

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



T. S. ELIOT

Edited by Jason Harding

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO
T. S. ELIOT

JASON HARDING
Durham University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107691056

© Cambridge University Press 2017

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2017

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Names: Harding, Jason, editor.

Title: The new Cambridge companion to T. S. Eliot / edited by Jason Harding.

Description: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2016. | Series: Cambridge companions to literature | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015042947 | ISBN 9781107037014 (hardback)

Subjects: LCSH: Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888–1965 – Criticism and interpretation. | BISAC: LITERARY CRITICISM / European / English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh.

Classification: LCC PS3509.L43 Z7958 2016 | DDC 821/.912–dc23

LC record available at <http://lccn.loc.gov/2015042947>

ISBN 978-1-107-03701-4 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-69105-6 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
T. S. ELIOT

Drawing on the latest developments in scholarship and criticism, *The New Cambridge Companion to T. S. Eliot* opens up fresh avenues of appreciation and inquiry to a global twenty-first century readership. Emphasizing major works and critical issues, this collection of newly commissioned essays from leading international scholars provides seven full chapters reassessing Eliot's poetry and drama; explores important contemporary critical issues that were untreated in the previous *Companion*, such as the significance of gender and sexuality; and challenges received accounts of his controversial critical reception. Complete with a chronology of Eliot's life and work and an up-to-date select bibliography, this authoritative and accessible introduction to Eliot's complete oeuvre will be an essential resource for students.

Jason Harding is Reader in the Department of English Studies at Durham University. He is the author or editor of six books, including *T. S. Eliot in Context* (Cambridge University Press) and (with Ronald Schuchard) *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition: Volume 4, English Lion, 1930–1933*.

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book.

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE
COMPANION TO

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

JEWEL SPEARS BROOKER, Professor Emerita, Eckerd College, has held numerous visiting appointments, most recently at Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Merton College, Oxford. She is the author or editor of nine books, including *Reading The Waste Land: T. S. Eliot and the Limits of Interpretation* (1990), *Mastery and Escape: T. S. Eliot and the Dialectic of Modernism* (1994) and *T. S. Eliot: The Contemporary Reviews* (2004). She is the co-editor with Ronald Schuchard of *T. S. Eliot: Apprentice Years 1905–1918* (2014), volume 1 of *Eliot's Complete Prose* (2014), and is also co-editing volume 8. She is writing a book on Eliot's mind and art.

JOHN XIROS COOPER, Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia, has published articles and chapters on twentieth-century literature, modernism, poetry and fiction. His books include *T. S. Eliot and the Politics of Voice: the Argument of The Waste Land* (1987); *T. S. Eliot and the Ideology of Four Quartets* (1995); *The Modern British Novel* (1997); *T. S. Eliot's Orchestra: Critical Essays on Poetry and Music* (2000); *Modernism and the Culture of Market Society* (2004) and *The Cambridge Introduction to T. S. Eliot* (2006). He is translating the *Maximes* (1664) of La Rochefoucauld into English and has just finished writing a novel, *The Wasp's Sting*.

ANTHONY CUDAH is Associate Professor of English at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, where he teaches courses in modernism and twentieth-century poetry. He is the author of *The Passions of Modernism* (2010) and co-editor with Ronald Schuchard of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition, Volume 2: The Perfect Critic, 1919–1926* (2014).

RICK DE VILLIERS has taught in the Humanities Faculty and in the Department of English at the University of Pretoria. He has published articles on T. S. Eliot, Samuel Beckett, and J. M. Coetzee in the *English Academy Review*, *English Studies in Africa* and the *Journal of Literary Studies*. His postgraduate thesis was titled "The Concitation of the Backward Devils': A Revaluation of the Quatrain Poems in T. S. Eliot's *Poems* (1920)" (2011).

STEVE ELLIS is Professor of English Literature at the University of Birmingham. His writing on T. S. Eliot includes *The English Eliot: Design, Language and Landscape in "Four Quartets"* (1991) and *T. S. Eliot: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2009), as well as the opening chapter in his most recent book *British Writers and the Approach of World War II* (2014). He has also written books on a range of other authors including Dante, Chaucer and Virginia Woolf, and has published three volumes of poetry and a verse translation of Dante's *Inferno*.

JASON HARDING is Reader in English Studies at Durham University. He is the author of *The Criterion: Cultural Politics and Periodical Networks in Interwar Britain* (2002), co-editor with Giovanni Cianci of *T. S. Eliot and the Concept of Tradition* (2007) and editor of *T. S. Eliot in Context* (2011). He is also the co-editor with Ronald Schuchard of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition, Volume 4: English Lion, 1930–1933* (2015).

SARAH KENNEDY is Research Fellow and Director of Studies in English at Downing College, Cambridge. Her research interests fall within twentieth-century and contemporary Anglophone poetry, and are informed by questions of metaphor, landscape, poetic influence and the literary afterlives of poets. She has published articles on T. S. Eliot and the Australian poet Judith Wright. She is currently working on a monograph on Eliot's later poetry and the creative imagination.

GAIL MCDONALD is Senior Lecturer in American Literature and Culture at Goldsmiths, University of London, and Director of the T. S. Eliot International Summer School. A founder and past president of the Modernist Studies Association, her publications include *Learning to Be Modern: Pound, Eliot, and the American University* (1993) and *American Literature and Culture, 1900–1960* (2007). With David Chinitz, she is co-editor of *A Companion to Modernist Poetry* (2014).

MICHAEL O'NEILL is Professor of English at Durham University. His more recent books include *The All-Sustaining Air: Romantic Legacies and Renewals in British, American, and Irish Poetry since 1900* (2007) and, with Michael D. Hurley, *Poetic Form: An Introduction* (2012). He is an editor of volume 3 of *The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (2012), editor of *The Cambridge History of English Poetry* (2010) and co-editor (with Mark Sandy and Sarah Wootton) of *Venice and the Cultural Imagination* (2012) and *The Persistence of Beauty: Victorians to Moderns* (2015). He has published three collections of poems: *The Stripped Bed* (1990), *Wheel* (2008) and *Gangs of Shadow* (2014).

LAWRENCE RAINEY is Professor of Modern Literature, University of York. He is the author of *Ezra Pound and the Monument of Culture* (1991), *Institutions of Modernism* (1998) and *Revisiting "The Waste Land"* (2005). He has edited *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary Prose* (2005), *Modernism: An Anthology* (2005) and *Futurism: An Anthology* (2009). He is the founding editor of the journal *Modernism/modernity*.

BARRY SPURR is Professor of Poetry and Poetics at the University of Sydney. He is the author of numerous articles and chapters on poetry, and of books on liturgical language, including *Studying Poetry* (2006), *See the Virgin Blest: Representations of the Virgin Mary in English Poetry* (2007) and an account of T. S. Eliot's religious faith and practice, "Anglo-Catholic in Religion": *T. S. Eliot and Christianity* (2010). He has contributed a chapter, "Religions East and West," to the *Cambridge Companion to "The Waste Land"* (2015).

ANNE STILLMAN is Fellow and College Lecturer in English at Clare College, Cambridge. Her research interests lie predominantly in American and British Literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (especially poetry). She has published numerous articles and reviews in *Essays in Criticism*, *Thinking Verse*, and *The Cambridge Quarterly*.

HELEN THAVENTHIRAN is a Fellow of Robinson College, where she is Director of Studies for English, and an affiliated lecturer of the Faculty of English, University of Cambridge. Her first book is *Radical Empiricists: Five Modernist Close Readers* (2015). She is currently preparing a new edition of William Empson's *The Structure of Complex Words* (forthcoming in 2016).

PREFACE

In his preface to the 1994 *Cambridge Companion to T. S. Eliot*, A. David Moody remarked: "For a time after his death in 1965 Eliot himself seemed in danger of becoming simply another monument, frozen in a fixed idea of his achievement. But there is too much life in his work for the accepted idea to contain it; and a new generation of readers, coming to it in the frame of mind of this end of century, are finding that there is much in it which answers to current preoccupations."¹ Over the succeeding twenty years, major developments have transformed the landscape of our current preoccupations in Eliot studies, leading one Eliot scholar to claim: "Critical work on T. S. Eliot has undergone a renaissance since the early 1990s, bringing new ideas and methods to bear on a much-studied writer whose depths, by then, were long supposed to have been plumbed."² As Gail McDonald observes in her contribution to this volume, the dynamic and controversial subject of Eliot's engagement with gender and sexuality was not treated in the 1994 volume. Furthermore, with the release of a mass of hitherto restricted archive material into the public domain, new generations of readers are asking their own questions of T. S. Eliot. Since 2009, six volumes of *The Letters of T. S. Eliot* have been published and four volumes of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot*, taking us up to 1933. A two-volume Faber edition of *The Poems of T. S. Eliot*, building on the principles established in the 1996 edition of Eliot's early notebook, *Inventions of the March Hare*, will provide an authoritative text for new readers. These authorised, fully annotated new editions must undoubtedly re-inflect ongoing debates about this complex and challenging poet-critic. Moody's collection was sensitively and intelligently constructed as a gateway for Eliot's readers in 1994, but given the seismic upheaval in Eliot scholarship and criticism since then, it is time for a revised *Companion* to address the needs of a twenty-first century audience.

The contributors to *The New Cambridge Companion to T. S. Eliot* share many of the same goals and animating concerns of Moody's volume; in particular, the emphasis on detailed examination of major works and critical issues. However, this volume is conceived with significant differences. The introductory opening chapter, an overture to the key themes addressed in

subsequent chapters, offers an analysis of the interrelations between Eliot's life and art across his career. It contains a cautionary invitation to new readers of Eliot to "unravel" some of the received orthodoxies about his life and the claims made about the impersonality of his poems. Seven chapters are devoted to Eliot's achievement as a poet and verse dramatist. One chapter is focused on Eliot's modernist handling of poetic form – at the level of rhyme, metre, lineation and allusion – as a creative transformation of (generic) poetic traditions. Crucial chapters, drawing on recent specialist scholarship, re-examine the masterpieces of *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*, and others re-contextualise their fresh readings of long cherished poems by devoting fuller coverage to the early poetic notebook, the satirical quatrain poems, and the transitional Ariel Poems than the 1994 *Companion*. Eliot's drama is revisited by an award-winning editor of his seminal prose writings on dramatic verse during the years 1919–26. The chapters on Eliot's literary and social criticism are informed by a number of important critical studies – books, articles and reviews – that have emerged over the past twenty years, and by a familiarity with the material in 200 prose items added to Donald Gallup's bibliography. As mentioned previously, a chapter places Eliot in the lively arena of contemporary debate regarding gender and sexuality, and a chapter on Eliot's formative reading in philosophy and anthropology is enriched by original research undertaken during the editing and annotating of Eliot's postgraduate essays and his Ph.D. thesis. The final chapter offers an account of how Eliot's daily practices as a Christian bear on his oeuvre and his reputation. In common with the original 1994 *Companion*, there is no separate chapter devoted to the "critical heritage": this international team of scholars has taken due account of the contested nature of Eliot's reception in presenting his work to a modern audience. We are all indebted to the indispensable studies by the scholars and critics listed in the Select Bibliography. In spite of the reordering and reemphasis, then, occasioned by the passage of twenty years, this *New Cambridge Companion to T. S. Eliot* reaffirms the aspiration of its predecessor, in seeking to open up subtle, incisive and rewarding avenues of inquiry to generations of readers who wish to experience the pleasure of a first-hand encounter with a living classic rather than pay a dutiful visit to a frozen monument.

NOTES

- 1 "Preface", *The Cambridge Companion to T. S. Eliot*, ed. A. D. Moody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), xiii.
- 2 David Chinitz, "Preface", *A Companion to T. S. Eliot*, ed. David Chinitz (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), xiv.

CHRONOLOGY OF ELIOT'S LIFE AND WORKS

- 1888 Thomas Stearns Eliot born on 26 September in St Louis, Missouri, the seventh and youngest child of Henry Ware Eliot and Charlotte Champe Stearns.
- 1898 Attends Smith Academy in St Louis until 1905.
- 1905 Spends one year at Milton Academy in preparation for his university education at Harvard.
- 1906 Enters Harvard University studying classics, German, French, English literature, and comparative literature as an undergraduate.
- 1908 Reads Arthur's Symons's *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*; encounters the work of Jules Laforgue for the first time.
- 1909 Joins the board of Harvard's literary magazine, the *Advocate*. Receives B.A. from Harvard.
- 1910 Receives M.A. from Harvard. Studies at the Sorbonne in Paris and attends the lectures of Henri Bergson at the Collège de France. Strikes up a friendship with Jean Verdenal, a French medical student.
- 1911 Composes "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." Travels to London, Munich, and Northern Italy. Returns to Harvard in the autumn, undertaking graduate studies in philosophy.
- 1912 Meets Emily Hale.
- 1913 Becomes president of the Philosophical Club at Harvard. Studies under Josiah Royce.

- 1914 Meets Bertrand Russell (who is visiting Harvard as a guest lecturer). Awarded the Sheldon Travelling Fellowship in Philosophy. Studies briefly at the University of Marburg, Germany, before the outbreak of the war. Continues study at Merton College, Oxford, under the tutelage of Harold Joachim. Meets Ezra Pound.
- 1915 Teaches at High Wycombe, then at Highgate Junior School (until 1917) while completing his thesis on F. H. Bradley. Jean Verdenal killed at the Battle of Gallipoli. Marries Vivien Haigh-Wood on 26 June, two months after their first meeting. Writes first review for the *New Statesman*, which marks the start of an intense and protracted period of reviewing.
- 1916 Completes doctoral dissertation but is prevented from returning to Harvard due to the war.
- 1917 Begins work for Lloyds Bank in the Colonial and Foreign Department. *Prufrock and Other Observations*. Becomes assistant editor of the *Egoist*. Delivers university extension lectures until 1918. With Pound, begins experimenting with the quatrain form using Théophile Gautier's *Émaux et Camées* as a model.
- 1919 Publication of *Poems* (1919). Goes on a walking tour of southern France with Pound. Publishes "Tradition and the Individual Talent" in the *Egoist*. Death of father.
- 1920 Publication of *Poems* (1920), *Ara Vos Prec*, and *The Sacred Wood*.
- 1921 Writes a draft of *The Waste Land*. Approaches Lady Rothermere with a proposal for a new journal, the *Criterion*. Takes a three-month break from Lloyds on medical advice; checks into a clinic in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- 1922 Becomes editor of the *Criterion* (until its closure in 1939). *The Waste Land* published in the *Criterion*. Receives Dial Award of \$2,000 for *The Waste Land*.
- 1923 Begins work on his first verse play, *Sweeney Agonistes*.
- 1925 "The Hollow Men" and *Poems 1909-1925* published. Resigns from Lloyds Bank to join publishing firm Faber and Gwyer.
- 1926 Launches the *New Criterion*. Delivers the Cambridge Clark lectures on metaphysical poetry.

- 1927 Baptised and confirmed in the Church of England, and becomes a naturalized British citizen. Publishes "Journey of the Magi."
- 1928 "A Song for Simeon" and *For Lancelot Andrewes: Essays on Style and Order*. Takes a vow of celibacy.
- 1929 "Animula." Death of mother.
- 1930 "Marina" and *Ash-Wednesday*.
- 1931 *Coriolan* and *Thoughts after Lambeth*.
- 1932 Returns to America for the first time since 1915. Delivers Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard. These lectures are collected as *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (1933).
- 1933 Presents the Page-Barbour Lectures at the University of Virginia, published as *After Strange Gods* (1934). Separates from Vivien.
- 1934 Opening of *The Rock* in London. Resides in the presbytery of St. Stephen's Church, Kensington. Visits Burnt Norton with Hale.
- 1935 Premiere of *Murder in the Cathedral* in Canterbury Cathedral. Subsequently opens in London.
- 1936 *Collected Poems, 1909-35* (includes *Burnt Norton*). Undertakes visits to Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire and East Coker, the ancestral home of the Eliots in Somerset.
- 1939 *The Idea of a Christian Society*. Premiere of *The Family Reunion* in London. Publishes *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*.
- 1940 *East Coker*.
- 1941 *The Dry Salvages*.
- 1942 *Little Gidding*.
- 1943 *Four Quartets*.
- 1946 Takes up residence in John Hayward's mansion flat in Chelsea.
- 1947 Receives honorary doctorates from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Death of Vivien.

- 1948 Awarded the Order of Merit and the Nobel Prize for Literature.
- 1949 *Notes towards the Definition of Culture. The Cocktail Party* premieres in Edinburgh.
- 1953 *The Confidential Clerk* premieres in Edinburgh.
- 1954 "The Cultivation of Christmas Trees."
- 1956 Lectures at the University of Minnesota to a crowd of 14,000.
- 1957 Marries Valerie Fletcher, his secretary at Faber & Faber. Publication of *On Poetry and Poets*.
- 1958 Awarded the Dante Gold Medal at the Italian Institute in London. *The Elder Statesman* premieres in Edinburgh.
- 1963 *Collected Poems 1909-1962*.
- 1964 Awarded U.S. Medal of Freedom.
- 1965 Dies on 4 January in London. His ashes are interred at St. Michael's Church in East Coker.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASG	<i>After Strange Gods</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1934).
Brooker	<i>T. S. Eliot: The Contemporary Reviews</i> , ed. Jewel Spears Brooker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
CP ₁	<i>The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition, Volume 1: Apprentice Years, 1905–1918</i> , eds. Jewel Spears Brooker and Ronald Schuchard (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press & London: Faber & Faber, 2014).
CP ₂	<i>The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition, Volume 2: The Perfect Critic, 1919–1926</i> , eds. Anthony Cuda and Ronald Schuchard (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press & London: Faber & Faber, 2014).
CP ₃	<i>The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition, Volume 3: Literature, Politics, Belief, 1927–1929</i> , eds. Frances Dickey, Jennifer Formichelli, and Ronald Schuchard (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press & London: Faber & Faber, 2015).
CP ₄	<i>The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition, Volume 4: English Lion, 1930–1933</i> , eds. Jason Harding and Ronald Schuchard (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press & London: Faber & Faber, 2015).
CPP	<i>The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1969).
ICS	<i>The Idea of a Christian Society</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1939).
IMH	<i>Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909–1917</i> , ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Faber & Faber, 1996).
LI	<i>The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 1: 1898–1922</i> , revised edition, eds. Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton (London: Faber & Faber, 2009).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

L ₂	<i>The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 2: 1923–1925</i> , eds. Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton (London: Faber & Faber, 2009).
L ₃	<i>The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 3: 1926–1927</i> , eds. Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden (London: Faber & Faber, 2012).
L ₄	<i>The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 4: 1928–1929</i> , eds. Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden (London: Faber & Faber, 2013).
L ₅	<i>The Letters of T. S. Eliot, Volume 5: 1930–1931</i> , eds. Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden (London: Faber & Faber, 2014).
NTDC	<i>Notes towards the Definition of Culture</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1948).
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013).
OPP	<i>On Poetry and Poets</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1957).
SE	<i>Selected Essays</i> , 3rd edition (London: Faber & Faber, 1951).
TCC	<i>To Criticize the Critic</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1965).
TLS	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i> .
UPUC	<i>The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism</i> , 2nd edition (London: Faber & Faber, 1964).
WLF	<i>The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts</i> , ed. Valerie Eliot (London: Faber & Faber, 1971).

CONTENTS

	<i>Notes on contributors</i>	page ix
	<i>Preface</i>	xiii
	<i>Chronology of Eliot's life and works</i>	xv
	<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xix
1	Unravelling Eliot JASON HARDING	I
2	Eliot: Form and Allusion MICHAEL O'NEILL	26
3	<i>Prufrock and Other Observations</i> ANNE STILLMAN	41
4	Banishing the Backward Devils: Eliot's Quatrain Poems and "Gerontion" RICK DE VILLIERS	55
5	With Automatic Hand: <i>The Waste Land</i> LAWRENCE RAINEY	71
6	"Let These Words Answer": <i>Ash-Wednesday</i> and the Ariel Poems SARAH KENNEDY	89
7	<i>Four Quartets</i> STEVE ELLIS	103
8	"A Precise Way of Thinking and Feeling": Eliot and Verse Drama ANTHONY CUDAH	116