden Cupidon peeped out' (*B, D, H*) to 'Wherefrom . . .' (*C*). Apparently the printers did not have carbons of the same copy.

When the printers save Eliot from a mistake in punctuation, Rainey berates them as 'officious'; but not all printer's adjustments are sinful, some are matters of taste and local style. Rainey is too ready to assume that a discrepancy is an error. So the absence of an apostrophe in the repeated cry of 'HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME' (*B, D*) is interpreted as a mistake which Eliot corrected in the Hogarth edition but then overlooked in 1925. It may be better to think in terms not of a mistake but of an inconsistency which Eliot did not care about greatly or else was in two minds about.⁴ If it is a mistake, we must imagine this exacting classicist (and his officious printer) failing on five occasions to notice a glaring solecism in the proofs of *B*, and the writer then failing again to notice it when the poem was reprinted in 1925, 1932 and 1936. The lack of apostrophes here – and on five occasions in 'dont' and 'wont' – is more probably due to Eliot having at least for a time intended their conspicuous absence, like missing teeth in the mouths of the publican's customers. 'I want to avoid trying [to] show pronunciation by spelling' he wrote (for Pound) on the draft,⁵ but this would not preclude visual reference to the working class's traditional picturesque uncertainty with apostrophes. After the Boni & Liveright edition, the experimental 'dont' and 'wont' were presumably deemed too ugly,

and either the printers or Eliot reverted to the more usual forms: Eliot certainly acquiesced, as the Faber editions show. But in the case of 'HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME', the Faber editions preferred to go without the apostrophe. The *Criterion* printer had tidied up Eliot's punctuation throughout, so apostrophes would be expected whatever his setting copy had said (and in C the barman's cry ends neatly each time with a full stop). But was it Virginia Woolf who supplied the apostrophes for the Hogarth edition?⁶ They reappeared when Penguin produced *Selected Poems*, but years later, back at Faber, they were spotted and removed once more; *Collected Poems 1909-1962* also omits them. Yet again, Rainey puts them back.

Most of the errors in Rainey's text of the poem, however, are not editorial choices between readings at all, for they are without warrant in any of the significant previous editions. Among these are the capital 'G' in 'Hyacinth Garden' (l. 37); the full stop at the end of 'Tell her I bring the horoscope myself.' (l. 58); the comma in the middle of 'Others can pick and choose, if you can't' (l. 154) and the pronoun in 'Amongst the rock we cannot stop or think', which has always previously read 'Amongst the rock one cannot stop or think' (l. 336). At line 370, 'Ringed by the flat horizon only', Rainey has lost the adjective altogether. When Eliot describes the call of the hermit thrush, so deceptively like water, two monosyllables provide the rhythm, 'Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop' (l. 357). The simple change from an alternating drip, drop to individual drops has an elongating effect as the parched listener waits for the very last of the song's notes to drop. An editor called Rainey might have been just the man to hear this, but instead he starts the line 'Drop drop drip drop . . .'. So the enterprise is eroded by errors.

The 'Historical Collation' is not only incomplete but deliberately restricted. In so far as it deals with the first Faber edition of *The Waste Land*, within *Poems 1909-1925* (when the dedication to Pound was added), it does not distinguish where the text follows *B* from where it follows *H*. From the many later editions, only one variant is noted, a change in 1936 in the quotation from the *Pervigilium Veneris* at line 428. This was presumably made by Eliot and has been followed by every

subsequent edition until Rainey's. As long ago as 1957 Robert Beare pointed out in his 'Notes on the Text of T. S. Eliot'⁷ that in correcting in pen an error in the Hogarth edition, Eliot had created a further intriguing variant. At line 96, he originally wrote 'In which sad light a carved dolphin swam', but in setting the type Woolf mistakenly repeated the adjective 'coloured' from the line above. In presentations, however, including the Faber family copy sold at Bonham's on 20 September 2005, Eliot changed this to 'carven'. Rainey is silent in his collation about this, as well as about a variant in C noted by Beare in line 425, and (although he mentions it elsewhere) about one in line 202 from the Mardersteig edition of 1962, which Eliot supervised. The 'Note on the Text' claims that this new Yale edition departs from its copy text at line 14, but does not say how. The line is not mentioned in the collation and is printed exactly as it always has been. Presumably '14' is just another of Rainey's misprints. What it refers to is anyone's guess.

The Waste Land has always been a challenge to tidy-minded printers. Its cacophony of voices is matched by clashes of convention in indicating speech or quotation. Lines in foreign languages are often but not always italicised. Spoken words, or quoted by the speaker, are sometimes not indicated at all:

He'll want to know what you done with that money he gave
 you
 To get yourself some teeth. He did, I was there.
 You have them all out, Lil, and get a nice set . . .

Then, transforming the line we have just read:

He said, I swear, I can't bear to look at you.

Not only is Lil's friend speaking to her, but we now find that reported speech within her remarks has shifted, unsignalled, to direct quotation. 'You have them all out, Lil' has to be read a second time, no longer as merely the advice of a bickering female friend but now as the earnest request of a husband repelled by his wife.

Elsewhere, speech or sounds or even half-formed thoughts may be set in what Eliot, resorting to French, called ‘guillemets’:⁸

And still she cried, and still the world pursues,
“Jug Jug” to dirty ears.

“Well now that’s done: and I’m glad it’s over.”

In ‘III. The Fire Sermon’, three successive strophes are separately enclosed in inverted commas. The voice seems to be continuous but the closure of each speech with the strophe points otherwise:⁹

“Trams and dusty trees.
Highbury bore me. Richmond and Kew
Undid me. By Richmond I raised my knees
Supine on the floor of a narrow canoe.”

“My feet are at Moorgate . . . ”

Do the knees and feet really belong to different speakers? Odder yet are the passages when inverted commas are opened at the start of successive lines:

“Stetson!
“You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
“That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
“Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
“Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?

Even to a reader familiar with it, this anachronistic (or foreign) convention must always have added to the feeling of disturbance. In the absence of closing inverted commas to keep order among a succession of speakers, the apparently nested quotations suggest a new interrogator chiming in at every line, while exclamation marks and question marks become increasingly insistent. The effect of cumulation, of voices within voices,

The sea was calm, your heart would have responded
 Gaily, when invited, beating obedient
 To controlling hands

I sat upon the shore
 Fishing, with the arid plain behind me

In Rainey's copyrighted version, 'I sat upon the shore' is not indented, so that it reads, after the blank line, as a new thought, a new paragraph, a new beginning. As Eliot intended, however, the indentation, in a passage so lightly punctuated, gives the phrase an ambivalent status: it suggests a half-line of dramatic dialogue, in reply to something sheared off (a full stop after 'controlling hands' was removed at some stage after the final extant draft). The line-numbering counts

To controlling hands

I sat upon the shore

as two lines, yet taken as one full line it responds to 'Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar', by rhyming with it. In the drafts Eliot had fiddled here with formulations about 'you' and 'I' but deleted them. Instead of words, he left that jagged space. The 'I' upon the shore is half-beached and tenuously half-hitched to the scene at sea. We cannot tell whether this is a different time or a different speaker, and we do not know what relation 'I' might have to the expert hands or the beating heart. Who is speaking, how many voices are heard and how many participants are described are all at issue – as so often in Eliot's poetry, from 'Let us go then you and I' (1915) to 'Who is the third who walks always beside you?' (1922) and 'I assumed a double part, and cried / And heard another's voice cry: "What! are you here?"' (1942).

Writing poetry by leaving things out, not telling things, evoking unanswerable questions and creating unsettling visual effects may be a strange procedure, but it was Eliot's elliptical way, so it would have been right to follow his intention – clear from the typescripts and the Faber editions – to demarcate the passages beginning 'The river sweats' and 'And no rock' by indenting them.

How and where to publish *The Waste Land* was a tricky question, because in those pre-Faber days modern poetry did not have its own house, and the poem was of an awkward length. The typescript that Ezra Pound saw in January 1922 was '19 pages, and let us say the longest poem in the English langwidge' (though Rainey says 'landwidge'). Eliot was reassured by Pound's 'complimenti' and asked 'Do you advise printing "Gerontion" as a prelude in book or pamphlet form?' Since his previous volume *Ara Vos Prec* (and its American counterpart, *Poems*) had opened with 'Gerontion' two years earlier, this would have been retrograde and enfeebling, as though *The Waste Land* were merely some further thoughts of that dry brain, and Pound insisted that the new epic must stand alone.¹¹

The combined number of copies of Eliot's three books of poems published in England to this date was probably less than a thousand, and the print run of his single American book of poems is unlikely to have been more.¹² Yet thanks to Pound and Eliot's unstinting patron John Quinn, American publishers vied to publish a poem they had not read, taking its prestige on trust. Reconstructing the negotiations, Rainey prints a letter Eliot wrote offering the work to the American publisher Maurice Firuski early in 1922 (Rainey dates it 16 February in one of his books and 26 February in the other, and has changed 'propose' to 'intend' since he first printed it in 1991):

My poem is of 435 lines; with certain spacings essential to the sense, 475 book lines; furthermore, it consists of five parts, which would increase the space necessary; and with title pages, some notes that I intend to add, etc., I guess that it would run from 28 to 32 pages.

Perhaps at the prompting of the rival publisher Horace Liveright, who had thought the poem too short to stand alone, Eliot not only emphasises spacing, but mentions the expedient of 'some notes'. Thirty-five years later he said that at first he 'intended only to put down all the references for my quotations, with a view to spiking the guns of critics of my earlier poems who had accused me of plagiarism'. Both journal printings,

however, gave the poem naked to the world, although *The Dial* had a note which advertised that the first ever annotated edition of *The Waste Land* was forthcoming from Boni & Liveright. That book edition was then the first to print the poem with line numbers, and thanks to the ‘annotations by Mr Eliot’, it and the Hogarth Press edition, both of them limited and numbered, included something extra, rather like an extra suite of prints. (Rainey is right to say that by the 1920s limited edition publishing ‘had become a routine step in a tripartite publishing program – journal, limited edition and public or commercial edition’, but wrong to suppose that this was an especially modernist manoeuvre: Rudyard Kipling, Ralph Hodgson and John Masefield did just the same.) As a result, and with the kind of ambivalence that Eliot enjoyed, the notes both are and are not integral to the poem. Purporting to explain it, they complete it, complicate it and undermine it. For if the poem pretends that its erudite quotations are allusions, echoes that will remind readers of other contexts, the notes acknowledge that no reader would ever recognise them all. The voices in the poem are almost all anonymous. Once they are attributed we can begin to ponder how to hear them, but no one reading the notes for the first time feels any the wiser. The enigma merely deepens. Unfortunately, Rainey omits the words ‘to Emmaus’ from the note to line 46, and three words from the note to line 401, concerning what he calls the ‘Unpanishads’. He prints Eliot’s original note on ‘C.i.f. London’ (l. 210), which explained the abbreviation as ‘carriage and insurance free’, rather than ‘cost insurance and freight’, as Eliot amended it at the end of his life, when the mistake was pointed out to him. Finally, Rainey prints the original explanation of ‘Shantih’, although Eliot softened it in 1932 and all subsequent editions, in a change which must be taken as his final intention.¹³

Eliot’s letter to Firuski mentions ‘title pages’. This may have meant a title page and a half-title page, perhaps even encompassing some preliminary blanks. Alternatively, it is possible that he was envisaging part-title pages for each section, and although no edition used these, both first editions and most of those issued since begin each section on a new page. (The Boni & Liveright

edition uses the section titles as running heads.) However, Rainey runs the sections on one after another, sacrificing something of the poem's visible history and reducing the impact, for instance, of the enigmatically brief 'IV. Death by Water'. In March 1922, when publicising his 'Bel Esprit' scheme to raise money to pay for Eliot to leave Lloyds Bank, Pound referred to *The Waste Land* as 'a series of poems', and this determined indeterminacy is constitutive of Eliot's poetry. In 1930 when Eliot issued his next book of new poetry (just managing twenty-eight pages without notes, if one counts the blanks), the title page called it *Ash-Wednesday* but only the dust-wrapper added 'SIX POEMS'. Each one, or each section as we more usually think of them, began on a new page. In his *Paris Review* interview in 1959, Eliot recalled that 'one or two drafts of parts' had been separately published, and that 'gradually I came to see it as a sequence' – singular and plural at once: 'That's one way in which my mind does seem to have worked throughout the years poetically – doing things separately and then seeing the possibility of fusing them together, altering them, and making a kind of whole of them'. *Four Quartets* too was (or were) explicitly ambiguous. The dust-wrapper flap explains: 'The four poems which make up this volume have all appeared separately: *Burnt Norton* first in 1936, *East Coker* in 1940, *The Dry Salvages* in 1941, and *Little Gidding* in 1942. The author, however, has always intended them to be published as one volume, and to be judged as a single work'. The dry, resistant style there gives away nothing except in the matter of identity: for though the blurb-writer uses the third person, he and the poet are evidently the same.

Four poems, then, but one work. So is it 'Burnt Norton' or *Burnt Norton* – a part or a whole? Is it simply length that earns italics, or separate publication – and what, then, if a work is later subsumed? 'Is "Absalom and Achitophel", is the "Letter to Arbuthnot," poetry?' asks Eliot in the essay on 'Prose and Verse' – and Rainey discriminates by italicising only the former title, while emphasising the length of Dryden's poem (given as 2,100 lines in a note on page 223 though only 1,031 lines in a note on page 236). This is his attempt at

scholarly standardisation, but when Eliot's essay is professionalised in this way, his conversational tone is lost. Again, when Eliot muses on 'the difference between De Quincey's "Dream Fugue" and Browne's "Urn Burial"', Rainey creates a categorical difference of his own by italicising Browne's title but not De Quincey's.

In a generation more widely literate than our own, the rules of presentation were more flexible, more personal. An expression such as 'Jonson's Works' could refer not narrowly to a book from 1616 but to Jonson's oeuvre (including plays that he had yet to write at that date), to what he worked upon – his handiworks – and to the claim to substance that he was making when he published them. Nowadays, though, editors routinely italicise Anthony Wood's *Athenae Oxoniensis* or Johnson's *Dictionary* or Coleridge's *Table Talk* without considering that these words are more than titles, they are descriptions of public monuments. 'No one who is willing to take some trouble about his pleasures complains of the *length* of the Divine Comedy, the Odyssey, or even the Aeneid': italicise those titles and Eliot's own italics lose some of their force. For him these were not bibliographical entries but features in the landscape of civilisation, and if, as he profoundly hoped, one could sensibly speak of 'the mind of Europe', this was its common parlance. The descriptive term 'Newman's Apology' refers not only to the book of 1864 but to its author's posture. Rainey, however, renders it 'Newman's *Apology*', which is less accurate since this English word does not appear in Newman's title. In the same paragraph, inconsistently, 'Gibbon's History' becomes the very different 'Gibbon's history'. As it appeared in the *Chapbook*, this essay 'Prose and Verse' never italicised titles. So when Eliot asked the reader to consider 'this whole passage about La Gioconda', he encompassed Walter Pater's rapture not only about the painting but about the girl. Rainey, though, italicises the name as though it were exclusively a title. Modern editors should beware of making it look as though writers have always processed their words to the standards of the Modern Language Association. Eliot was not manufacturing monographs, he was talking to an audience. In the same spirit, his editors should resist the use of dehumanising acronyms.

The massive annotation in the Hill–Powell edition of Boswell managed beautifully without them, and as a result it is a book to read as well as refer to. Mrs Eliot and those clever Faber designers achieved the same in the facsimile of the drafts of *The Waste Land* and the first volume of the letters – so why must Rainey’s books allot to these the ugly and unprecedented code names ‘*TWL:AF*’ and ‘*LOTSE*’?

Eliot’s citations do need to be brought up to modern standards, but the place for this is in the notes, and here Rainey is insufficiently officious. Eliot’s offhand practice has an intrinsic interest (like Empson’s), but scholarly annotation ought not to refer to Gray’s most famous poem as ‘The Country Churchyard’ or to Henry King’s as the ‘Exequy for His Wife’. (The King example is a particular travesty, since his poem’s magnificent containment so depends upon his never using the word ‘wife’ while honouring ‘his Matchless never to be forgotten Friend’.) In the essay on Andrew Marvell, Eliot writes casually of both ‘The Nymph and the Faun’ and ‘Marvell’s “Nymph and Faun”’. Rainey complicates matters by citing spurious titles invented by *The Oxford Book of English Verse* and *The Golden Treasury* including ‘The Girl Describes Her Fawn’, and four pages later, when he finally uses the true title, ‘The Nymph complaining for the death of her Faun’, he does not indicate that all of these are the same poem. Also in the essay on Marvell, Eliot quotes the line ‘It is such a King as no chisel can mend’ from the satirical ‘The Statue in Stocks-Market’. A helpful annotator would explain that the authorship of this broken-backed doggerel about Charles II is now, to put it mildly, disputed, but Rainey, while misspelling the title, gives no hint of this. If all of his citations from Marvell are taken, as he says, from Elizabeth Story Donno’s Penguin edition, did he not notice that she excludes the poem entirely? Other notes make errors of various kinds in the titles of works by Baudelaire, Buckingham, Dryden and Stravinsky, and by Byron – to whom he attributes an ‘essay’ called *English Bards and Scots Reviewers*.

Not only does Rainey feel free to normalise punctuation in Eliot’s prose, but he also indulges in freelance textual editing of writers quoted in his own annotations. In a passage from

The Spanish Tragedy, for instance, accents are added to word-endings for emphasis, but ill-advisedly because Rainey does not understand the flexibility of the iambic pentameter. Nor is he more successful with *The White Devil*. One of Eliot's notes gives Webster's lines

they'll re-marry
Ere the worm pierce your winding-sheet, ere the spider
Make a thin curtain for your epitaphs

but when Rainey copies this out in his own note, 'epitaphs' become 'epigraphs', though any recourse to sense should have told him that epigraphs go at the beginning and epitaphs, like obituaries, come at the end. Eye-skips damage the verse of both Milton and Tennyson, and other texts are cited so erratically that Spenser alone is in old spelling, whereas in an unexplained shift from prose to modern verse in the translation of Ovid, we are told that Jove is 'feeling pretty good'.

In buccaneering spirit, Rainey is not scrupulous in attributing the discoveries of others.¹⁴ Nor are the references that are given reliable. One implies that the volume of *Tercentenary Tributes* to Marvell in which Eliot's essay was reprinted was written entirely by Augustine Birrell; another gives the publisher of Grierson's *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems* as '(Oxford: Clarendon; London: Milsford)', as though there were two editions and poor misspelt Humphrey Milford were an imprint. Most amazingly of all, Rainey claims that in 1922 Edmund Gosse 'became editor of the *Sunday Times*'. Other biographical information is contentious too. Harold Monro may not have understood Eliot's poetry, but this does not mean that their relations were 'strained'. On the contrary, Eliot published 'Doris's Dream Songs' in Monro's *Chapbook* in 1924, and wrote a critical note for Monro's *Collected Poems*, issued posthumously in 1933. In his book about *The Criterion*, Jason Harding calls Monro 'one of the founding members of the Criterion group and a good personal friend of Eliot'. Nor can one rely upon the general cultural awareness of an editor who writes of 'the Southwark Bridge' and Shakespeare's 'Marc Antony', and

claims that Congreve was 'the author of many comedies' (there were four).

The 'contemporary prose' that Rainey chooses to reprint is all from 1921, the year *The Waste Land* was written. Overruling Donald Gallup's sequence (so that Gallup C123 comes before C119), Rainey claims to be able to specify the weekend when Eliot 'must have' written two pieces for Wyndham Lewis's *Tyro*, and maximises the confusion by explaining that 'it can be inferred' that the 'London Letter, May 1921', printed in the June issue of *The Dial*, was written in late April. Contemporary readers of that magazine were to see three London Letters from Eliot not reprinted here, and some favourable mentions of him before *The Waste Land* appeared in November 1922. By then Eliot was no longer the outsider: as the editors wrote the following month in a 'Comment' celebrating his receipt of the Dial Award, he was an increasingly well-known voice and 'an exceedingly active influence on contemporary letters'.

Rainey's confidence about dating arises from a series of intimidating tables he has compiled, describing every physical aspect of the writing papers that Eliot used for more than 630 letters and for the drafts of *The Waste Land*. However accurate they may be (and one must wonder), the degree of surety he derives from them is unwise. For example, three poems among the manuscripts are drafted on the same lined paper as some lecture notes Eliot took at Harvard, dated 2 October 1913 and 3-10 October 1913. On this basis alone, Rainey writes that there is 'little doubt that the three poems should be dated to the same period, between 2 and 10 October 1913'. Has Rainey never used left-over sheets of paper or returned to an old notebook long after first using it? This specific claim may well be right, and is of little significance, but Rainey's chronologies and challenges to Mrs Eliot's datings of letters would be sturdier if they did not rely upon conjectures such as 'Quite plainly, the paper was part of a small supply which he had purchased while in Margate, the remainder of which he then proceeded to use up while in London'. Who rules on 'plainly'?

Other nagging questions remain. Rainey claims to prove by dating the typescript that the name Madame Sosostriis cannot be taken from Aldous Huxley's Sesostriis the Sorceress, in

Crome Yellow (which title he misspells). In October 1921 Eliot wrote to Huxley's brother Julian to ask whether he would recommend the Lausanne psychiatrist Dr Roger Vittoz, and mentioned having just seen Aldous. *Crome Yellow* was published in November 1921, and in December in a letter from Paris, Vivien Eliot bewails 'That last evening –! at the Huxleys'.¹⁵ Might this have been a publication party? Given that a copy of the book is known from an inventory in 1934 to have been in Eliot's library, and that Eliot himself was 'almost certain' that he borrowed the name, an open verdict may be best. 'The name is obviously appropriate for someone who equivocates, or whose answer to every question is a variant of "so so"', writes Rainey – but is that really a sufficient explanation for such a coincidence of clairvoyants? If it wasn't a borrowing and there wasn't a common source – in the newspapers, perhaps? – then the similarity and synchronicity are uncanny.

In the case of Eliot's meeting with Pound in Paris in November 1921, Rainey asserts that 'it is unlikely that Pound would have had enough time to go through *The Waste Land*'. Why? Well:

Valerie Eliot assigns Eliot's departure from Paris to '22? November' [for which Rainey refers us to a page in the *Letters* that does not exist]. But a difficulty for this date is posed by Eliot's letter to the editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*, which was datelined Lausanne and published on 24 November. Surely it had to have been set in type by at least 23 November, and surely it must have been posted at least one day earlier, on 22 November. It seems to ask too much to suppose that Eliot could have taken the train from Paris to Lausanne, arrived, and then written and posted a letter the same afternoon. It seems more likely that he left Paris on 21 November, perhaps even 20 November.

After this chain of suppositions in a note, Rainey contradicts these dates by declaring as fact in his main text that 'Eliot departed for Lausanne, on either 21 or 22 November'. And so, since Eliot had not left London until the 18th or 19th (depending on which of Rainey's books you consult), his rush through Paris would have left him and Ez time to do no more

than gulp their bocks. But two seems and two surelys do not make a fact. In practice, letters to a weekly paper might be typeset days in advance, and although Eliot was responding to a review in the issue of Thursday, 17 November, the *TLS* stock book indicates that his letter was available to the Editor early in the following week. He may have posted it in England or France, using Lausanne as a poste restante address to advertise his absence, and in itself it is not proof of when he left Paris. Actually there is evidence of a relatively late departure, since on Monday, 5 December, Pound wrote to Scofield Thayer of seeing Eliot 'on his way through Paris last week', which if taken as literally as Rainey takes the 'Lausanne' dateline would mean during the week beginning on Sunday 27th. Rainey, however, is sure that Eliot stayed in Lausanne 'from 22 November until 2 January', arriving back in Paris 'on 2 January'. Again, this may be correct, but he does not present his reasons for disbelieving both Eliot's letter to André Gide of 14 December in which he said he would be leaving Lausanne at Christmas, and his letter to Sydney Waterlow of 19 December, which is headed 'Lausanne (leaving Saturday [i.e. Christmas Eve])'.¹⁶

Throughout these months, Eliot's principal focus was on writing his poem, and a major reason for travelling through Paris was to see his old collaborator. If, as Rainey believes, some 420 lines were in typescript when he left London,¹⁷ could a man in Eliot's state of creative excitement have kept them locked in his suitcase? As Lyndall Gordon prudently wrote, 'it seems likely' that Eliot showed Pound what he had written on his way out as well as on his way back. How much time was needed for this exercise depends upon what we imagine took place. Did Eliot show Pound the drafts and discuss them there and then as Pound read them through? Or did he give them to Pound to read at leisure, before meeting again on another day? The evidence of Pound's scrawls themselves points both ways, since they look hasty yet are so perceptive as to suggest careful consideration. Pound understood his responsibilities, and was later to write 'The more a man goes over a real writer the more he knows that *no reader* ever read anything the first time he saw it'.¹⁸ Eliot wrote on 20 January

1922 that the poem 'will have been three times through the sieve by Pound as well as myself',¹⁹ which is most readily interpretable as meaning first in Paris in November and again after Christmas, and thirdly by post, with two more letters from Pound later in January.

A letter to Quinn tells us that Eliot had had a long poem 'in mind' by late 1919. In 'Prose and Verse' in April 1921 he commented, 'I see no reason why a considerable variety of verse forms may not be employed within the limits of a single poem', and perhaps by then he was meditating an experiment on those lines. Elsewhere, too, his journalism of 1921 overlaps with the poem – Eliot added his voice, for instance, to the protests against the mooted demolition of nineteen City churches, which included St Mary Woolnoth and St Magnus Martyr – and yet many of his critical assimilations have no direct bearing on the creative ones. The *TLS* pieces that we know from *Selected Essays* are exceptionally powerful realignments of literary reputation, but most of the seventeenth century writers they discuss are not implicated in his poem. The 'London Letters' are much weaker, and illustrate principally what Eliot's poetry had to overcome – a tendency for his despair at vulgarity to issue in condescension. One of the good things about Rainey's edition is the extract from 'The Fire Sermon' delivered by Buddha. Given in the Harvard translation by Henry Clarke Warren that Eliot refers to, it tells of how the noble disciple 'conceives an aversion for the body, conceives an aversion for things . . . conceives an aversion for the mind, conceives an aversion for ideas . . . and whatever sensation, pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent'. This is enlightening to readers of the poem, as are the text and music of 'The Shakespearian Rag' and the Philomela story from the *Metamorphoses* (in the fine 1916 translation by Frank Justin), because they are immediately germane. Too much in this edition is not, including a *Daily News* sunspot report, the cast list of *The Duchess of Malfi* in 1919 and the identity of Sir Leo Money, who is treated to thirteen lines of note even though his review of *The Duchess* is untraced. This is pseudo-information: data included so as to impress rather than to fulfil any need.

In *Revisiting 'The Waste Land'* Rainey rightly points out the recurrence of 'surprise' as a literary touchstone in the ten prose pieces, only to press his observation into the service of a dubious re-evaluation. As his dust-jacket puts it, 'Far from the austere and sober monument to neoclassicism that admirers have praised, *The Waste Land* turns out to be something quite different: something grim and wild, unruly and intractable, violent and shocking and radically indeterminate'. But the idea that anyone has ever mistaken *The Waste Land* for a neoclassical monument like the *Essay on Man* or *The Vanity of Human Wishes* is absurd. No one who reads the line 'April is the cruellest month' can be in any doubt that this poem is grim, wild, violent – surprising – and indeed the review quoted on the dust-wrapper of the Boni & Liveright edition pointed to its 'anguish, bitterness and disillusion'. Rainey thinks that all this has been overlooked because Eliot went on to sweep it beneath his classicist, royalist, Anglo-Catholic cloak. Eliot's aesthetics in 1921, he argues, were 'radically incommensurate' with his critical doctrine before and after. Two years earlier, in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', he says, Eliot had 'urged that the personality of the individual artist be submerged or expunged in his work, submitting to the imperatives of a vague tradition'. The words of the essay itself say that tradition involves

a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order . . . The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them . . . the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new.

Eliot could scarcely have been more prescient about *The Waste Land* and the change of perspective it effected. As if to confirm his continued adherence to this highly original and immensely influential vision of tradition, he quoted it soon after *The Waste Land*, at the beginning of 'The Function of Criticism' in 1923. Rainey sceptically comments that the writings of 1921 could be called classicist 'only by a remarkable extension of the term', without realising that this extension is precisely what Eliot achieved. What is so new about *The Waste Land* is the way it makes use of the old.

Yet Rainey thinks Eliot was fiddling the record when, 'perhaps innocently', he misdated 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' to 1917 (rather than 1919) and made it 'the gateway into that vast graveyard known as his *Selected Essays*'. Since the running order of *Selected Essays* was explicitly non-chronological (and its earliest essay is from 1919 anyway), the suspicion is unwarranted, and so is the description of pieces that were not reprinted as 'suppressed'. One of the 'London Letters' from 1921 contains a striking statement of the kernel of Eliot's lifelong belief: 'Culture is traditional and loves novelty'. The man who wrote the most revolutionary poem of modern times was also the profound conservative in the four-piece suit. We don't have to choose between tradition and surprise.

Eliot can withstand charges of hypocrisy so long as he is allowed to speak for himself, and in the long term scrupulously edited collections of his writing can only enhance his standing. Rainey's books, though, like several other scholarly revisitings of recent years, do not clarify our picture of Eliot but cloud it. Their endless small misstatements are a strong contrast to the elegantly written history of *The Waste Land* that prefaces Mrs Eliot's facsimile.

The palimpsests of *The Waste Land* in the New York Public Library are so dazzlingly rich that apparently no one has yet collated its evolution as a text, or reconstructed the intermediate stages. How did the poem read on the three occasions when Eliot showed it to Pound? When Pound commended the whole poem of nineteen pages in January 1922, precisely which nineteen pages was he counting? There are extant, according to Rainey, four pre-publication typescripts, which he dismisses

in a footnote as devoid of authority. A brace of books that devote 470 pages to a 433-line poem might at least have investigated their provenance. How did one of them come to be among the *Dial* papers at Yale? Could one be the fair copy that Rainey says Eliot 'evidently' made for Horace Liveright after they had dinner in Paris with Pound and Joyce? Or was it the copy that Eliot promised Pound on 28 July 1922?²⁰ In the following month, according to Rainey, Eliot 'sent a manuscript of the text to James Sibley Watson', co-owner of *The Dial* with Scofield Thayer. If by this Rainey means the typescript now at the New York Public Library, in what sense are its 'great many' variants 'nonauthorial'? There is more to be discovered from these documents, the drafts, the letters and perhaps the publishers' files, about who did what and when in the creation of this bizarre masterpiece. Perhaps one day there will be a responsible scholarly edition from, say, Faber & Faber.

London

NOTES

¹ The title page, colophon, dust-jacket and spine each punctuate the title slightly differently, with shifts of type size and uneasy outbreaks of commas, slashes, caret marks, and italics.

² Thirteen other possible hyphenations were treated inconsistently by the four printers: 'seven-branched', 'gas-house', 'week-end', 'tea-time', 'South-west', 'down-stream', 'torch-light', 'mud-cracked', 'pine-trees', 'roof-tree', and three that Rainey does not notice: 'finger-nails', 'deep-sea' and 'house-agent's'.

³ See, for instance, his note to George Rylands of 18 July 1925 and his annotation on the draft of Rylands's poem 'Russet and Taffeta', both preserved at King's College, Cambridge.

⁴ 'HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME' has no apostrophe in the pre-publication typescript preserved in the Hayward papers, though it has in the draft shown in the facsimile. The capital letters indicate shouting, just as they do on the internet.

⁵ *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript*, pp. 12-13; yet he did allow 'Goonight'.

⁶ Forty years later Leonard Woolf claimed that 'Mr Eliot certainly read the proofs', but did Eliot really fail to notice 'under London Bridge'?

⁷ *Studies in Bibliography*, 9 (1957), 21-49.

⁸ Letter to John Hayward, 7 Sept. 1942 (King's College, Cambridge, V/12).

⁹ Christopher Ricks writes of the 'astonishing play of the cadences and the sense against the punctuation's demand' in the lines '(Come in under the shadow of this red rock), / And I will show you . . . ' (*T. S. Eliot and Prejudice* (1988), p. 152). A still more complex puzzle is set by the quotation and brackets of '(Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!) / Here is Belladonna . . . '.

¹⁰ The opposite effect comes later in the poem, where the capacity even to ask a question falters and no question marks are achieved: 'What is that sound high in the air / . . . Who are those hooded hordes swarming / . . . What is the city over the mountains / . . . Unreal' (ll. 366-76).

¹¹ Astonishingly, Eliot was prepared to countenance serial publication of the poem in four issues of *The Dial* (*Letters*, ed. Valerie Eliot (1988), p. 502).

¹² The American *Poems* (Knopf, 1920) was first reprinted in 1927, in a reset edition not recorded by Gallup. Its misspelling of the title 'Mr. Apollinax' suggests that it may have been set from a copy of *Ara Vos Prec.*

¹³ Rainey properly corrects the reversed notes to lines 196 and 197, but not four other occasions when Eliot's own notes give wrong line numbers.

¹⁴ His note to line 411, for instance, about Eliot's misunderstanding of Dante's word *chiavi*, fails to credit Geoffrey Carter (*Notes and Queries* (Oct. 1977), 451-2). Examples could be multiplied.

¹⁵ *Letters*, pp. 496-7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 494 and 495-6. The letter to Gide implies that Eliot would not be going straight from Lausanne back to Paris. In the letter to Waterlow he writes: 'I am trying to finish a poem – about 800 or 1000 lines'.

¹⁷ *Revisiting 'The Waste Land'*, p. 35: 130 lines of section I, 98 lines of section II and approximately 190 lines of section III.

¹⁸ Letter to W. H. D. Rouse, Jan. 1937; *The Letters of Ezra Pound*, p. 379.

¹⁹ Letter to Scofield Thayer, *Letters*, p. 502.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 552.