

THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS OF
T. S. ELIOT'S FOUR QUARTETS

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
KENNETH WARREN RHOADS
1969



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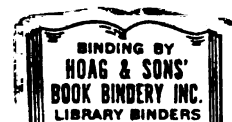
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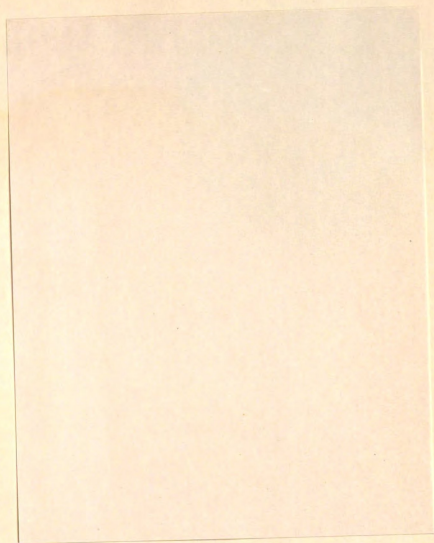
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ABSTRACT

Eliot's earlier poetry exhibits both overt musical analogy and

THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS OF T. S. ELIOT'S FOUR QUARTETS

of form, style, linear construction, and musical devices. Such

poems as "Preludes" and "Night" attempt

poetic imitation of musical counterpoint by using structural ele-

ments and stylistic devices. Both his critical writing and his poetry give continuing evidence of T. S. Eliot's acute awareness of the musical aspects of poetry. He explicitly designated the musical impulse as a fundamental element in generating both the form and substance of the poetic structure, and demonstrably followed this belief in his own poetic practice. This aspect of Eliot's poetry would thus seem to be a central area for critical analysis. Some investigation has been made of musical elements in Eliot's poetic work; more particularly, a number of critics have nominated various musical models for Four Quartets--these being primarily certain of the late string quartets of Beethoven. Although some of these discussions are perceptive, they have most often been limited in scope, highly generalized, and insufficiently based on professional musical knowledge. Accordingly, I propose in this study to undertake a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the elements of musical analogy in Eliot's poetry, with primary focus on his most mature work, the religious-philosophical poem cycle

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Four Quartets. I believe that such an investigation will provide insights contributing substantially to a full and satisfying understanding of the purpose, design, and method of Eliot's work.

Eliot's earlier poetry exhibits both overt musical analogy and the poet's intuitive use of musical elements in the various aspects of form, style, linear construction, and musical devices. Such poems as "Preludes" and "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" attempt poetic imitation of musical counterparts through structural elements and stylistic devices; in addition to analogies with prelude, fantasy, and similar forms in music there are striking similarities to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century contrapuntal forms such as intonazione and ricercare, as well as later free fugal forms. The Waste Land incorporates notable developments in the areas of structure and rhythm. The Hollow Men effectively uses a close poetic equivalent of musical counterpoint. Sweeney Agonistes embodies remarkable experimentation with jazz rhythms. "Five-Finger Exercises" and other poems utilize such classical musical forms and styles as the rondo and the toccata. The furthest development of musically-analogous techniques prior to Four Quartets occurs in Ash Wednesday, which closely integrates musical elements of form, rhythmic contrast, and various structural devices.

The structure of Four Quartets provides the poem cycle's broadest analogy with music. Each of the four poems is organized into five "movements," each with its own well-defined inner structure, and

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generally furnishes the poetic equivalent of the classical sonata in music. The multiple-movement structure provides for contrast, both within and between movements, of mood, tempo, rhythm, metre, and form, and allows each movement to be most suitably adapted, in structure and texture, to the individual treatment of its thematic materials. Movement-by-movement analysis shows a close congruence of form and content.

In the linear development of his thematic materials Eliot uses techniques closely analogous to those of music. Motivic development, providing for the evolution of themes, imparts coherence, organization, and unity to each poem and to the cycle; in this connection the concept "time" is seen as the germ-motive from which the entire poem evolves. Thematic metamorphosis provides for concurrent unity and contrast. Both devices are basic to Eliot's poetic counterpoint, an essential element of Four Quartets, by which Eliot achieves a correspondence to musical counterpoint through statement, restatement, development, juxtaposition, and combining of primary and secondary themes.

Rhythm--for Eliot a primal element--operates in Four Quartets on several structural levels. The overall rhythmic pattern of the cycle, closely coinciding with its formal structure, derives from repetition of the pattern of rhythmic alternation between poems of the cycle, between corresponding movements, and between sections within movements. The discrete aspects of rhythmic construction, now highly

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developed from the earlier experiments in jazz and other overt techniques, draw on such musical devices as frequently changing metres, rhythmic displacement, polyrhythms, and polymetres. A hallmark of Eliot's mature style is a rhythmical counterpointing of accentual and syllabic rhythms. Eliot also conceived of rhythm as a generative force for poetry, and much of the substance and structure of Four Quartets is directly derived from the rhythmic impulse. A further manifestation of Eliot's comprehensive concept of rhythm occurs in his anticipation of the science of biological rhythm, which is also pertinent to Four Quartets.

With regard to critical proposals for specific musical models as prototypes for Four Quartets, the case for isolated quartets of Beethoven does not hold up. The close musical analogies in Four Quartets derive largely from Eliot's broad background of music of diverse periods and styles, and careful comparison of the poems with the Beethoven quartets shows that he was not attempting a direct structural analogy with any one musical prototype. At the same time, Eliot's close spiritual and aesthetic affinity with Beethoven is clearly apparent. Detailed musical analysis strongly indicates that Eliot's principal inspiration was very probably the late music of Beethoven, even largely the string quartets, and that in Four Quartets he attempted to emulate Beethoven's artistic achievement in the string quartet idiom by writing poetry of such immediacy and transparency that it tended to transcend its medium in a perfect fusion of form and content--an attempt in which he was eminently successful.

THE MUSICAL

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THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS OF T.S. ELIOT'S FOUR QUARTETS

By

Kenneth Warren Rhoads

A THESIS

Submitted to

Michigan State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1969

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Final responsibility for the quality and content of any doctoral dissertation must ultimately rest with its author, whose name stands in pristine singleness on the title page. At the same time, it will be patent that no dissertation rightfully claiming some portion of originality, substance, or value is devoid of substantial assistance. To my mother and father, with my love and deepest appreciation:

For their understanding, encouragement, and faith; for the tangible example of their own lives and those essential ideals of the higher life they have imparted to me; but most of all, for just being themselves. To mention all those who have aided me in my work is not possible here; there are too many. I am, therefore, obliged to acknowledge. And, while the obligation is a personal one, I find it also a pleasurable opportunity.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the members of my guidance committee, who have given me the most direct and immediate assistance. Professor Joseph H. Summers' insistence on scholarly meticulousness has been most salutary and his suggestions invaluable. Professor Clyde Henson has long been interested in the subject of this study and convinced of its need, and his knowledge and enthusiasm have been highly stimulating. Primarily, I am indebted

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To mention all those who have had some influence on my work is not possible here; there are some, however, whom I decidedly must acknowledge. And, while the obligation is a traditional one, I find it also a pleasurable opportunity.

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to my dissertation director, Professor Sam S. Baskett, under whose tutelage I was first introduced to the profound wonders of T.S. Eliot. Dr. Baskett's encouragement and enthusiasm were, in fact, directly responsible for the choice of this thesis, and for the decision to expand an initial paper on the topic into a full-scale dissertation. Throughout the course of my work his perceptive guidance and counsel have been of real help to me; and his continuing confidence in the worth and the progress of the project has greatly sustained my own convictions. Dr. Baskett has been not only a patient mentor, but a sincere friend whose advice and assistance, both in this specific effort and in academic matters generally, have been of inestimable value. I am sincerely indebted to him.

Next I must offer my very real appreciation to the collective members of the English faculty of Michigan State University for the consideration they have shown me over the past several years. They have unstintingly given of both their time and knowledge whenever I sought it, and have been a considerable stimulus to me in the search for scholarly achievement. At the usual risk of oversight, there are a few I must single out. Professor Elwood Lawrence has been a continuing source of advice and encouragement. Professor John Yuncck was largely responsible initially for my choice of university for graduate study, and he steered me well. Professors George Price and William Heist have always been most generous and enthusiastic in helping resolve even the most obscure problems of research

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I might have posed. Professors Lawrence Babb and Arnold Williams have long maintained standards of literary scholarship which are an object-lesson in professional excellence to a younger colleague. Professors Russel Nye, Joseph Waldmeir, and Virgil Scott have provided invigorating examples for an aspiring teacher of what may be achieved in classroom performance. Also, for their individual help and guidance which have been of benefit to me in diverse ways, I express my gratitude to Professors Arthur Sherbo, John Waite, C. David Mead, James Pickering, E. Fred Carlisle, James Hill, and Mary Devine.

Finally, there is one to whom I must surely offer my deepest measure of gratefulness--my wife, Mary. Certainly without her devotion, encouragement, and enthusiasm I would never, at a somewhat later age than most students enter upon graduate studies, have changed careers in mid-stream and undertaken the long and sometimes arduous program requisite to the doctoral degree. She has been for me a source of real inspiration. And, while concurrently teaching, completing her own doctoral dissertation in music, and admirably fulfilling the functions of wife, mother, and homemaker, she has still found time to give me substantial direct assistance and encouragement in this endeavor of my own.

I can say in all sincerity that at no point has this dissertation become a disagreeable task or a routine chore, but from first to last has continued as an enjoyable and satisfying undertaking. I am grateful to all those who have helped make it possible.

INTRODUCTION

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the form and structure of both the poem and the cycle as a whole. While the term "quartet" has, in literary definition, may apply to diverse groups of four persons or things, it has, by common usage, acquired an almost exclusive musical connotation broadly designating a basic structure of music, whether the format of performing ensemble, be it instrumental or vocal. Since Eliot's use of language was anything but haphazard, his use of the term is certainly a significant indication of the musical influences which helped to shape the basic concept of the poems, and of the author's conscious awareness of the elements of musical correspondence which may be found to form a comprehensive and all-pervading component of the work.

However, the title is by no means the sole evidence of such musical influence in this, his most mature and profound poetry; for, while apparently Eliot never, in any of his published lectures or criticism, specifically commented on the relation of musical and poetic elements

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INTRODUCTION

By entitling his tetralogy of religious-philosophical poems Four Quartets, T.S. Eliot has given unmistakable, even though largely implicit, testimony to the concepts of musical analogy which underlie the form and structure of both the individual poems and the cycle as a whole. While the term "quartet," by dictionary definition, may apply to diverse groups of four persons or things, it has, by common usage, acquired an almost exclusively musical connotation broadly designating a basic structure of composition as well as the format of performing ensemble, be it instrumental or vocal. Since Eliot's use of language was anything but haphazard, his use of the term is certainly a significant indication of the musical influences which helped to shape the basic concept of the poems, and of the author's conscious awareness of the elements of musical correspondence which may be found to form a comprehensive and all-pervading component of the work.

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in these particular poems, the general subject was one which intrigued and occupied him through all his creative life. His critical writings, from his earliest to his most mature period, give constant evidence of his awareness of certain basic analogies between the two art forms, and of his tendency to think of poetry in terms of musical elements; and in certain of his writings he has been most explicit in discussing his ideas. Clearly, Eliot felt the musical impulse to be an inextinguishable, even motivating, aspect of poetry; and even further, he viewed it as a fundamental element capable of generating the whole poetic structure in respect to both form and substance. For Eliot, the "music of poetry" becomes much more than a convenient but ill-defined rubric; it embodies a whole way of looking at his art, and there is implicit in it a depth of interrelation between music and poetry which returns to the primitive origins of man's aesthetic expressions.

Eliot's own creative work, from his first poems, contains abundant evidence of the extent to which he was influenced, consciously and subconsciously, by the qualities of musical form and structure. In varying degree, most of his poetry is readily accessible to analysis which discloses close parallels with musical elements and the use of poetic devices and techniques bearing a close correspondence to those of musical composition. In the early experimental work this is frequently obvious and of a manifest virtuosity, while in the later and more mature poetry the exploitation of the musical elements becomes

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Consequently, with the provocative hint of the title as talisman, it becomes not only a valid inquiry, but an obligatory study, in pursuing a comprehensive and satisfying understanding of the genesis, purpose, method, and the design and structure of Four Quartets, to identify those elements and devices of a musical equivalence--or at least correspondence--which exist in the tetralogy and to assess the nature and extent of their contribution to the author's highly individual poetic expression.

It is my purpose in this study to make such an analysis of Eliot's musical elements and to attempt such an assessment of their nature and function; and further, going well beyond mere identification and analysis of technique and structure, to establish the relationship of form and content and consider the function of the musical elements within the total, integrated work.

Considerable critical attention has, of course, been previously devoted to the musical aspects of Eliot's verse; Four Quartets particularly, because of the implications of its title, has engaged the interest of critics. Some of this work is perceptive and has yielded valid insights into Eliot's poetry; but most of it, unfortunately, is by critics and scholars lacking an intimate knowledge of music. Much of it is therefore highly generalized, and usually deals with the more obvious and superficial similarities of music and poetry. Possibly the

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greatest deficiency of such criticism has been its limited scope and a failure to comprehend the full magnitude of Eliot's concepts and the full range of his musical elements. Also, past consideration has dealt almost entirely with those elements which Eliot would have been consciously aware of and would have purposely used, and has largely ignored both the inherent analogies and those deriving unconsciously and subconsciously from Eliot's whole poetic orientation and method. I hope that through investigating some previously unexplored areas, and by examining in greater depth and more detail certain aspects of Eliot's musical elements already considered by other critics, I may remedy some of those existing deficiencies.

Substantial critical speculation has particularly dealt with Eliot's possible use of musical models as specific prototypes in composing Four Quartets. A number of critics have proposed various individual models, certain of the late string quartets of Beethoven being primarily nominated as prototypes. In the absence of conclusive external evidence on the subject, such discussions have been for the most part highly conjectural and sometimes irresponsible. As a final task in this study I will consider the nature and extent of specific musical influences on Four Quartets; and in this connection will examine the late Beethoven string quartets in some detail.

While the primary focus of this paper is on Four Quartets, it should be apparent that a full appreciation of the musical aspects of these last works must necessarily involve a consideration of Eliot's

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earlier experiments with musical analogy as well as the direction and nature of his evolving musical techniques. I will therefore devote the first chapter to a general background discussion of the musical elements of the early poetry and the work preceding Four Quartets, and will also bring such consideration into the other chapters where it is pertinent. The second, third, and fourth chapters will deal principally with various fundamental musico-poetic elements--structural form, linear elements, rhythm--but will encompass other musical devices and aspects of musical construction. In the final chapter I will treat the subject of Eliot's possible musical models and general musical influence, and will also consider Eliot's debt to Ludwig van Beethoven.

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CHAPTER I

THE EARLIER POETRY: THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS

Much of Eliot's earliest verse shows the influence of music, not only in substantive content, but in the general concept underlying form and style. "A Lyric" (1905), written in imitation of Ben Jonson when Eliot was 16, and its variant version "Song" (1907) reveal, besides the musical suggestion of their titles, an intuitive, if embryonic, feeling for musical binary form which Eliot was to develop and employ for such powerful expression in his later work. In each poem the second of the two structurally identical stanzas takes its material from the first stanza, completing the idea and resolving the expressed dilemma in a statement of hopeful optimism. Though the poems are short and the idea condensed, the movement of mood loosely corresponds to a modulation in music from the tonic to a related--possibly the dominant--key in the first stanza, then returns in the second from the related key back to the tonic, where the resolution occurs. This may be more readily noted in "Song" (and in fact the revisions made in this variant version reveal the young poet's emerging feeling for the form):

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If space and time, as sages say,
 Are things that cannot be,
 The fly that lives a single day
 Has lived as long as we.
 But let us live while yet we may,
 While love and life are free,
 For time is time, and runs away,
 Though sages disagree.

The flowers I sent thee when the dew
 Was trembling on the vine
 Were withered ere the wild bee flew
 To suck the eglantine.
 But let us haste to pluck anew
 Nor mourn to see them pine,
 And though the flowers of life be few
 Yet let them be divine.¹

Two other "Songs" (1907 and 1909), "Nocturne" (1909)--in classical sonnet form, "Humoresque" (1910), and several unpublished "ballades"² give further indication of the musical influences which motivated the poet.

"Portrait of a Lady" (1909-10), where ". . . the conversation slips/ Among velleities and carefully caught regrets/ Through attenuated tones of violins/ Mingled with remote cornets,"³ is rich

¹ From T.S. Eliot, Poems Written in Early Youth (London: Faber and Faber, 1967).

² Grover Smith, in T.S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), discussing some unpublished and inaccessible drafts of verse from the period 1909-1917, says, "About 1913 a piece called 'The Ballade of the Outlook' was seen by Conrad Aiken. The trifling 'Ballade of the Fox Dinner' dates from 1909" (p. 30).

³ All quotations from Eliot's poetry cited in this paper, when not otherwise noted, are from the poems as they appear in The Complete Poems and Plays: 1909-1950 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1952).

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in musical reference and music imagery. Here Eliot has woven into the tissue of the work a background of diverse musical experience--everything from the concert-hall Chopin of "the latest Pole," who transmits the Preludes "through his hair and fingertips," to the "worn-out common song" of the tired mechanical street piano. In characterizing the lady, the poet suggests a literal comparison of her voice to certain musical instruments, as when "The voice returns like the insistent out-of-tune/ Of a broken violin on an August afternoon." The subjective orientation of the poem is emphasized, and the impressionistic mood heightened, by the juxtaposition--in a form of poetic counterpointing--of the out-of-tune ". . . windings of the violins/ And the ariettes/ Of cracked cornets" of the lady's voice and the absurdly-hammered prelude of the dull tom-tom, in its false-noted "capricious monotone," inside the brain of the narrator. Finally, in the closing lines, the narrator suggests that the entire poem has been music--music ". . . successful with a 'dying fall'/ Now that we talk of dying--"; and in this multi-level allusion to the neurotic and self-indulgent fantasy-love of Shakespeare's Duke Orsino, the withering October days of the protagonist's nearly-completed year, the narrator's sterile non-involvement and emotional incapacity for love, and the lady's pathetic futility and verbal grotesqueries, the substance and movement of the entire poem are distilled and summed up through a deft musical image.

The four "Preludes," two of which were written in 1909-10 and

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the final two in 1911, and "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" (1911) suggest in construction and mood an attempt at poetic imitation of their musical counterparts.

Each of the "Preludes" presents an image, a suggestive and tentative anticipatory scene presaging something to follow. Thus there is a correspondence with the initial form of the prelude, the intonazione, as it originated in sixteenth-century lute music, as well as with its later function in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of introducing one or more other pieces, such as a fugue or a suite of dances.⁴ At the same time, each "Prelude" creates the effect of a cameo piece, a brief sketch, in its evocation of an intense and individual mood. In this respect the group is imitative of the series of preludes, each standing alone as an individual piece, written by such later composers as Chopin and Debussy. There is a deeper point of interest here, however, in that these "Preludes" carry an aura of fantasy in both style and mood, with their kaleidoscopic succession of evocative images and metaphors, and could as well have been titled "Fantasies." Now, the fantasy is normally a freely-structured instrumental piece

⁴ André Hodeir, in *The Forms of Music* (New York: Walker and Company, 1966), notes, "The Italians gave the name *intonazione* to the few phrases the instrumentalist improvised before performing a musical selection, thereby establishing the composition's key, and at the same time making sure his instrument was tuned. As it was handed down from the lute to the harpsichord and the organ in the seventeenth century, the *intonazione* became the prelude, which grew steadily in importance right up to Bach. All the leading English, German and French polyphonists cultivated this form" (p. 102).

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which originated in the sixteenth century and, according to André Hodeir, "borrowed the structure, if not the spirit, of a related form: ricercare, prelude or sonata, according to the period."⁵ In the seventeenth century the English virginalists identified the fantasy with the ricercare and adopted it under the name fancy. It is interesting that in Eliot's "Preludes" the two short stanzas which seem to act as a brief coda section, uniting and resolving all four pieces, begin with the statement "I am moved by fancies that are curled/ Around these images, and cling." Eliot's use of the term fancies may have been fortuitous in specific relation to the musical form; but whether conscious or intuitive, its contextual position and the locution in which it is embedded does reinforce the close kinship which the entire poem bears to the fantasy and, even further, to the closely-related ricercare.⁶

It is in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" (1911), a poem closely similar in mood and style to the "Preludes," that poetic analogy

⁵ Op. cit., p. 47.

⁶ "The ricercare (literally 'to search')," states Hodeir, "is an instrumental composition of very free structure that imitates the vocal motet. First conceived for the lute, then for the organ or the harpsichord, this form, whose character is more austere than that of the canzone, made its appearance at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Italians called it ricercare, fantasia or capriccio; the English called it fancy; but the form also existed in Spain, Germany and France. In the seventeenth century the ricercare became a set form; under the impetus of Titelouze, Sweelinck, Frescobaldi and Froberger it evolved in the direction of the fugue, to which it ultimately gave birth. By the eighteenth century the word ricercare was hardly ever used, except to designate, paradoxically, a sort of specially constructed fugue" (Op. cit., pp. 110-111).

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with the *ricercare* becomes particularly well-defined. The poem does, of course, embody the characteristics of the musical rhapsody in that it is essentially a fantasy in a rather free style and consists of an uninterrupted succession of relatively short, contrasting episodes related to a central, or basic, theme. And, where the musical rhapsody has a strong affinity with folk music and is usually based on folk songs, or at least relatively simple themes in a folk idiom, Eliot's poetic counterpart uses vernacular elements--the street-lamp, the prostitute framed in the doorway, the rusted broken spring in the factory yard, the cat in the gutter, the ". . . cigarettes in corridors/ And cocktail smells in bars," the tooth-brush on the wall--for its analogous images. But Eliot's "Rhapsody" further displays a tightness of form and unity of structure which derive from elements more parallel to the (later) *ricercare*.

The basic element of the *ricercare*, as in the vocal motet from which it stems, is imitative contrapuntal writing. Normally, the form consists of several episodes (anywhere from three to nine), in each of which a different motif is brought into play. The primary sources of unity are the tempo and key, although some of the later *ricercars* by the Gabriellis, by Frescobaldi, and by Froberger were monothematic and were more formally complex and disciplined; thus, they were already closely allied to the eighteenth-century fugue.

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night" exhibits striking unity of both tempo and key, or mood. The tempo throughout is one of restless and

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insistent forward movement, eliciting a psychological correspondence with the gusty nocturnal context of the poem. This allegro tempo abates at only one point--in the last half of the third episode where the memory of the child on the quay motivates a brief contemplative passage which slows to an adagio tempo. The original tempo is then immediately picked up at the beginning of episode four. There is thus created the effect of a temporary lull in the whirling gusts, during which the wind quietly gathers its force, to return suddenly with renewed strength. The key effect, or mood, is closely equivalent to the tempo, varying only in the one slower section, and consequently contributes to establishing the unity of the piece.

In one sense, the "Rhapsody" is monothematic, even though each episode presents a different situation or image. The basic context is that of "memory": each episode occurs within the poet's memory, and the subject is specifically stated near the beginning of the first episode and repeatedly returns throughout the poem; the effect is one of thematic re-entrance, though with a modification at each return. A more detailed analysis, however, shows the poem to be much more contrapuntally complex. There are several dominant themes which recur either in all or most of the episodes; these have a close relationship within the context of the poem, and are re-introduced in varying order, much as the themes in a free fugue return in the different sections. The first theme is that of the clock-time device which introduces each episode as the night progresses from midnight to four

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o'clock. The second theme to be introduced is that of the "street," which is basic to all of the episodes and returns in specific statement in the third and fourth sections. The moon is next introduced in terms of "...lunar synthesis, / Whispering lunar incantations," and this thematic element reappears in the fourth episode with the moon personified; the use of the French nominative "La lune" in apposition with its English equivalent effects a brief ornamentation, or possibly the poetic parallel of a harmonic change on the same melodic element, and establishes the theme as a specific re-entrance of the original not only in terms of idea but also through the verbal relationships.

The first three themes are all introduced within the first three lines of the poem. In the fifth line the underlying theme of memory is specifically stated and, as the primary subject of the poem, reappears in various contexts in each succeeding episode. The fifth and final theme then appears, that of the street-lamp; this is another primary thematic element, since it not only reappears in every succeeding section, but, as a personified object, it plays a vital role in each episode, also acting as a vehicle, or more properly perhaps a catalyst, for memory; as spokesman for the poet's subconscious, it brings to light (*sic*) and articulates the hidden and repressed memories which provide the ground for the poem.

The fourth episode of the "Rhapsody" bears some resemblance to the development section of a fugue, since all themes reappear here

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and all, except the first one, are elaborated and developed in such a way that they appear to be undergoing a series of modulations. And, as in a fugal development section, each entry of a subject is separated from the next by short episodes, which are in fact the elaboration of the theme. Thus, the street-lamp not only sputters, it mutters in the dark, and hums; the moon, as the lamp relates, undergoes a series of actions, and has lost her memory; memory is modulated as reminiscence, elements of which are then elaborated. Finally, the sustained and concentrated catalogue of smells which pervade the moon's brain and which reminiscence calls forth in all their intense pungency seems to effect the poetic equivalent of dominant pedal-point with which the fugal development generally ends and which prepares for the return of the original key.⁷

The final brief episode acts somewhat as a short stretto (a fugal closing section in which an increase of intensity is effected by the dovetailing of the subject with its closely succeeding imitation),⁸

⁷ Pedal-point, or pedal, one of the earliest devices of polyphony--perhaps the earliest (its extended use is found in Oriental and primitive music)--refers to a long-held note, usually in the bass, sounding against changing harmonies in the other parts. A sustained pedal on the dominant (the fifth scale degree) tends to build tension which augments the feeling of resolution when the return to the tonic (first scale degree) occurs.

⁸ Hodeir considers that the stretto may be regarded as the "peroration" of the fugue. "It comprises a series of canonical entries of the subject and real answer, in increasingly close succession (stretto means 'close, narrow'). All these canons or strettos are usually truncated to some extent, except for one, called stretto maestrale, consisting of the complete subject and its answer in the original key" (Op. cit., p. 51).

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Discussing the Bergsonian philosophy which may have influenced the rationale of the poem, and considering the pattern of subjective durée formed by the imagery, Grover Smith, in his comprehensive analysis of Eliot's poetry, states, "Mingling as fluid perceptions, kaleidoscopic images pour into memory, the organ of time, the 'floors' of which break down to enable their total synthesis."⁹ Eliot's musical construction, with its elements of later *ricercare* and devices of early fugue, accomplishes exactly this on the structural level (the poem of course talks about the "floors of memory" being dissolved); total synthesis results from the contrapuntal re-entrance of themes continually recurring throughout the several episodes, from the underlying thematic unity of the diversely-oriented episodes themselves, from the unity of key and tempo, and from the concentrated development of themes in the penultimate section leading to the resolution of the concluding episode. The structure is therefore closely correspondent to the poetic purpose and an intimate relationship exists between form and content.

If the episodes and thematic entrances of "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" are graphed according to their musical structure, the

⁹ Op. cit., p. 24.

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contrapuntal pattern becomes immediately evident. Similarly, the dominance of the three themes of time, memory, and the street-lamp (the voice of memory posited in time), and their position in the total poetic structural entity, become apparent, as well as the position and structural function of the subordinate themes. Such a structural graph of the poem is included herein as Appendix A.

It is surprising, in view of the close analogies existing, that such correspondence with the earlier musical forms has not previously been noted. The implications for Eliot's later poetry are of course highly pertinent to a comprehensive view of his developing method.

Over the years Eliot continued to utilize musical devices and adapt the elements of musical structure to poetry, so that an enlargement of musical concept and an increase in musical analogy may be found in later works. Thus, Denis ApIvor, who made a musical setting of The Hollow Men,¹⁰ discusses the inherent musical aspects of the poem:

A remarkable feature, which must immediately strike a musician, is the music-like mode of construction employed by the poet in The Hollow Men. The effect is not impressionistic, as, for instance, are certain parts of Joyce's Finnegan's Wake, but the poem employs, deliberately or unconsciously, musical devices--in reality, variations on thematic fragments--which form the basis of the art of composition. What a composer does in the way

¹⁰ The Hollow Men. The Poem by T. S. Eliot. Set for Baritone Solo, Male Voice Chorus and Orchestra by Denis ApIvor (Oxford University Press, [1951]).

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of subtle variation--augmentation, diminution, inversion, echoes, mirror-images and reappearances for dramatic effect--is the method used by Mr. Eliot in his theme of 'death's kingdom'; 'lost kingdom'; 'death's other kingdom'; 'death's twilight kingdom'; 'death's dream kingdom'; and 'For Thine is the Kingdom'. . . . It becomes clear very quickly, therefore, that this kind of verse imposes its own musical form very precisely. . . . In fact, a key to the musical setting of the poem could be found in the combination of vulgar secular (Jazz) rhythms with the solemnity of liturgical chant, and this is the way which I approached the problem of setting such verse which is already half-way to music.¹¹

The Waste Land (1922), written some 3-4 years prior to The Hollow Men, was notable for its incorporation of musical device and construction in at least two of its aspects: rhythm and structure. I will take up these elements later in some detail: Eliot's continuing experiments with overtly musical rhythms will be analyzed in the section specifically devoted to rhythm; and the musical parallel of the structural form of The Waste Land, because of its close similarity to that of Four Quartets, whose first poem, "Burnt Norton," it preceded by some fourteen years, will be discussed in connection with the consideration of Eliot's use of specific musical models for Four Quartets.

Sweeney Agonistes (1924-25), Eliot's "Aristophanic Melodrama"--which Grover Smith calls "a melodrama in the sense that it is embellished with songs among the dialogue," and which he indicates Eliot seems at one time to have called "Wanna Go Home, Baby?"¹² is

¹¹ "Setting The Hollow Men to Music," in T.S. Eliot: A Symposium for his Seventieth Birthday, edited by Neville Braybrooke (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1958), pp. 88-89.

¹² Op. cit., p. 135.

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written in a broadly obvious music-hall style. In attempting to expose the cultural and spiritual vapidities of the age, Eliot drew heavily on diverse vernacular elements, chief among which was that of popular music. His experiments in rhythm in the work, specifically in the idiom of jazz rhythms, comprise its outstanding aspect; and aside from whatever other overall qualities *Sweeney Agonistes* might or might not possess, it may probably be justly stated that, from the standpoint of rhythm, this unfinished piece achieves a remarkable integration of medium and content. The work marked a high point in Eliot's experimentation with overtly musical rhythms; and subsequently, except for isolated instances in which he desired a special effect, he never returned to the jazz experiments. I will consider this subject in further detail in the section on rhythm.

In the *Five-Finger Exercises* (1933), whose title would seem to be as musically provocative as that of *Four Quartets*, Eliot appears to have indulged himself in a bit of poetic fun. Written as exercises in musical poetics--maybe, as the title implies, just to keep in practice--the five poems, brief as they are, display some intriguing parallels with musical form apparently not previously noticed. "Lines to a Yorkshire Terrier" would seem clearly to effect a poetic imitation of the musical toccata. More a style than a form, since it has no precise form, the toccata (from the Italian *toccare*, "to touch," or "to play") is essentially a virtuoso instrumental composition written for a keyboard instrument; as such, its primary function is to

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allow the performer to display the control, precision, and variety of his touch, and his brilliance of technique. It is normally a fast piece in a sustained rhythm which moves steadily and uninterruptedly from beginning to end. "Lines to a Yorkshire Terrier" similarly is in a relatively fast tempo; its brief three- and four-stress lines combine with the somewhat apprehensive mood and suggestion of impending natural disaster to impart a steady and insistent forward movement from the beginning right through to the final three-line cadence. Its most outstanding characteristic, however, is a syllabic and consonantal construction which effects a poetic counterpart of digital keyboard touch by means of a rapid and continuing contrast of vowels and consonants covering virtually the entire lingual range. In the brief fifteen lines all English consonants may be found and every vowel and diphthong is included except long closed o and long a; and the elimination of the latter two serves to maintain the regular, forward up-tempo.

In its cadence lines "Yorkshire Terrier" also contains a most remarkable verbal analogy to the musical device of enharmonic change. In modern music theory the term enharmonic denotes tones which are actually one and the same degree of the chromatic scale, but are named and written differently, e.g.: C sharp and D flat, G and A double-flat, etc., according to the key in which they occur. In an enharmonic change a note or a chord becomes a pivotal point in a change of key by being annotated in a new key while sounding the same

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Here a little dog I pause
Heaving up my prior paws,
Pause, and sleep endlessly.

In the change from paws to pause on the succeeding word there is a complete modulation of meaning, although the two words are identical orally. The analysis could be validly extended by considering the rhyming words pause and paws to provide an initial enharmonic change, and the shift from paws to pause as a return modulation. The fullest effect of the enharmonic device is given, however, by the change on adjacent words. This change, combined with the syntactic structure, also creates a sudden rubato (a momentary slowing of the tempo), an actual pause in fact, in the flow of the verse at this point, thus achieving a parallel between the oral structure and the idea. Finally, the rubato effect imparts a strong cadence feeling to the closing lines.

The last two of the Five-Finger Exercises utilize a structural form which is very closely equivalent to the classical rondo form in music. The rondo is characterized by the alternation of the principal theme--the subject--with a series of secondary episodes, with a resulting structural pattern of A B A C A D A and so on. The subject is usually fairly short; the episodes, generally of similar length, are longer. They may derive more or less directly from the subject, though they may also differ from it completely. The episodes are

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either in the same key as the subject or in closely related keys, and there may be any number of them. "Lines to Ralph Hodgson Esqre." has as a principal subject the lines: Italian canzoni, "song," and

How delightful to meet Mr. Hodgson!

(Everyone wants to know him)--

of the vocal style to instrumental style. The first line, which recur several times (once in a modified, or A' form of a single line, "How delightful to meet Mr. Hodgson!"). Each appearance of the subject (except the closing one of course) is followed by an episode of several lines which presents a different aspect of Mr. Hodgson's habits and characteristics; the episodes thus differ, though they all derive somewhat directly from the subject. The resultant structure of the poem therefore becomes A B A' C A D A.

The succeeding and final exercise of the group, "Lines for Cuscutscaraway and Mirza Murad Ali Beg," though somewhat shorter, follows the same basic form. Its one-line subject--"How unpleasant to meet Mr. Eliot"--recurs twice; each of the first two appearances is followed by an episode of several lines which is a commentary, or explanation of the subject. The form of the piece thus becomes A B A C A. In this case there is a brief one-line coda following the final appearance of the subject.

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13 A coda (Italian, literally "tail") is a section of a composition added to the form proper as a conclusion. Nearly all fugues close with a coda (the length varies) frequently based on a pedal-point. A coda is normally found at the end of each movement of a sonata, symphony, etc. In slow movements it usually functions as an epilogue, while in fast movements it frequently leads to the final climax, often combined with a quick-

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Other musical parallels may be found throughout the cycle.

"Lines to a Persian Cat" reveals certain affinities with the classical instrumental canzone da sonar (from Italian canzona, "song," and sonare, "to sound," or "play" an instrument), though with something of a reverse twist; whereas the instrumental canzone were adaptations of the vocal style to instruments, Eliot is here transmuting the instrumental form into a lyrical poetic expression. Both "Lines to a Persian Cat" and "Lines to a Duck in the Park" end with couplets which in style and context bear a resemblance to the ritornelle (ritornello, the two-line, rhyming final strophe--not a refrain) of the 14th-century madrigal. The latter exercise, if analyzed from the aspect of rhyme scheme, shows a perfectly-balanced musical ternary form in its rhyme pattern. The first, or A section, rhymes aaba; the middle B section is symmetrical within itself with a scheme of acca; the last section rhymes dded, which is identical in pattern, though not in actual rhyme, to the first section, and constitutes a return of the first part. We might therefore designate the form as A B A, or possibly A B A'. The two-line ritornello completes the structure with its ff rhyme.

The Five-Finger Exercises are thus skillfully-constructed little cameos in which Eliot has exploited certain musical forms and devices

ened tempo (to which the term stretto is often applied). The coda usually derives its material from the preceding themes of the movement. In movements in sonata form the coda frequently assumes considerable dimension, and occasionally becomes a second development section; as note the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

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which, while still essentially subservient to the matter of the pieces, establish a definite tone of technical inventiveness and set the whole format of the group within a framework of musical exercise.

Ash Wednesday (1930) probably represents the furthest point of development in T. S. Eliot's music of poetry prior to Four Quartets. While thematically perhaps the most obscure and ambiguous of the author's major poems, Ash Wednesday in form and structure bears much similarity to musical construction, and reveals extensive utilization of musically-analogous techniques. In general, these have here become highly refined from the earlier experiments, so that they are less obvious, more subtly worked into the poetic fabric; there is, in short, less of a virtuoso aspect to the use of musical devices and they have been effectively modulated to become integral components of the total expression.

The six closely-related sections, or "movements," of Ash Wednesday are substantially analogous, in their relationship and contrasts, to the movements of a musical sonata, which will be discussed more fully in considering the structural form, and the subject of musical models, for Four Quartets.

In the opening three lines of the poem,

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there is an excellent poetic equivalent of melodic repetition in music, with variation in the length of the repeated fragments. The first line also becomes a motivic element upon which is built the theme of the first stanza--the narrator's acceptance of the loss of desire for the values of the flesh, and inability as well to strive for the state of spiritual grace. This in fact is the theme of the entire section, and is re-introduced in each succeeding stanza by a modification, or variation, of the opening line. Each stanza elaborates the theme and approaches it from a different aspect. Thus the stanzas, introduced by variations of the thematic motif--"Because I do not hope to know again," "Because I know that time is always time," a repeat, "Because I do not hope to turn again," "Because these wings are no longer wings to fly"--present a series of variations on the basic theme, and the opening movement is in form equivalent to a musical theme and variations. The analogy with music here is double-edged, since the variations are generated both in the verbal syntactic structure of the motivic alterations and in the substantive ideas of the sub-sections.

The movement ends with two cadence-like lines taken from the Ave Maria of the Catholic liturgy, which act as a brief coda:

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

This use of coda is prevalent throughout Ash Wednesday, most of the sections ending with one-, two-, or three-line constructions which

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Lord, I am not worthy
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but speak the word only. (III)

Till the wind shake a thousand whispers from the yew
 And after this our exile (IV)

In each case the coda serves to round off and neatly terminate the group of stanzas forming the movement; its cadence-like construction imparts a feeling of finality which resolves the movement, setting it off from the one to follow and preparing for a change of mood and rhythm in the succeeding movement.

Even in the second movement, which does not contain a stanzaically separate coda section, the verbal and syntactic structure of the lines at the end of the final section is such as to render a coda effect:

..... This is the land which ye
 Shall divide by lot. And neither division nor unity
 Matters. This is the land. We have our inheritance.

Movements five and six both employ very brief snatches of prayer as final cadence, that in the fifth movement having been prepared for by a longer coda-like line beginning with the same phrase--"Oh my people"--and appearing twice within the movement. The invocational mode of all of the codas helps establish a sense of unity among the

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Ash Wednesday displays a contrast of mood and rhythm between its movements, as well as between the middle and outer sections of the second movement, which is analogous to the modal and rhythmic changes in a musical sonata; these constructions anticipate the similar, though more highly developed, rhythmic modulations and contrasts which Eliot was to incorporate in Four Quartets.

The sixth movement of the poem makes use of another structural device often found in music--the restatement, in the final section, of themes originally introduced in the first, or a preceding, section. Further, the musical restatement of themes in a concluding section or movement is usually in a different mode or key, and often in modified or developed form, and the sixth section of Ash Wednesday similarly contains such transformations. The opening lines of the work are here repeated in the same metre, but with one significant verbal change:

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as meaning, of the passage; it thus creates the same effect as a change of mode or key in music and makes the lines consonant with the whole altered mode of the movement. In essence this final movement represents an emergence of the narrator from a dark night of the soul, which he entered in the first movement and through which he progressed throughout the work to the vision of grace finally achieved in the closing section. Such change of spiritual orientation is implicit in the single modulation from the opening lines. Because is a determinate preposition introducing a falling clause; what is to follow is purely a resultant situation based on a preceding condition, and therefore determined and unalterable; this represents the poet's mood and outlook at the opening. But although implies and introduces a situation, condition, or result contrary to what might be anticipated or expected as a result of a given set of facts; it thus creates a rising poetic expression which, in the context of the work, is optimistic and hopeful.

This modal modulation, analogous to one from minor to major in music, is reinforced by the same alteration in restatement of ideas from the first movement throughout the final one. In the opening section the aged eagle saw no reason to stretch his wings; in fact, his wings were ". . . no longer wings to fly/ But merely vane to beat the air." Now, with the new vision, he has "unbroken wings" which ". . . still fly seaward, seaward flying." Initially he ". . . cannot drink/ There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for there is nothing again"; now he rejoices and his spirit quickens in the "lost lilac" and

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the "bent goldenrod." At the beginning of the dark night he could only ". . . renounce the blessed face/ And renounce the voice" and his entreaty to "Teach us to care and not to care/ Teach us to sit still" was a desperate imploring for release from a condition of seeming sterility and hopelessness; the modal and thematic transformation of the final movement embodies his newly-gained insight into the essential unity of the several manifestations of the Lady, his new understanding of the beauty of the fleshly world and its integrated relationship with the spiritual one, and his pending attainment of grace. Now he can invoke the love of the "Blessed sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the garden, / . . . Sister, mother/ And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea," and ask that he be not separated from either the love of man or the love of God. And now his exhortation, "Teach us to care and not to care/ Teach us to sit still" is one of fervent supplication; here is another restatement of theme, syntactically identical but modally transformed by its contextual alteration.

Finally, the modulated restatement is completed by the brief one-line coda; in contrast to the despairing and negative prayer which terminated the opening movement, the poet ends on a rising note of hope with the ardent and exalted "And let my cry come unto Thee."

Ash Wednesday, then, marks a high point in Eliot's development of a poetry whose form and structure bears inherent and close analogy to that of musical composition; and a high point also in his continuing

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refinement and elaboration of a musically-analogous poetic language capable of a philosophical and spiritual expression in which form is intimately fused with content.

CHAPTER II

THE STRUCTURAL FORM OF FOUR QUARTETS

Eliot's most cogent and detailed statement of the equivalence of certain musical and poetic elements is in the "Preface" which the poet may realize from a study of the *Waste Land* to have written "The Music of Poetry."¹⁴ In this "Preface" Eliot's critical elaboration which he feels was withheld from the public and the poetic medium in terms of a poetic form is a *poetic* statement, he says:

I think that a poet may wish to know the properties of musical form, but much technical knowledge is not necessary. I do not know, I do not know, for I have not that technical knowledge myself. I do not believe that the properties of musical form, as they are in the most most nearly, are the same as those of poetic form. I think that it might be possible to say that the properties of musical form are musical analogies: the same, but in the sense of a musical analogy, but I know that a poem, or a passage of a poem, may need to realize itself first as a particular rhythm before it reaches coherence in words, and that this rhythm may be a rhythm of the words and the image, and I do not believe that this is the same as the rhythm of poetry as to music. There are possibilities for some which I do not see some analogy to the development of a theme in different ways.

¹⁴ The Third W. P. Kar Memorial Lecture, delivered at Chicago University in 1942, and published by Chicago University Press in the same year.

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CHAPTER II

THE STRUCTURAL FORM OF FOUR QUARTETS

Eliot's most cogent and detailed statement of the equivalence of certain musical and poetic elements, and the benefits which the poet may realize from a study of music, is to be found in his lecture "The Music of Poetry."¹⁴ In discussing the period of musical elaboration which he feels can follow the stabilization of the poetic medium in terms of a contemporary colloquial language idiom, he says:

I think that a poet may gain much from the study of music: how much technical knowledge of musical form is desirable I do not know, for I have not that technical knowledge myself. But I believe that the properties in which music concerns the poet most nearly, are the sense of rhythm and the sense of structure. I think that it might be possible for a poet to work too closely to musical analogies: the result might be an effect of artificiality; but I know that a poem, or a passage of a poem, may tend to realize itself first as a particular rhythm before it reaches expression in words, and that this rhythm may bring to birth the idea and the image; and I do not believe that this is an experience peculiar to myself. The use of recurrent themes is as natural to poetry as to music. There are possibilities for verse which bear some analogy to the development of a theme by different groups

¹⁴ The third W. P. Ker Memorial Lecture, delivered at Glasgow University in 1942, and published by Glasgow University Press in the same year.

from "The Music of Poetry" as reprinted in *Eliot's On Poetry and Poets* (New York: Noonday Press, 1961), p. 32.

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Of the two major properties which Eliot poses as of most concern to the poet in relation to music, the sense of structure is particularly comprehensive in its application since it involves the overall architectural aspects of the work. This is, in fact, the area in which those critics and scholars who have discussed musical analogies in the poet's work have most readily perceived parallels with music; and is the area with which they have been primarily--often exclusively--concerned. While regrettable, this is understandable; for, since music and poetry are both temporal arts, and further, temporal arts deriving from a common ancestor of which they were integral and equal components, it is natural that they possess inherently similar structural tendencies of unusually strong correspondence. The natural approximation in structural form exhibited by music and poetry will be found to be closer than with any other art forms, with the possible exception of the dance--also a temporal form--which is intimately related to music and poetry in its origins, and in which total pattern is also achieved through temporal progression.

Both music and poetry depend upon the movement through time of thematic elements which, to be meaningful, must possess some type

¹⁵ From "The Music of Poetry" as reprinted in Eliot's On Poetry and Poets (New York: Noonday Press, 1961), p. 32.

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of intelligible relationship and progress according to a coherent pattern--a pattern which in its resultant totality may be perceived, or at least felt, as unified. Because of its temporal orientation, the form will in large measure result from an organic generation and growth--the inherent process of all time-oriented entities--which progresses from its beginning through a development to a final resolution. Both music and poetry thus show an innate affinity for the Aristotelian aesthetic: regardless of structural detail and degree of complexity, both media of expression will in fundamental outline have a beginning, a middle, and an end, apprehended both as transient in temporal progression and simultaneous and permanent in their structural and aesthetic totality. Just as a piece of sculpture or architecture is a form cut into space, so musical and poetic compositions are forms cut into time; and while perceived, via a different set of sensibilities, linearly in time rather than instantaneously in three-dimensional space, exist as aesthetic wholes just as completely as the work of graphic or plastic art.

Eliot was acutely aware of these structural and aesthetic relationships. In his introduction to Paul Valéry's The Art of Poetry, for example, referring to Valéry's analogy of the structure of poetry to architecture, and discussing the assimilation of poetry to music which was a Symbolist tenet, he says:

Paul Valéry, *The Art of Poetry*, translated from the French by Denise Folliot; introduction by T. S. Eliot (New York: Vintage Books, 1957). For Music itself may be conceived as striving towards an unattainable timelessness; and if the other arts may be thought of as yearning for duration, so Music may be thought of as yearning

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for the stillness of painting or sculpture. I speak as one with no technical training in music, but I find that I enjoy, and "understand," a piece of music better for knowing it well, simply because I have at any moment during its performance a memory of the part that has preceded and a memory of the part that is still to come. Ideally, I should like to be able to hold the whole of a great symphony in my mind at once. The same is true, surely, of a great tragedy: the better we know it, the more fully we hold in mind, during the action, what has preceded and what is to come, the more intense is our experience.¹⁶

Finally, since music and poetry are not only temporal arts but tonal as well, many of their basic elements and modes of expression are closely similar: rhythm, metre, tonal values--both quantitative and qualitative--pitch, timbre, intensity, dynamic level, legato and staccato, suspension and cadence. So, constructed from these fundamental analogous building blocks, the two forms, while developing a great divergence of detail within the very general structural limits of "beginning, middle, and end," will exhibit some remarkable inherent parallels of structural outline.

Now, it is clear that Eliot conceived of a poetic work, regardless of its length, in terms of the overall musical structure of the whole. In his lecture on "The Music of Poetry" he considered this aspect of even an entire drama. "In the plays of Shakespeare," he says, "a musical design can be discovered in particular scenes, and in his more perfect plays as wholes. It is a music of imagery as well as

¹⁶ Paul Valéry, *The Art of Poetry*, translated from the French by Denise Folliot; Introduction by T.S. Eliot (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, September, 1961), p. xiv.

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sound: Mr. Wilson Knight has shown in his examination of several of the plays, how much the use of recurrent imagery and dominant imagery, throughout one play, has to do with the total effect."¹⁷ Eliot then proposes that a play of Shakespeare is a very complex musical structure, as contrasted with the more easily grasped structures of forms such as the sonnet, the formal ode, the ballade, the villanelle, rondeau or sestina. Noting signs of a return to these forms, the poet then propounds the belief that the tendency to return to set, and even elaborate, patterns is as permanent as the need for a refrain or a chorus to a popular song.

It is significant that although Eliot's major emphasis is on the structural entity of a work, he also speaks of a music of imagery and sound. And he would seem to see a psychological factor at work which relates to the temporal nature of both music and poetry and, in dictating similar tendencies in both art forms, contributes to their basic correspondence. Certainly it is clearly evident that his concept of musical analogy in poetry far transcends the mere literal simulation in rhetorical terms of the discrete structural elements of musical composition; he is rather concerned with the comprehensive structure of the total work in its major outlines. At the same time, for Eliot the structure is not itself the end, but is essentially a vehicle for the expression of poetic imagery and sound in coherent

¹⁷ Op. cit., p. 30.

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In his essay "Poetry and Drama" Eliot analyzes the construction of the opening scene of Hamlet from the standpoint of its verse rhythms; he concludes that this is great poetry, and dramatic, but besides being poetic and dramatic, it is something more. "There emerges, when we analyze it, a kind of musical design also which reinforces and is one with the dramatic movement. It has checked and accelerated the pulse of our emotion without our knowing it."¹⁸ He further considers the music of dramatic poetry as it determines dramatic construction, and conjectures, "It would be interesting to pursue, by a similar analysis, this problem of the double pattern in great poetic drama--the pattern which may be examined from the point of view of stagecraft or from that of the music."¹⁹ In his "Note to 'Poetry and Drama'" accompanying the essay, Eliot cites a note extracted from a lecture given some years previously at the University of Edinburgh, on the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet. The note contains the following analysis of the scene:

...one is aware, from the beginning of this scene, that there is a musical pattern coming, as surprising in its kind as that in the

¹⁸ "Poetry and Drama," in *On Poetry and Poets*, pp. 80-81. This was originally the first Theodore Spencer Memorial Lecture delivered at Harvard University and published by Faber & Faber and by the Harvard University Press in 1951.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

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early work of Beethoven. The arrangement of voices--Juliet has three single lines, followed by Romeo's three, four and five, followed by her longer speech--is very remarkable. In this pattern, one feels that it is Juliet's voice that has the leading part: to her voice is assigned the dominant phrase of the whole duet:

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep: the more I give to thee
The more I have, for both are infinite.

And to Juliet is given the key word 'lightning', which occurs again in the play, and is significant of the sudden and disastrous power of her passion, when she says

'Tis like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say 'it lightens'.

In this scene, Shakespeare achieves a perfection of verse which, being perfection, neither he nor anyone else could excel--for this particular purpose. The stiffness, the artificiality, the poetic decoration, of his early verse has finally given place to a simplification of the language of natural speech, and this language of conversation again raised to great poetry, and to great poetry which is essentially dramatic: for the scene has a structure of which each line is an essential part.²⁰

In the light of such a concept of the function of structure in a poetic form, and the essential musical equivalence of that structure, one might readily anticipate that T. S. Eliot's most mature work would embody these ideas as an integral part of its design and construction. And in fact it is precisely in this area that the broadest and most obvious analogy exists between the poems of Four Quartets and musical composition. Each poem is organized into five divisions, or "movements," each with its own well-defined inner structure, and may be considered generally to provide the poetic equivalent of the

²⁰ Op. cit., pp. 94-95.

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classical sonata structure in music as utilized in the symphony, the string quartet, and the instrumental sonata. Within each movement, in each poem, and over the total cycle, the themes are stated, developed, modulated, and recapitulated much as a composer handles musical themes. By this means the author achieves a tight, coherent structural unity consonant with the thematic unity of the basic ideas with which he is working; and theme and structure become, in fact, integral and inseparable.

At this point, a brief analysis of the general structure of the individual movements of each of the quartets--"Burnt Norton," "East Coker," "The Dry Salvages," and "Little Gidding"--may perhaps most effectively illustrate not only the internal form of each separate movement but the relationship of the movements and the resultant structural totality of each quartet. This should not be construed as an attempt at detailed thematic explication of the poems--such consideration is outside the province of this study; however, since form and content are inseparable in these poems the interpretation of idea and meaning here presented is necessary to develop and clarify the musical analogies involved. Thus, the explication given will deal primarily with the essential philosophical or religious idea concerned.

In each of the four poems the first movement contains two contrasted but related general themes; the themes treated in each case have their direct origin, or motivation, in the specific place giving

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rise to the poem, as reflected in the title. In essence these themes are identical in all four of the Quartets. Stemming from the basic idea of time, which is generic to the poem cycle, they comprise the two apparently conflicting and irreconcilable aspects of time: temporal time--that is, time as sequence or succession; and eternal time--time as infinite and all-encompassing. In each poem the themes are represented, or treated, in terms of actual and abstract experience. Since the locus of each poem determines the appropriate and peculiar nature of the experience and the philosophical meditation, the themes become in effect metaphors for the two aspects of time.

In each movement the two themes, or two forms of experience, are, after their initial exposition, combined and developed through the experience of viewing eternal time from the present moment, then finally modulated into an implicit resolution in which the conflicting themes are, at least partially or tentatively, reconciled.

Various critics have found in this exposition of themes, with their subsequent development and reconciliation, a similarity to the statement and counter-statement, or first and second subjects, followed by their modulation and development, and eventual resolution, of a musical movement in sonata allegro form (sonata-form).²¹

²¹ The term sonata-form, though commonly accepted and used, is a somewhat inaccurate term which designates, not the form of the sonata (a composition consisting of several related but contrasted and independent movements), but rather the specific structure used frequently for the first movement of the sonata. As such, it refers to a form consisting of three major sections, called exposi-

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There is, certainly, a general overall resemblance, and a cursory comparison might lead to the conclusion that Eliot was here attempting a poetic approximation of that musical form. A more careful examination, however, discloses that, with the exception of "Burnt Norton," which presents a somewhat special case, the form is not sonata allegro but is rather that of a modified binary song-form.

In the first movements of "East Coker," "The Dry Salvages," and "Little Gidding," the presentation of the two themes followed by their development and integration yields a loose approximation of sonata allegro form. However, there exists here no recapitulation section in which the themes return in their original form--a fundamental part of sonata allegro construction. Moreover, there is a great disparity between Eliot's poems and musical sonata allegro in length of themes and balance of sections. In sonata allegro both first and second subjects are stated and expounded within the exposition section, which is the first of the three basic and roughly equivalent divisions of the structure; however, in the Eliot movements each of the two themes requires an entire section

tion, development, and recapitulation, in which the main and sub-themes are stated, developed, and restated (usually in inverse order and with some modification), respectively. The movement usually ends with a coda section. Within and between these sections there are repetitions, transitions, codettas, and other devices used to elaborate, extend, and develop the basic themes.

In the Harvard Dictionary of Music (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964) Willi Apel estimates that "80 per cent of all the movements found in the sonatas, symphonies, quartets, concertos, trios, etc. from 1780 to the present day, are written in sonata-form, strictly or freely applied" (p. 696).

Actually, this specific single-movement form is more accurately designated as sonata allegro.

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of the movement for its statement and exposition, and the two expository sections and single development section are generally equivalent in length and complexity. The resultant form is thus one of three sections with a structure of A B C, in which the C section, derived by a combining of A and B, may be designated as A/B. It is therefore essentially binary; in this there is a certain similarity to the true sonata allegro, which is likewise a binary form, although its basic structure of A A B A has become obscured, and has even tended to be considered as ternary form, as a result of modern conductors and performers omitting the repetition of the exposition which was clearly prescribed by the masters of the classical sonata as an aesthetic feature of great importance.

Further, in true binary form (which was, in fact, the progenitor of sonata allegro form) the same or similar material is used throughout and the form is a continuous one, as opposed to the sectional structure of the ternary form, in which the middle section is derived from wholly new material. According to Willi Apel, "The binary form is essentially a stylistic and structural entity, a unified whole which, like many phrases in music, falls into two halves, the second of which forms the logical and necessary completion of the first."²² Clearly, this is the structural and aesthetic form of Eliot's first movements, where the two major themes, both derived from the same

²² Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 87.

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basic motif, are--as eventually resolved--necessary and complementary to each other. At the same time, the A/B section of Eliot's form may be seen as a completion, a resolution, of the themes presented in A and B; and in this there is a parallel to the harmonic scheme found in the binary musical forms. Each section in the binary form is harmonically "open," i.e. the first leads from tonic to dominant and the second returns from dominant to tonic (whereas in ternary form each section is harmonically "closed," beginning and ending in the same key, but often with a related key--dominant, relative, parallel--used for the middle section). Both of the thematic sections in Eliot's first movements are "open" in the sense that the aspect of time presented in each is left as an uncompleted proposition, tenuous and unresolved until the two are reconciled in the final section. The rhetorical and poetic effect is thus that of a movement from the tonic to the point of maximum suspension--the dominant--with a return to tonic in the resolution. (We have already noted this structure intuitively used in an embryonic form in certain of Eliot's earliest poems.)

A more specific musical equivalent of Eliot's binary form is, appropriately, known as song-form, and designates a form which has been much more frequently applied to instrumental music than to songs. With the basic structure of A A B it is to be found in the early medieval music of the Eastern churches; in the canzo of the troubadors and the ballade of the trouvères of ca. 12th-century France

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it established itself in European music, and subsequently became the basic form of the later medieval German Bar (barform), by far the most frequent form of the Minnesingers and Meistersingers.²³

Possibly the earliest origin of the form of which we have record is the ancient Greek ode, which consisted of strophe (A), antistrophe (A), and epode (B).

The first movement of "Burnt Norton," as previously indicated, presents a unique and highly interesting case among the opening movements of the cycle. It is possible to analyze it to show a rather general correspondence to the binary form of the other poems. From this approach the first theme, or section, would be constituted by the opening abstract speculation on the nature of time--the relationship of time past, present, and future, and the significance of the potential. The second theme would be the actual moment, or conscious experience, in the rose garden--which is the motivation for the meditation and the entire poem--stimulated by the consideration of what might have been, or unrealized potential. With the interaction of the two themes in the subsequent development section, the application of the abstract

²³ A Bar consisted of two Stollen (section a) and the Abgesang (section b). There is a humorously pretentious description in Richard Wagner's Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, I, 3, where Kothner, reading from the Leges Tabulaturae, says, "Ein jedes Meistersanges Bar" . . . consists of . . . "unterschiedlichen Gesetzen" (sundry sections, strophes); "Ein Gesetz" . . . is composed of . . . "zweenen Stollen" (two stanzas) . . . and . . . "Abgesang" . . . (after-song).

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Within this somewhat general structure, however, there is a much more thoroughly defined musical form whose details have not been previously recognized to my knowledge; for this movement may in fact be seen to provide a remarkably literal rendering of sonata allegro form. The first section containing the abstract speculation on time comprises the exposition: within this section three themes are presented--time as progression, time as eternity, and time as potential. These themes are then combined, or modulated, to produce a new theme of the potential and actual resulting in the present moment. Beginning with the recollection of the past potential experience in the rose garden which remained unconsummated, a development section follows in which time and experience are treated, in highly poetic imagery, in terms of past, present, future, and potential. The development reaches a tentative resolution in the experiencing of the previously unrealized potential as actual through the intuitive insight into the simultaneity of past, present, and future, and the eternal nature of perpetual possibility. A brief transitional passage then leads back to a short recapitulation section in which the basic themes are restated in condensed and modulated form and the movement is resolved with the articulation of the concept of past and future, potential and actual, existing simultaneously as an eternal

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This is certainly the most specific and literal analogy with an extended musical form to be found in Four Quartets; the other movements are much more general in structure. It is probably not likely that Eliot was consciously attempting any such precise imitation of sonata allegro form as this analysis reveals. Nevertheless, the correspondence exists and the parallel is striking; and, regardless of the extent of conscious analogy, the cogency and concentrated intensity which the poet achieves in a relatively short section derives in no small measure from its form--the same form which in musical terms has proved so fruitful for a corresponding concentration and intensity of musical expression.

The structure of this unusual movement is presented in a graphic form in Appendix B.

In "East Coker" the first movement, falling into three parts plus a longer than usual concluding coda section, follows Eliot's A B A/B binary form. The first part presents the theme of the cycle of birth, growth, and death, looking at time as progression in cyclical recurrence--"In my beginning is my end"; the second restates the basic theme, but now treats of the time of the present timeless moment, of the experience of being outside time. The third section is a development in which the two themes are combined; the poet, standing outside of the cycle, and from the vantage point of eternal time, visualizes in concrete and graphic images the time of years and

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seasons and the passing of generations of men and women. The coda restates the concept of timelessness in terms of the eternal cycle; and the closing words, restating those which opened the movement, effect a cyclical return of the movement to its beginning in a perfect correspondence of form and idea.

The simplest, most direct treatment of the contrasting themes is found in "The Dry Salvages," where the river and sea images are metaphors for two different kinds of time, the conscious time we feel in our lives--time as succession or progression--and eternal time without beginning or end which transcends our comprehension and which we can apprehend only in our imagination, or in our psychic understanding. Each theme is expanded, or ornamented, within its section, and the second one presented in three levels, or "keys"--the sea as the land's edge, the variety of sea voices, and the eternal ground swell. A short transition leads into the final section where the first theme reappears transmuted, or modulated, into an image of the subjective, limited human perception of time, which is juxtaposed and contrasted with the eternal time of the ground swell. A restatement of the ground swell theme, integrated with its clanging bell, closes the movement in a brief coda.

The first movement of "Little Gidding," set in Eliot's three-part binary form, again presents the two contrasted aspects of time in imagery evoked by the experience giving rise to the poem. The first section treats of eternal time, the idea of eternity contained in

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The second movement of each of the quartets comprises two general subdivisions which handle a single subject in two highly-contrasted ways. The first section of the movement consists of a thoroughly poetic and symbolic lyrical passage in a traditional metrical form. The second section is an extremely colloquial passage of philosophical reflection in which the idea treated in symbol and metaphor in the first ~~part~~ is developed and enlarged on in a conversational manner. The ~~e~~ffect is similar to the handling of a musical theme by different ~~groups~~ of instruments, or in contrasting harmonization or different keys, and, probably even more closely analogous, in an altered rhythm and tempo; such a change, for instance, as would be effected by a ~~r~~hythmic expansion where the same basic melodic progression would be spread out over a longer sequence of measures in altered rhythm and in a slower tempo. The second section, while it is structurally homogeneous, presents thematically a series of variations on ~~the~~ original subject by expounding on various aspects or elements of ~~the~~ condition, dilemma, or thesis stated in the opening section.

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Eliot's poetic structure is therefore closely parallel to the musical theme and variations, which has been a favored form by the major composers in the history of Western music from Bach through Franck and even into the twentieth century in the polyphonic revival of the Viennese school.

In "Burnt Norton" the highly obscure and symbolic first section treats of the reconciliation in eternity of the apparent flux of life. The second then turns to a discursive statement which first considers reconciliation in terms of stillness and movement; then in a second variation of the theme discusses ultimate resolution as the union of change and permanence implicit in the partial ecstasy of momentary revelation and the protection of man from the unendurable full knowledge of ultimate reality by his enchainment in past and future. The movement ends with a coda section in which a brief abstract meditation on time reverts thematically to the first movement; the mention of three concrete moments, including "the moment in the rose garden," again recalls the first movement, thereby establishing a subtle structural unity; and the "moment in the draughty church at smokefall" anticipates the final poem of the cycle. These closing lines, re-establishing the idea of the oneness of time--past, present, and future--and the intersection of time by the timeless moment, sum up the thesis of the movement's opening section that time is the only medium of ultimate reconciliation.

In "East Coker" the first section of the second movement is a

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lyric presenting an apparent confusion in the seasons and constellations which embodies the theme of the uncertainty of human perception and the deception of human knowledge. The second, or variation, section, beginning with a transitional passage which expresses the difficulty of the poet's craft and restates the theme in brief and simplified form, turns to a highly prosaic discourse on the parallel confusions in the lives of men. These are enumerated in variations presenting the deception of knowledge taught by elders; the limited value of knowledge derived from experience; the blindness and uncertainty of man in the mortal world (this variation being enhanced by the imagery of the "grimpen"); and the deception of wisdom in old age. Humility, which is endless, is posed as the only wisdom we can hope to acquire.

In the final two lines (which in effect comprise almost a separate section)-- "The houses are all gone under the sea./ The dancers are all gone under the hill"--there is a summing-up of the transience of human existence and an evocation of the entire first movement. These final two lines may be considered as a brief coda. They very definitely impart a strong cadence effect; the repetition of the relatively short lines with their identical metrical structure, accompanied by the change in images, seems to effect the poetic equivalent of the plagal cadence in music.²⁴

²⁴ The plagal cadence uses the chord based on the subdominant (fourth) scale degree preceding the tonic: IV-I. This is also known as the Amen-cadence because of its traditional use for the "Amen" at the end of hymns.

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In place of the symbolic lyrical strophe of the first two quartets, the sestina opening the second movement of "The Dry Salvages" takes the form of an anguished inquiry into the meaning of man's endless cyclical succession; in effect it becomes an elegy for all of mankind, whose anonymous individual lives leave little trace but wreckage on the ocean of time. The final stanza of the section, containing a hint as to where meaning may be found, provides the direct motivation for the second section of the movement, which develops, in its successive variations, the idea of meaning attained through past experience, through the pain and suffering of others past, and experience restored through approach to the meaning. The final lines comprise a coda succinctly summarizing the movement's essential idea--that permanence is attained in transience through the element of time, which is the vehicle of experience and the medium of reconciliation. Here again, at the close of the movement there is a return to the imagery of the first movement--the ragged rock, the waves, the restless waters. Thus the effort to find meaning has restored the original imaginative vision of the river and the sea.

This movement seems to be particularly rich in musical elements: the full, rhythmic flow of the sestina, the germ-motive of the first section providing the theme for the second, which develops it in a highly contrasting style and mood, then the restatement of the initial imagery of the quartet which both resolves the meaning and idea of the movement and provides a thematic bridge with the initial movement.

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In "Little Gidding" the richly symbolic lyric on the decay of the mortal world again leads into a contrasting section, the colloquy of the poet with the "dead master" after the air raid, on the streets of London in the early morning hours. Here, however, though the move is typically from the cosmic to the human and temporal, and while the second part is distinct in mood, style, and metre from the first, it is metrically formal²⁵ and is shot through with imagery, unlike the corresponding sections of the first three quartets. This is consistent with the whole construction of "Little Gidding," where the stylistic contrasts are less severe than in the other quartets, particularly the two middle ones, and where the "counterpointing" of themes (which will be discussed later in some detail) is more cumulatively complex. The second section presents first the picture of present decay resulting from mankind's willful destruction; then the colloquy elaborates on the lessons of experience, the continuing change and decay of individual human existence, and the futility of existence without the redemptive

²⁵ In The Art of T.S. Eliot (London: The Cresset Press, 1949), Helen Gardner comments on the metre of this section:

The metre is an original modification of terza rima. The 'want of like terminations' in an uninflected language such as English involves most translators and imitators of Dante in a loss of his colloquial terseness and austere nobility in an effort to preserve the rhyme. Mr Eliot has sacrificed rhyme, and by substituting for it alternate masculine and feminine endings, he has preserved the essential forward movement of the metre, without loss of directness of speech and naturalness (footnote to p. 40).

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As with the first movements, the relation of the contrasting sections of the second movements, while sufficiently flexible to allow for variation with the individual character of each poem, is relatively constant throughout the cycle. Generally, the first section is lyrical, rich in romantic imagery and symbolism, and in traditional metre and stanza form; the second is colloquial and conversational in style, meditative in mood, and consonant with the character of the individual poem, being philosophic in "Burnt Norton," analytical in "East Coker," reflective in "The Dry Salvages," and more narrative and conversational in "Little Gidding."

This structural constancy between respective movements is a major element in establishing the unity of the Four Quartets, a unity further reinforced by the close relationship of theme and idea treated in the corresponding parts. Essentially all four second movements deal with the subject of permanence achieved through continuous transience: continued change creates a pattern through which meaning is found; thus individual existence and experience are meaningless in themselves but achieve purpose as part of the eternal pattern.

The second movements of the four poems illustrate particularly well the contrast of intensity to be obtained through juxtaposition of

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the poetic and prosaic, another structural element which Eliot thought requisite to poetry. Discussing the function of poetic dissonance, even cacophony, in his lecture "The Music of Poetry," he states that "in a poem of any length, there must be transitions between passages of greater and less intensity, to give a rhythm of fluctuating emotion essential to the musical structure of the whole; and the passages of less intensity will be, in relation to the level on which the total poem operates, prosaic--so that, in the sense implied by that context, it may be said that no poet can write a poem of amplitude unless he is a master of the prosaic."²⁶ Certainly the application of Eliot's own criteria to Four Quartets provides ample evidence of the poet's mastery of the prosaic within the poetic context.

"The third movement," observes Helen Gardner, "is the core of each poem, out of which reconciliation grows: it is an exploration with a twist of the ideas of the first two movements."²⁷ Musical analogies in the structure of the third movements are perhaps less apparent than in the other movements; nevertheless, the form follows a generally consistent pattern through the four poems.

²⁶ Op. cit., pp. 24-25. In a footnote to the passage cited, Eliot added, "This is the complementary doctrine to that of the 'touchstone' line or passage of Matthew Arnold: this test of the greatness of a poet is the way he writes his less intense, but structurally vital, matter" (p. 25).

²⁷ Op. cit., p. 41.

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In its correspondence to musical structure, each third movement may be considered to be in two-part song form with an A B relationship, the contrast of the two sections being primarily one of thematic treatment. In the first section the themes presented in the first two movements are now explored in a deeply meditative, almost mystical mood. The second section stands in relation to the first almost as answer to question; however, the answer to the dilemma is not complete, but only hinted at, and in each case points to the final movement where the ultimate resolution occurs. Thus, the third movement of each poem, standing midway in the work, deriving its thematic content as a modulation of the themes of the preceding movements, and anticipating the final reconciliation of the last movement, is vital to the thematic development and progression of the poem and an integral element of the structural and thematic unity of the quartet.

In "Burnt Norton" the first part is symbolic, with the London tube figuring as an emblem of the time-bound human condition, while the second part poses the "downward way" through mystical experience as the release from the bondage of time. Here there is no radical change of rhythm between the two sections, though in the second part three-stress lines are interwoven with the basic four-stress pattern.

The first section of the "East Coker" third movement considers the agonized wait for the mystical illumination, while the second outlines the way to attain it through a series of ostensible paradoxes via the negative way of self-denial of St. John of the Cross. The first

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section has a more complex structure than in any of the other poems, consisting of three main parts: the first considers how all mankind disappears into the dark, we with them; the second, in a series of three metaphorical variations, poses the necessity of submitting to the darkness of God; the third presents the necessity of waiting in faith, detached from hope, love, and thought.

In this movement the two sections are separated by a transitional passage rich in imagery and conveying implicit intimations of immortality, which effects a smooth transition into the final section. There is no sharp break between sections; the break in metre occurs after the realization of the true approach to hope, love, and faith and the knowledge that ". . . the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing," with a change from the six-stress line of the first section to the five-stress of the transition, which in turn modulates into the four-stress rhythm of the Passion lyric.

In "The Dry Salvages" the meditation of the movement's first part concerns the relationship of past, present, and future (the theme of the opening lines of "Burnt Norton"); the second part is an exhortation to action arising as the logical and necessary adjunct to the resultant existentially-conceived condition, an admonishment to "Fare forward" rather than "fare well," inspired by Krishna's advice to Arjuna on the field of battle. Time here is seen as a succession of present moments, with the moment of experience existing only in the present; man's commitment therefore must be to present,

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The first part of the third movement of "Little Gidding," taking the form of a disquisition on the uses of memory, considers three conditions arising from attachment and detachment, and offers liberation from both future and past through detachment, as opposed to attachment or indifference. The past, reclaimed by memory, is seen to be transfigured in freedom. The second section is a meditation on history which applies the previously-developed abstract thesis to specific men and events of the past. All the dead of history are found to be reconciled in death; and they become for us a symbol of action in the present moment and a model, perfected in death, for our emulation. The coda develops the most optimistic and positive conclusion to be found in any of the four third movements--"And all shall be well and/ All manner of thing shall be well/ By the purification of the motive/ In the ground of our beseeching." Thus our redemption derives from our own action as that of the past dead derived from theirs, and as their motive and action is purified in the eternal. There is a definite break between sections in this movement, with the poet's change from the subjective to the historic, accompanied by a shift from the loose

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blank verse of the first section to the incisive, intermixed two-, three-, and four-stress (though predominantly three-stress trimeter) line of the second.

Here again, in the third movements, it is to be noted that in each quartet the mood and style of the movement is consistent with the character of the whole poem. And again the unity of the poem cycle as a whole may be clearly observed, not only in the structural form of the corresponding movements, but in the thematic content as well. Each of the third movements deals with some aspect of commitment or action necessary to the attainment of spiritual tranquility. All four start from the dilemma of man in his earth-bound, mortal condition, subject to the limitations of time; but "Burnt Norton" and "East Coker" are concerned with the way to divine insight and mystical illumination, whereas "The Dry Salvages" and "Little Gidding" explore the means of achieving a sense of purpose and meaning in the everyday activities of the worldly life, finding it in the affirmative commitment to present action. There is, then, a balance and symmetry in the variety of thematic treatment, as well as the element of thematic homogeneity, contributing to the structural unity of the cycle.

The fourth movement of each poem is a brief invocalional lyric essentially serving as a transitional device. The brevity of the movement, coupled with its sharply rhythmic metre, provides a very decided relief, a relaxation of tension, from the profound meditation of the third movement. This movement is in essence a prayer, addressed

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to, or at least invoking the image of, in the four poems respectively, the Father, or Divine Spirit; the Son--God incarnate; Our Lady as Divine Intercessor; and the Holy Ghost, or Divine Grace. Thus for the first time the poet has given expression to the underlying ideas in specifically Christian terms.

The transitional nature of the movement is emphasized by its essentially unit form in each poem, with no contrast of themes or sections within itself. Another effect of the passage is one of a rather abrupt modulation to a related but highly contrasting key. Therefore this movement acts both as separation and contrast, and also as bridge between the momentous pivotal third movement and the final one. Here, certainly, we have an outstanding realization of Eliot's vision of the "possibilities of transition in a poem comparable to the different movements of a symphony or a quartet" of which he spoke.

In "Burnt Norton" the invocation is in highly symbolic imagery and poses the ultimate salvation of escape from the temporal world to the "still point" of eternal time; this salvation, however, being only attainable through a knowledge of, and acceptance by, God the Father, whose grace is imaged in terms of the sunflower and the clematis. Since these flowers are associated with the Son and the Virgin there is a subtle preparation for the matching movements of the following quartets. This movement in fact establishes the ground of a thematic unity in all four of the fourth movements: since Father, Son, Virgin, and Holy Ghost are varying aspects, or conditions, of

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man's redemption, rebirth, and salvation, expressing different manifestations of the eternal Oneness with which the poet aspires to be reconciled, the four corresponding movements are interdependent and integrally related.

Along among the four movements, this passage from "Burnt Norton" is composed of a single stanza of irregularly-rhyming, four-stress, syllabically-irregular lines.

The "East Coker" movement, highly metaphorical, picturing Christ as the "wounded surgeon," proposes the Church as the true guide to salvation, and acceptance of the Saviour and His sacrifice for man as the only means of redemption from the human condition. Each of the five rhyming, metrically-identical stanzas embodies a metaphor which is part of the complete, over-riding metaphor carrying the theme of the passage. Structurally the five stanzas may be considered to comprise a single strophe, with a form of

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In "The Dry Salvages" the prayer to the Virgin, who is also the patron saint of mariners, is for all voyagers, and, while in quite literal language, implicitly invokes the Lady's protection for all mankind. The three stanzas comprising this strophe, while five lines each and essentially four-stress, are unrhymed and syllabically irregular. Thematically, they can be considered to present a form of a á á.

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choice for mankind of two kinds of fire--those of purgatory and hell--which will determine his hope or despair. Both stanzas portray the Pentecost in symbolic terms; Divine Love, manifested in the two kinds of fire, and the origin of our purgatorial agony, is invoked as the universal motivating force and man's true promise of salvation. The two seven-line stanzas, taking an a á relationship, are metrically and rhythmically formal, and with their rhyme scheme of ababacc they may be regarded as approximating--somewhat truncated--the form of the medieval French ballade.

The fifth and final movement in each quartet provides a recapitulation and summation of all the basic themes of the poem and finally effects a resolution of the contradictions of the first movement which had achieved tentative and partial reconciliation in the pivotal third movement. The similarity of this construction to the restatement and resolution of themes in musical composition is here particularly striking, and is to be considered further in some detail. The movement in each quartet again falls into two parts, although the contrast is less marked than in the second movement, and is reversed, the colloquial passage occurring first. Here again the form is a binary one, with an A B structure and "open" harmonic construction. The two sections bear a relationship of question and answer, or dilemma and resolution, the second part deriving its immediate thematic motivation from the first; and, as in certain preceding movements of the cycle, there is a modulation of theme and mood equivalent to the harmonic movement

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in the musical form: the effect is that of an initial modulation from tonic to dominant, the first section ending in a tenuous, suspended, unresolved state, with the return to the tonic occurring in the resolution of the concluding section.

In "Burnt Norton," "East Coker," and "Little Gidding" the first section of the movement treats of the problems of art, particularly those of the writer, regarded from the aspect of time and concerned with his struggle to master the tools of his craft and learn to use language effectively. In each case this subject serves as a point of focus for the re-introduction of themes and ideas from the preceding movements, and a nucleus around which they are organized and to which they are integrally related.

In "The Dry Salvages" this first section consists of a consideration of man's futile attempts to penetrate the barrier of time and see into the past and the future, and contrasts this with the way of the mystic, who alone is capable of an apprehension of ultimate reality as opposed to the "half-hints and guesses" available to most of us. There is perhaps no completely logical reason for Eliot's deviating in this instance from the subject of the other three quartets, particularly in view of the general consistency of the cycle in this regard. (There is of course an inherent and basic relationship between the attempts of mankind over the ages to divine the meaning of all human events past and future, and the individual poet's "raid on the inarticulate" in an attempt to reach and establish meaning through the patterns

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of poetic expression.) A close consideration will, however, reveal that the orientation of "The Dry Salvages" is more deeply rooted in primal motivation and archetypal imagery than the other poems: the river as god, the sea as eternal and all-encompassing progenitor of man, the mythology of the Mahabharata, the worship of the Virgin--who is, after all, the Christian manifestation of a mythological archetype which reaches back at least as far as the recorded origins of the Eastern religions. From this standpoint, the more universal aspect of the theme of this first section of the last movement is completely consonant with the approach and mood of "The Dry Salvages" as a whole.

The final sections of the last movements are similar in all the quartets; coincident with a fairly sharply-defined structural break with the first section (less well-defined in "East Coker"), a rhythmic modulation occurs from the verse of the first section (four- with some five-stress, syllabically irregular in "Burnt Norton"; loose hexameters and pentameters with varying four-, five-, and six-stress in "East Coker"; four-stress loose pentameters and hexameters in "The Dry Salvages"; four-stress irregular blank verse in "Little Gidding") to a predominantly three-stress line which is in loose trimeter in all quartets except "East Coker," where the metre is syllabically irregular. The images from earlier movements of the same quartet, or preceding quartets, return in quick succession and the final resolution is in a highly poetic style of intense imagery,

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Thus, "Burnt Norton" resolves the ambiguities of movement and stillness, time and timelessness, potentiality and actuality, in terms of Love in its highest form, the Incarnation, which realizes all potentialities. "East Coker" reconciles the meaning of the present moment of temporal existence with the eternal cycle, establishing the necessity of commitment to this life in a spirit of humility and detachment in the realization that each action, each stage of the journey, is not merely an end but also a beginning. "The Dry Salvages," containing in its resolution thematic elements from both of the preceding poems, discovers how man may reconcile the apparent ambiguities of time and attain the still point not only through insight but through ordinary action, the Incarnation symbolizing the ultimate reconciliation within time and out of time available to man through Christ. Finally, in "Little Gidding" occurs the apotheosis, the quintessential resolution, in which all of the themes of the four quartets are restated and interwoven in a complete synthesis of idea and meaning. The pattern and design of the eternal cycle is understood; the redemption of time and temporal existence through knowledge of the One in the many, the eternal in the temporal, is disclosed; God as the ultimate source, as beginning and end, is at last comprehended; the true nature of Divine Love, as revealed in the Incarnation, is known. And therefore, "all shall be well" when the fire of life is merged in the "crowned

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Note: I am including as Appendix C a graphic presentation of the structural form of Four Quartets. I believe the manner in which this is arranged will clearly illustrate the internal form of each movement and of each poem, the correspondence between parallel movements of the four poems--and consequently between the individual poems of the cycle, and the resultant structural integration of the cycle in its totality. The coherence and unity, as well as the contrast, which Eliot achieves through the use of musically-analogous structural form should thus be readily apparent.

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CHAPTER III

THE LINEAR ELEMENTS OF FOUR QUARTETS

It is abundantly evident that in Four Quartets Eliot has exploited to a remarkable degree the poetic equivalent of the musical statement and development of themes within a complex and integrated structural form. But the full range of Eliot's method and the complexity of his linear development have so far never been realized; and there are techniques basic to his composition, closely analogous to musical devices, which have not been treated, or even fully recognized, by Eliot scholars. Among these, I would like to propose that Eliot closely approximated the musical techniques of motivic development and thematic metamorphosis in having built the entire magnificent thematic structure of the four poems from just one basic idea, or germ-motive. Further, both of these techniques are vital components of a poetic counterpoint which is a basic structural element of Eliot's mature poetry and which is closely correspondent, in certain aspects of construction and in effect, to musical counterpoint. The whole texture and style of Four Quartets in fact largely inhere in Eliot's contrapuntal method.

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Motivic Development

In music, the motive (alt. motif, G. motiv) is, according to one cogent definition, "the briefest intelligible and self-contained fragment of a musical theme or subject."²⁸ A motive may be constituted by as few as two notes, e.g. the descending fourth at the beginning of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in A major, Opus 2, No. 2, or the descending fifth at the opening of his Ninth Symphony. The motives are the foundation blocks, or germinating cells, of a musical composition, from which the themes themselves evolve and through which thematic development is accomplished by means of expansion, imitation, repetition in the same or other parts, transposition, rhythmic modifications, modal change, contrapuntal combination with other motives, and other devices. It is probably safe to say that all of the major composers from the classical period on, and most twentieth-century composers, have used this technique. Motivic development is, as may be readily inferred, a means of imparting coherence, organization, and unity to a musical work; and far from limiting the composer in inventiveness, it has, while imposing certain inherent disciplines, provided the ground for a high degree of creative ingenuity. As an instance in point, Richard Strauss' great symphonic tone poem "Death and Transfiguration," Opus 24, which is in a free

²⁸ Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 462.

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sonata form with an extended coda, is entirely derived from a motive which is nothing more than a simple major third chord, first introduced in a repetitive rhythmic pattern by the violins and violas:

Example 1



All of the subsequent principal and sub-themes evolve from this basic interval and its parallel minor modal form, which remain implicit throughout all thematic transformation and development; the motive is thus generative of the entire 499-measure musical structure.

The germ-motive of Four Quartets is the concept "time." Time is, in fact, the first word of the first quartet, and it is from this one primal idea that every subsequent theme develops. However, time as a single, unit, abstract concept without further differentiation would be equivalent to a single note of music, which would be incapable of development or evolution. The musical motive requires at least two notes to provide, through their combined interval, pitch, rhythm, and duration a fundamental characteristic--an essential "personality"--and a sequential relationship from which thematic development may evolve. Eliot finds this necessary motivic tension in the two primary and inherent aspects attaching to the human concept of time: temporal time--that is, time as progression; and eternal time--time as infinite

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and all-encompassing. The two aspects of time are ostensibly opposed and irreconcilable, thus giving rise to ambiguity and conflict. From this dilemma Eliot derives the central theme of Four Quartets, which Grover Smith defines as "the union of the flux of time with the stillness of eternity."²⁹

Eliot's continuing motivic development sees the emergence of temporal, or transient, time as a progression of present moments. Viewed objectively in their totality these moments constitute only the present in eternal succession; but looked at subjectively, from the locus of a given present moment intersecting the timeless flow, the finite components of past, present, and future are seen in sharp differentiation. In eternal time, however, all present moments exist simultaneously and eternally, so that no distinction of past, present, and future is possible. A further evolution from the motives of past and present--stimulated by a present experience in which the unfulfilled past is contemplated--develops the theme of the potential event (what might have been), which leads to the concept of potential as continually existent in eternal time. This process may be seen in the exposition section of the first movement of "Burnt Norton." The motives of time present, past, and future give rise to the first theme-- "Time present and time past/ Are both perhaps present in time future."

²⁹ Op. cit., p. 253. This would seem, incidentally, almost a definitive example of Coleridge's theory of the "dynamic tension of opposites" which he sees as fundamental and requisite to the generation of poetic impulse.

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This theme is then condensed, or diminished, inverted, and restated-- "And time future contained in time past." Next, the second theme is developed from the motive of eternal time--"If all time is eternally present/ All time is unredeemable." Then a third theme evolves from the motivic concept of the potential event in time with the statement, "What might have been is an abstraction/ Remaining a perpetual possibility/ Only in a world of speculation." Thus, from the cycle's basic motives three primary themes have been derived, which are modulated and combined at the end of the exposition section, and which become the underlying motivating material and thematic substance for the development section to follow.

Such, then, is the process of motivic development by which the major and minor thematic elements of Four Quartets are ultimately all derived from the single germ-motive of time.

Essentially, each quartet deals with the basic dilemma of man's entrapment within the flux of temporal time as opposed to his striving for the attainment of spiritual grace in the stillness of eternity, which he intuitively, but only partially, perceives. But each poem treats the theme, and reconciles the ambiguity, from a different viewpoint, examining and exploring a varied aspect in both its temporal and spiritual implications; each poem is initially stimulated by a meaningful present experience by the poet in a place rich in association with the historical past, or having some personal or family association, and significant to the consideration of time. Thus, "Burnt Norton"

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originates with a visit to a rose garden of a country house in Gloucestershire once associated with an intensely poignant personal relationship in which some highly desired potential accomplishment or event was somehow frustrated and failed of consummation; "East Coker" is prompted by the village of that name in Somersetshire from which Eliot's ancestors had emigrated to America in the mid-seventeenth century after having lived there for some two centuries; "The Dry Salvages" takes its inspiration from a small group of rocks (presumably Les Trois Sauvages), with a beacon, off the coast of Cape Ann, Massachusetts, remembered by Eliot from summer holidays in his childhood; "Little Gidding" finds its motivation in the poet's meditation in the historic chapel at Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire, the seat of an Anglican religious community established in 1625 by Nicholas Ferrar, visited several times by King Charles and subsequently desecrated by the Roundheads. Thus, each poem's peculiar and individual treatment of the basic theme has grown as an organic development of the primary thematic motives originating in specific experience; the result is a complete consonance of thematic content and generating experience. The musical process of motivic development has therefore provided for variety of poetic expression through flexibility in development of thematic context, while retaining the essential unity inherent in its method. So, each quartet, while primarily oriented to the basic theme of the cycle, explores within its movement the different levels of meaning inhering in its secondary

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themes of history, poetry, love, and faith. And so the structure of each quartet, and the four quartets as a group, grows, inseparable from its thematic motivation, as a completely integrated and unified whole.

Thematic Metamorphosis

Thematic metamorphosis, previously mentioned in connection with motivic development, is closely related to it in the evolution of thematic material within a musical composition. Metamorphosis is the modification of a musical subject or motive in order to change its "personality." There is a kinship with classical theme and variation here; however, metamorphosis is a 19th-century device differing markedly from earlier technical methods of alteration, as in ornamentation of the theme, variation in the accompanying voices, or augmentation or diminution of a fugal subject. Modification in thematic metamorphosis may be accomplished by transforming one or more elements, such as rhythmic pattern, melodic contour, or harmonic structure, while maintaining sufficient of its basic characteristics to insure retention of its essential individuality. Applied to transformation of a motive, the device is illustrated in Strauss' "Death and Transfiguration" cited earlier, with the alteration of the major third interval to its parallel minor third,³⁰ both of which undergo subsequent

³⁰ Parallel keys are major and minor keys with the same tonic, e. g., C major and C minor.

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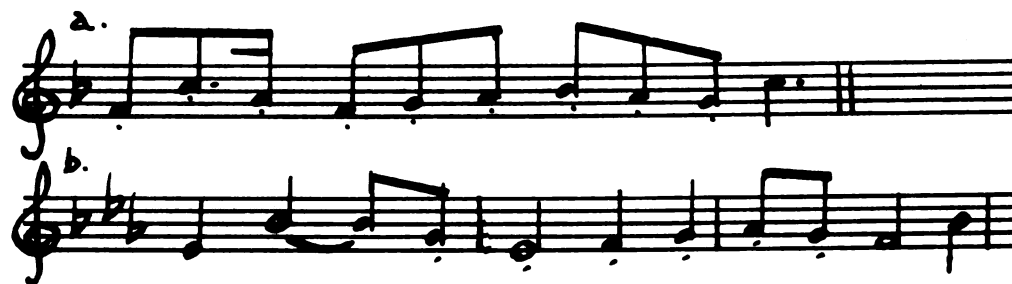
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motivic development. In the following example of thematic metamorphosis from Richard Wagner's Siegfried, the horn-call Leitmotiv maintains its melodic contour, but is transposed down two keys and undergoes a rhythmic alteration:

Example 2



Eliot makes use of motivic, as well as thematic, metamorphosis in Four Quartets. In the third movement of "Burnt Norton," for instance, with the shift of locale to the London tube--the "place of disaffection"--the time past and time future of the abstract speculation in the rose garden become "Time before and time after," and men and bits of paper are whirled by the cold wind that blows ". . . before and after time."

Similarly, in the same movement, the motive of ". . . dim light: neither daylight/ . . . Nor darkness . . .," ostensibly describing the London tube but also an implicit metaphor for the unenlightened human condition, becomes transformed to "Neither plenitude nor vacancy . . ."

Motivic metamorphosis is not limited by Eliot in its span to a single movement or even poem, but occurs between different poems of the cycle. Thus, the "dust on a bowl of rose leaves" of "Burnt Norton," I--the now-decayed, unrealized potentialities of the past--becomes, in the lyric on the decay of the mortal world in "Little Gidding," II, the ". . . ash the burnt roses leave" on an old man's sleeve, and "Dust in the air suspended." In "East Coker," IV, the motive appears as ". . . frigid purgatorial fires/ Of which the flame is roses" It might be logically considered that a further modification of the decayed roses motive occurs in "The Dry Salvages," II, in "The silent withering of autumn flowers/ Dropping their petals and remaining motionless." And the third movement of the same poem finds another transformation in the ". . . Royal Rose . . . / Of wistful regret . . . / Pressed between yellow leaves of a book that has never been opened." In "Little Gidding," III, it undergoes a further change in ". . . an incantation/ To summon the spectre of a Rose," with reference to the chemical revival of a flower in metaphorical allusion to the resurrection of a dead past (and no doubt to the Fokine ballet as well); then, in the fifth movement of the last quartet, appears as "The moment of the rose . . ." which is of equal duration with that of the yew-tree of immortality. Finally, it recurs in the last line of the poem and the cycle, now merged with the purgatorial fire of suffering and transformed into Divine Love.

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metamorphosis of fire as the fire of mortal decay, the fire of human vitality, the fire of apocalyptic destruction, the purgatorial fire of suffering and hell-fire of damnation, the fire of human self-destruction, the fire of commitment to action, and the Pentecostal fire of suffering imposed by Divine Love, could be traced through its continuing transformation in "East Coker," Ia, Ic, IIa, IV, and "Little Gidding," Ia, Ic, IIa, IIb, IV, Va, and Vb.

The perception of Eliot's use of recurring motives and themes, constantly developed and transformed, as the poetic equivalent of thematic metamorphosis in music leads, I believe, to a substantially greater insight into the author's method and into the design of Four Quartets than that provided by the traditional approaches. The musical analogy reveals the essential organic unity of the poems much more quickly and much more clearly than the typical view of recurrent imagery. Most frequently critics discuss these metamorphosed motives and themes as ornamentation or variation on a basic imagery.³¹ What happens is that they largely tend to treat each modified recurrence

³¹ Helen Gardner, for instance, has stated in connection with Four Quartets, "One is constantly reminded of music by the treatment of images, which recur with constant modifications, from their context, or from their combination with other recurring images, as a phrase recurs with modifications in music" (The Art of T.S. Eliot, p. 48). Miss Gardner is one of the most perceptive of Eliot scholars and prone to think in musical terms more than most; here, however, she appears to view Eliot's treatment of imagery more as theme and variations, a fundamentally different technique from thematic metamorphosis.

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as a separate image, the focus being on the imagery within its new context. Each recurrence therefore tends toward a certain isolation and the unifying connection is lost. Thus, with respect to the metamorphosis of the burnt rose imagery just outlined, most critics see primarily the rose symbolism in its variety of age-old symbolic meanings and are concerned to explicate it in each instance in terms of its symbolism as it relates, say, to the Virgin Mary, to sensual and divine love, as the emblem of the martyr, the emblem of Christ's love, the emblem of human love becoming divine, and from many other aspects. One consequence is that the concentration on the specific traditional imagery and the particular contextual position loses sight of other more subtle and less overt transformations--again losing much of the unifying thematic continuity. Often, critics discuss the recurrent symbols or images in terms of allusion to preceding statements or modifications of the imagery; such an approach again tends to isolate each treatment as a separate statement only loosely related to what has gone before, and the full impact of the organic interrelationship fails to be realized. This becomes most apparent when allusion to imagery in Eliot's poems outside of Four Quartets is introduced, since the organic relationship of the poem cycle then becomes even more remote.

If, however, this constant transformation of basic motives and themes throughout Four Quartets is recognized for what it seems to me to be--the equivalent of thematic metamorphosis in music--the

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close relationship of the various episodes is immediately apparent and approach to the meaning is greatly enhanced. Once the essential unity of certain thematic elements becomes clear, subtle thematic transformations and recombinations are more readily perceived and their relationship understood. The meaning emerging from the continuously evolving thematic materials throughout the cycle then becomes constantly expanding and incremental rather than episodic, and the intimate and integrated relationship between movement and movement, poem and poem, becomes much more thoroughly defined.

In addition to motivic metamorphosis, the metamorphosis of both principal and supporting themes is one of the major devices by which Eliot obtains unity between movements of a quartet and between all four poems of the cycle, as well as a means of achieving the intense concentration which his philosophical inquiry demands.

In illustration, we may cite the fundamental theme of the apparent contradiction of temporal time and eternal time. This theme is of course introduced at the very opening of the cycle in the first movement of "Burnt Norton"; and here, as has been discussed, temporal time is presented in terms of time as progression, involving the disparate aspects of past, present, future, and potential, while eternal time is comprehended as the simultaneous existence of all finite time particles in an infinity of concurrent present moments. In the first section of the second movement this theme undergoes a transformation and is presented in terms of the flux of mortal life and the eternal

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In each case the essence of the theme is the relationship of movement and stillness--both progression and flux imply motion, while eternity and cosmic pattern connote arrest of motion. And it is precisely in these terms that the next metamorphosis of the theme takes form; in the second section of the movement, in what is structurally a variation of the theme as presented in the first section, reconciliation is achieved through the union of movement and stillness ". . . at the still point . . . Where past and future are gathered." Just as eternity enfolds progression, and the "drift of stars" encompasses the temporal pattern, the dance now becomes the symbol of reconciliation "At the still point of the turning world," which is not fixity, nor movement from nor towards, nor ascent nor decline.

The entire third movement of "Burnt Norton" is essentially a transformation of the same basic theme, whereby the metaphor of the London tube in the first section presents flux and movement as empty and purposeless mortal existence, while the stillness of eternity is sought through spiritual union in the "world of perpetual solitude," where is the ". . . destitution of all property, / Desiccation of the world of sense, / Evacuation of the world of fancy," and the way to reconciliation lies ". . . not in movement / But abstention from

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In the final movement, a continuing metamorphosis of the theme produces a contemplation of the poet's struggle to achieve the form and pattern through which poetic expression may attain a permanent, independent existence surviving change and carrying universal meaning. This derives from a consideration of the nature of language: words move, as does music, in time, reaching, after speech, into the silence, attempting by the form, the pattern, to reach the stillness ". . . as a Chinese jar still/ Moves perpetually in its stillness."

From this consideration of stillness and movement, partially seen in the "stillness of the violin, while the note lasts," emerges another transformation of the theme in the concept of the co-existence of beginning and end--"Or say that the end precedes the beginning, / And the end and the beginning were always there/ Before the beginning and after the end. / And all is always now." While this expression retains the fundamental characteristics, the essential meaning, of the theme as it reconciles successive time and infinite time, movement and stillness, change and permanence, it introduces a related aspect--the idea of eternal cyclical recurrence. It is from this that the following poem, "East Coker," takes its opening motive--"In my beginning is my end"--and its first principal theme of the eternal cycle of birth, growth, and death, experienced by man in his time-bound condition as finite and limited temporal succession, but seen as continuously and simultaneously existent in eternal time.

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In the closing section of the last movement of "Burnt Norton," a further thematic evolution transforms finitude and infinity into desire, which is movement, "Not in itself desirable," and Love, ". . . itself unmoving, / Only the cause and end of movement, / Timeless, and undesiring / Except in the aspect of time / Caught in the form of limitation / Between un-being and being." In these terms the principal theme of Four Quartets is prepared for its ultimate resolution which will only become fully realized in the final section of the last poem of the cycle and which will in the interim have undergone a continuing and expanding metamorphosis.

Poetic Counterpoint

Closely related to both motivic development and thematic metamorphosis, and vital to the thematic and structural unity of the quartets, is the device, or structural element, of "contrapuntal arrangement of subject matter" of which Eliot spoke in "The Music of Poetry." Now, in preceding sections of this paper, counterpoint has occasionally been mentioned rather obliquely, or referred to in somewhat general terms. However, any discussion of counterpoint as a specific poetic equivalent to its musical counterpart requires more exact definition of just what is intended. The term "counterpoint" seems to admit of flexible interpretation among Eliot scholars and has been applied in various ways, often with little regard for its precise musical definition. A counterpoint of themes based on manifold levels of meaning of

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words, phrases, images, symbols, and even of literary allusion has been proposed.³² The symbolism of the four elements--air, earth, fire, and water--which runs throughout Four Quartets is sometimes considered to provide a type of counterpoint in the simultaneous expression of manifold levels of meaning and imagery; similarly, the multiple levels of interpretation inhering in the literal, tropological, allegorical, and anagogical modes are posited as functioning contrapuntally within the cycle. Approaches such as these, however, are somewhat remote from the more literal musically-analogous counterpoint obtained through syntax and prosody which I am proposing, and will not be pursued here.

This subject of poetic counterpoint presents certain complexities not involved in the other aspects of structure so far discussed. Now, counterpoint literally means "point against point" and refers in music to the simultaneous movement of two or more independent melodic lines, or voices ("voice" being used in its general musical context referring to a vocal or instrumental line).³³ Therefore a literal counterpoint is patently impossible in a poem designed to be read or

³² For instance, see Grover Smith, op. cit., pp. 253-254.

³³ The Harvard Dictionary of Music, defining counterpoint, states, "The term--derived from L. punctus contra punctum (note against note or, properly interpreted, succession of notes against succession of notes, i. e., melody against melody)--means the combination into a single musical fabric of lines or parts which have distinctive melodic significance" (p. 189).

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spoken by a single individual. At the same time, any poetic construction of multiple voices intended to be read simultaneously by several speakers would be obviously impractical due to the limitations of aural assimilation.³⁴ Nevertheless, by an adroit technique and an amazing

³⁴ Reid MacCallum has considered certain implications of this matter in the essay "Time Lost and Regained" in the book Imitation and Design and Other Essays, edited by William Blissett (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953):

Mr. Eliot is very exact in his language. When he calls his latest book of poems Four Quartets that is what he means. Now a quartet in music requires four instruments sounding together; in poetry, of course, only one line of sound at a time can be voiced. If these are called quartets, and not four solos, then, it means that they are not to be taken as four separate poems; as thought and memory may, they are to be held together in the mind in wholeness. But then you should have one quartet resulting: one instrument to each poem--say first and second violin, viola, 'cello, each successively playing its part unaccompanied, but collected in the mind. If it is four quartets and not four solos or one quartet, the conclusion, which is alarming, is that as you read each in turn, "Burnt Norton," "East Coker," "The Dry Salvages," and "Little Gidding," the three that you are not reading must be sounding in your mind at the same time, and sounding very nearly fully, to a unique and different result in each. A complexity faces us which calls for an almost unbelievable effort of concentration: these poems could not be read as quartets on the first reading; on the fifth, perhaps they might for the first time be so read (p. 132).

While MacCallum's speculations are interesting, he does seem to belabour the implications of the title unnecessarily. There seems to be no reason not to accept Eliot's title literally as denoting each of the four poems a separate "quartet." Since Eliot originally considered naming the four poems the South Kensington Quartets, there would seem to be little question of his intent. In the light of all available evidence, or lack of it, it seems most logical to consider that the poet was concerned primarily with the quartet in its general structural genre, and not attempting a literal equivalent of the quartet as an instrumental ensemble.

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facility in handling the line, Eliot is able to approach the condition of musical counterpoint and to create the impression of simultaneously-moving poetic voices.

This construction may be found in some of his earlier works. Part V of The Hollow Men, for instance, provides a salient example: the first and last stanzas comprise the first voice; the second, third, and fourth stanzas make up the second voice; and the three lines of broken prayer following the second, third, and fourth stanzas respectively are that of the third voice. Here the counterpointing effect is accomplished mainly by contrast--contrast of rhythm, mood, and idea; the two stanzas of the first voice--the first, the parody of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush," and the last, the grotesque parody of the parody--have a lilting, regular, immediately recognizable rhythm. The second voice, with its two-stress line and its agonized mood, provides an immediate and violent contrast, from which the effect of the new and separate voice derives. Similarly, the yet different contrast of the snatches of prayer produces the effect of a third, entirely new, voice, and their brief interposition between stanzas of the second voice creates the suggestion of almost simultaneous movement. The brief broken fifth stanza, by its position and its content, seems to suggest a merging of the second and third voices in unison.³⁵

³⁵ A strikingly similar, though much more extended, application of this same technique (which could very well have been directly inspired by Eliot's work) may be found in Act III--The Exorcism--of Edward Albee's play Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? During the cli-

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That this is Eliot's intention is emphasized by his mechanical layout of the verse; the first voice is differentiated by appearing in italics, the second being in regular Roman, while the third voice is set apart through its italicization combined with its position on the page, beginning at the center and running to the right margin. Such an observation, however, should be quickly supplemented by pointing out that the graphic aspects are no more than gratuitous hints to the reader; the contrapuntal effect does not depend on them, and lies entirely in the verbal poetic elements. Eliot was a poet thoroughly immersed in the oral tradition. Mechanical arrangement and visual elements involved in transferring the poetry to the printed page surely are for him merely means to the end of more adequately conveying the oral intent; their function is annotational and serves the same basic purpose as the notative devices of music, with its staves, notes, rests, and other qualitative and quantitative symbols and expression markings.

In order to more clearly illustrate Eliot's contrapuntal voicing in this episode, I am including a presentation of the fifth section of The

mastic episode in which George destroys the imaginary son, he intones excerpts from the Requiem Mass, interposing snatches of the liturgy between lines of the other characters, thus giving the effect of a poetic counterpointing of lines. An actual counterpointing occurs when he delivers the whole of the "Libera me, Domine" simultaneously against an agonized lament by Martha. The rhetorical counterpoint is enhanced not only by the lingual contrast of Latin against English, but also by the basic thematic contrast of Martha's pleading for the life of their "son" while George irrevocably establishes his death with the Mass for the Dead.

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Hollow Men, with the voice entries indicated, as Appendix D.

The poetic effect of contrapuntal voices derived from contrast may also be seen throughout The Waste Land. For example, in "The Burial of the Dead," the quotation from Wagner's Tristan und Isolde provides the feeling of a concurrently moving voice by its interpolation between lines of the Tiresian narrator and the reproach of the hyacinth girl; the individuality of the voice lies in the rhythmic contrast of its two-stress lines opposed to the four-stress voice in which it is embedded, and in the contrast of the German against English. The effect is reinforced by the return of the voice at the end of the strophe with an additional line from the Wagner excerpt--"Oed' und leer das Meer." In the final section of "A Game of Chess" a neat contrapuntal voicing is achieved by sandwiching the cryptic and insistent call of the proprietor, announcing closing time for the pub--"HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME"--not only between lines of the dialogue between May and Lil, but as interruption between clauses within the narration of May. The frequent recurrence of the line throughout the pub scene further enhances the contrapuntal impression.

It may be seen that in the above examples, while it is primarily the element of contrast which imparts the contrapuntal sense, another important feature is the restatement of themes; this element of recurrence is fundamental to establishing the feeling of unity within a voice, identifying it as a separate voice, or theme, and inducing the sensation of concurrent movement by its continued re-combination

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with other voices, or themes. In the last section of The Hollow Men, the first voice is restated in terms of formal stanza construction and rhythm; the second voice utilizes syntactic repetition and thematic repetition in variation as well; and the third voice has a literal re-statement. In the pub scene from The Waste Land each re-entrance is a literal restatement.

Now, in classical counterpoint, restatement of a theme, not only within a single voice, but as imitation at an interval by one or more other voices, is basic to the contrapuntal structure. Thus, in the fugue--whether the strict scholastic fugue or the later free fugue--both the subject and countersubject appear in alternate voices, in the dominant or sub-dominant key but otherwise identical, and of course entering in imitation subsequent to the entry in the originating voice. Thematic contrast exists between subject and countersubject, and both contrast and unity are imposed by thematic imitation and re-entrance in different voices.

There is no evidence that Eliot was concerned with a literal imitation of classical counterpoint as form; no such direct analogies can be made in any of his work. His interest rather lay in counterpoint as style, and in the concentration and particular effects which could be achieved by a general poetic equivalent of combined and concurrently moving voices. We have previously discussed the remarkable contrapuntal effects of "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," which probably represents Eliot's closest approximation of a formal contrapuntal

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structure. In that poem the counterpointing lies in the patterned re-entrance and contextual integration in succeeding sections of several contrasting themes.

The first four sections of The Hollow Men utilize a contrapuntal treatment much less formally structured than that of "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," one which depends more on restatement and recombining of motives than on contrast, and is considerably less obvious and more subtly interwoven into the verse than that of the poem's own fifth section. In this respect it moves a long way from the technique of the earlier poetry and points closely toward Four Quartets. Here it appears more as a counterpointing of motives, since The Hollow Men seems to be composed of a series of brief, fragmented hints, symbols, and ideas, ostensibly disjunct and ambiguous, but achieving unity through mood, diction, rhythm, and structure, the latter determined in no small part by the contrapuntal re-entrance of motives. Section I serves primarily to introduce motivic images: "the hollow men . . . the stuffed men," the image of the scarecrow with straw-filled headpiece, the "dried voices" whispering together, the "wind in dry grass," rats' feet running over broken glass in the dry cellar; finally, "death's other Kingdom" and the "direct eyes" of those who have crossed over to it. The section ends with the first reappearance of a motive--". . . the hollow men/ The stuffed men"--coming back almost as a brief recapitulation.

Section II opens with a recurrence of the "eyes" image, now

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coupled with a new motive of "dreams"--"Eyes I dare not meet in dreams"--followed immediately by "In death's dream kingdom," which unites the new dream motive with the previously-stated, but now slightly-altered "death's other Kingdom" (and modulated from the Kingdom of salvation and grace to the dream kingdom where the eyes are but memory). Two lines later the eyes are re-introduced, identified metaphorically in a new image as "Sunlight on a broken column." After statement of another motive, "a tree swinging," two more motives from the first section, voices and the wind, return in intimate juxtaposition with a new motive, a star--"And voices are/ In the wind's singing/ More distant and more solemn/ Than a fading star." In the following stanza "death's dream kingdom" reappears, followed by a return of the rats' feet now altered to "Rat's coat" coupled with images of "crowskin" and "crossed staves"--the "deliberate disguises" worn by the hollow men, which now make explicit the implied scarecrow of the first section. Then a "field" image is integrated with a return of the wind motive. The final brief stanza brings back the kingdom motive now modulated to "twilight kingdom"--the purgatorial kingdom of actual death.

In the third section the "dead land . . . cactus land" expresses motivically the environment already described (and the cactus may very well be a motivic transformation of the swinging tree); new thematic fragments introduce "stone images" which receive the "supplication of a dead man's hand," linking them with restatement

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of a previous image, the fading star, in "the twinkle of a fading star." The next stanza re-introduces the principal motive of "death's other kingdom," after which the lines "Lips that would kiss/ Form prayers to broken stone" effect a merging and counterpointing of two previous images, the broken column and the stone images.

Section IV begins with a restatement, in two succeeding lines, of the "eyes" motive; then a re-entrance of the star image, now modulated as "dying stars," is related to a new motive of "this valley," which is itself immediately restated in the next line as "this hollow valley," thus incorporating the "hollow" motive in a closely-coupled counterpoint. The last line of the stanza--"This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms"--recalls the broken column and stone motives, thus combining several motivic elements in a seeming simultaneous movement; "jaw" relates both to the whispering together of the first section and the prayer-forming lips of the third; and the reappearance of the kingdoms is again in an altered form. In the second stanza, "This last of meeting places," where the hollow men " . . . grope together/ And avoid speech," recalls their meeting in the field, the dead cactus land, the hollow valley, where they whisper together and where a broken jaw makes speech difficult or impossible. Multiple restatement in the final stanza finds the eyes reappearing as the "perpetual star," now metaphorically transformed to "Multifoliate rose" of "death's twilight kingdom," which is the hope only of "empty men."

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The Hollow Men is usually felt to depend for its coherent and satisfactory explication on a multiplicity of external sources, including various other poetry of Eliot himself, Conrad's Heart of Darkness, works of Kipling, James Thomson, Shakespeare, Paul Valéry, Yeats, Frazer's The Golden Bough, Dante's Purgatorio and Paradiso, Jung, the Grail legends, Pope's Dunciad, Aristotelian dialectic, Hindu mythology and metaphysics, British history, and sundry other materials. It would be foolish to maintain that an exhaustive analysis and thorough investigation of all allusions and ramifications of thought and idea could be made without research into external sources; at the same time, however, it may be seen that without any outside reference whatever the poem possesses a tremendous textual and structural unity. It is a unity attained by a beautifully adept technique of poetic counterpointing which achieves a tight integration of thematic materials and a closely-knit textual fabric through the use of the poetic counterpart of musical counterpoint. And the devices which Eliot uses to achieve his poetic counterpoint are directly analogous to those of music: the statement and restatement of principal and secondary subjects, imitative re-entrance, thematic contrast, motivic transformation, and the combining and juxtaposition of motives and themes.

The contrapuntal construction which invests the poetic texture of Four Quartets represents a refinement and an extension of the

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techniques used in the first four sections of The Hollow Men. In the quartet cycle there is nothing quite as literal or obvious as the distinctly-defined separate moving voices of Section V of The Hollow Men; in fact, the counterpointing in Four Quartets becomes primarily one of thematic materials rather than disparate voices. The element of contrast, essential to a differentiation of voices, is greatly minimized in the counterpoint, and in Four Quartets the contrasts are embodied in much broader structural units where they are more properly analogous to other musical devices. Such contrasts as are obtained, for instance, by the juxtaposition of the highly poetic, lyric section and the following prosaic, colloquial section of the second movement of each quartet correspond to the handling of a theme in different keys, such as tonic and dominant, or possibly more appropriately, in a major and minor key; or even as the handling of the theme by different groups of instruments. In fact we have already analyzed these second movements as essentially theme and variations, and it will be recalled that Eliot himself, in "The Music of Poetry," talked of "the possibilities for verse which bear some analogy to the development of a theme by different groups of instruments." In any event, the contrast exists as one of structural form, between sections, and in other cases between movements. The counterpointing which Eliot has developed in Four Quartets is of a much subtler nature, and more complex even than that in the first four sections of The Hollow Men since it involves whole thematic sequences as well as motives and thematic fragments.

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In sum, it rests on the basic elements of motivic development, thematic metamorphosis, and thematic imitation and restatement, and results from a skillful rearrangement, integration, and interweaving of thematic material.

A complete and detailed analysis of the contrapuntal structure of Four Quartets would be a monumental task beyond the scope of this study; however, an examination of some characteristic sections of the cycle should provide salient and more than adequate illustration of the poet's technique and the importance of poetic counterpoint as a fundamental element of the poetry.

The first movement of "Burnt Norton" opens with a statement of time as progression--"Time present and time past/ Are both perhaps present in time future, / And time future contained in time past." Following statements of time as eternal and as potential (the second and third themes), the potential and actual are stated to result in the present moment--"What might have been and what has been/ Point to one end, which is always present." Thus the last statement has evolved as an interaction and integration of the three basic themes; its component motives of what might have been, what has been, and the eternally present posited as implicit future in past and potential, bring together in intimate counterpoint the "what might have been" as "perpetual possibility" of the third theme, the accomplished event implicit in time and the time past of the opening theme, the future of the opening theme, and the eternal present of theme two. The three

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primary themes are essentially contrasting, yet unity results from their contrapuntal integration.

After the development of these themes through the experience in the rose garden, a short transitional passage leads back to the recapitulation which states that "Time past and time future/ What might have been and what has been/ Point to one end, which is always present." Here there has occurred a combining and synthesis of themes previously separated--in other words, a counterpointing, or simultaneous restatement of themes.

In the second movement, past, present, and future time continue to be woven into the discourse on the relation of stillness and movement; thus there is a counterpointing of already existing themes with a newly-introduced idea (which has, as we have previously discussed, evolved from the essential theme through a metamorphic process). The motive of the dance, first stated in the opening section of the movement, is brought back and elaborated in juxtaposition with the development of the stillness and movement theme.

In the second section of the movement appears a statement of man's inability to endure the full revelation of reality; this recalls a theme initially introduced in the first movement during the episode in the rose garden, when "Go, go, go, said the bird; human kind/ Cannot bear very much reality." Now, however, it is counterpointed with the recurring theme of past and future time, as well as that of movement and change--"Yet the enchainment of past and future/

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Woven in the weakness of the changing body, / Protects mankind from heaven and damnation / Which flesh cannot endure." Then, in the final lines, with the re-introduction of the moment in the rose garden from the first movement, there occurs a synthesis, an integration of the basic themes of both movements, effected through a magnificent counterpointing:

Time past and time future
 Allow but a little consciousness.
 To be conscious is not to be in time
 But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,
 The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
 The moment in the draughty church at smokefall
 Be remembered; involved with past and future.
 Only through time time is conquered.

The final section of the last movement of the poem is composed almost entirely of themes and motives previously introduced, now compacted by an adroit counterpointing into a summation of the basic themes of the entire poem. "The detail of the pattern is movement" restates and integrates the basic motive of movement II and the pattern idea first stated in II and developed in the first section of V in the consideration of the form and pattern of music and words. The figure of the ten stairs introduces a new motive which, however, coming from St. John of the Cross, recalls the descent into the Dark Night of the Soul in the third movement. Then the statement of desire as movement brings back the theme of "freedom from practical desire" originally counterpointed with stillness and movement in II, and presented

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in metamorphosed form in III as "Desiccation of the world of sense, / Evacuation of the world of fancy," and "abstention from movement." The subsequent introduction of Love as unmoving, as the "cause and end of movement," and as timeless and undesiring, while presenting a new, or at least metamorphosed, theme, does effect a restatement of idea through the parallel of the incongruity of desire and Love with that, in the preceding section, of words and the Word-- words representing the medium by which the poet desires to attain the stillness through movement in pattern, and the Word in the desert, the Logos, being Divine Love. This is thematic restatement and contrapuntal movement of a highly sophisticated order; and while it does approach the counterpointing of manifold levels of meaning which were stated to be outside the scope of this study, it retains a firm footing in syntactic construction. Similarly, the aspect of time "Caught in the form of limitation/ Between un-being and being" restates the condition of suspension between new world and old in "partial ecstasy" and "partial horror" in movement II, as well as the "World not world, but that which is not world" of the Dark Night in the third movement. There follows then in close contrapuntal restatement a gathering of several images from the first movement--the shaft of sunlight, the moving dust, the hidden laughter of the children in the foliage--all combining to reaffirm the continuing and eternal existence of the unrealized past potential. Finally, with its implicit return in the quotation "Quick now, here, now, always--," the bird again performs

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its transitional function in a return to the absurd world of temporal time incorporating motives from the third, and first section of the fifth, movements--"Ridiculous the waste sad time/ Stretching before and after."

In succeeding poems of the cycle, the counterpointing of restated motive and themes against metamorphosed themes and newly-introduced thematic material frequently tends to acquire a multiple, or cumulative, emphasis through repetition and continuing development of basic themes. This is particularly true, as may be seen from the foregoing discussion, in the final movements, which recapitulate the essential ideas and resolve the apparent ambiguities of their respective poems. The culmination occurs in the fifth movement of "Little Gidding," the final movement of the cycle, through the counterpointing of all primary themes of the four poems in explicit restatement from every poem and from most movements of each poem. Poetic counterpoint thus becomes the vehicle for a synthesis of all thematic content embodied in symbol, image, idea, and meaning: the significance of the endless cycle of human existence, where every moment is death and rebirth and reconciliation is achieved in the totality of stillness; the meaning and function of poetry where, as in the eternal cycle, the beginning is the end and to make an end is to make a beginning and the poet finds the meaning of his calling and the significance of his existence in both creating and being an epitaph to the past; our communion with the dead, with whom we become reunited in both

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death and rebirth; the realization of the coexistence of life and death in each moment; the knowledge that history may redeem a people from time, since history is a pattern of timeless moments--the reconciliation, again, of temporal and eternal time--so that history is always now and every moment; the necessity, therefore, of commitment to action in every present moment; and finally, the realization that all existence is an emanating from and returning to God, in whom exists the immaculate eternal potential--realized and made manifest in the Incarnation--and with whom, through detachment and complete acceptance of the suffering and conditions of this life, man may be ultimately reconciled in spiritual union.

With the conclusion of this terminal movement it becomes unmistakably clear that--regardless of the fact that Eliot had not envisioned the complete cycle when he wrote "Burnt Norton"--Four Quartets is truly cyclical in structure. Grover Smith notes that "The 'end' of the Quartets is implicit in the first movement of 'Burnt Norton' just as it is explicit in this conclusion toward which the poetry has all pointed as toward its final cause."³⁶ We might also proceed logically from this final movement of "Little Gidding" to the opening of "Burnt Norton" and find the beginning of the cycle implicit in its final resolution.³⁷ It should come as no surprise,

³⁶ Op. cit., p. 294.

³⁷ In this respect Four Quartets bears a certain similarity to the ancient Chinese poems written in the revolving order, which

in fact, considering the amazing consonance of substantive content and structural form of the Quartets, to find that the beginning and the end are coincident and indistinguishable; the final and ultimate reconciliation achieved in its conclusion in effect comprises the unified and undifferentiated concept of time and existence from which the basic motives which initiated the cycle were derived and which gave rise to their germination. Thus, the cyclical nature of Four Quartets is generated by an organic process, closely parallel to that of music, and its total thematic construction largely inheres in the application of poetic techniques which are closely analogous to the musical devices of motivic development, thematic metamorphosis, and linear counterpoint.

may be read cyclically. The Huêi-wên-t'ü, or the revolving chart, a love poem by Lady Su Huei of the Chin Dynasty (265-419), is composed of eight hundred characters which may be read from different ends in different directions and so form numerous poems, four hundred having already been found, some very long and some short. The Ch'ien-tzu-wên, or thousand-character literature, by Chou Hsing-ssü (fifth century A.D.), made of a thousand different characters, was a collection of stone inscriptions left by the master calligrapher Wang Hsi-chih; originally loose characters with no order and no connection, they were arranged and rhymed as a perfect poem by Chou Hsing-ssü, and later have been made into poems by ten or more authors. (Cited by Kiang Kang-Hu in the Introduction to The Jade Mountain: A Chinese Anthology, Being Three Hundred Poems of the T'ang Dynasty 618-906, translated by Witter Bynner from the texts of Kiang Kang-Hu (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1939), p. xxxvi.)

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CHAPTER IV

ASPECTS OF T.S. ELIOT'S RHYTHM

As he stated in the passage from "The Music of Poetry" quoted previously, T.S. Eliot considered that in addition to structure, the musical property which most concerns the poet is that of rhythm. While he does not offer any precise definitions, it is clear that Eliot considered rhythm on at least two different structural levels; his concept embraced not only the rhythm of the line in respect to metre, stress, and tempo, but the much more comprehensive aspect of an overall rhythm of the entire work. "The music of verse," he said, "is not a line by line matter, but a question of the whole poem."³⁸ This aspect of rhythm is closely related to structure for Eliot. Thus, the alternation of contrasting sections, which has been discussed in connection with structural elements, is also a constituent of the poem's total rhythmic pattern. It will be recalled that in "The Music of Poetry" he stated that "in a poem of any length, there must be transitions between passages of greater and lesser intensity, to give a rhythm of fluctuating emotion essential to the musical structure

³⁸ Op. cit., p. 30.

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of the whole." We have previously noted Eliot's citation, in his essay "Poetry and Drama," of the opening scene of Hamlet as a masterpiece of rhythmic construction, and his analysis of its alternations of rhythms as they develop an overall musical design which reinforces, and is one with, the dramatic movement.

Four Quartets reveals a rhythmic structure coinciding closely with its formal structure; this becomes most fully apparent when the four poems are studied together, and may be seen to exist on several levels of structural organization. Considering all four quartets as a group, a fairly rigid pattern of rhythmic alternation existing between the individual movements of each poem imposes an overall rhythmic pattern on the total work. Essentially this derives from the repetition of the pattern with each succeeding poem, serving to reinforce and intensify the rhythmic effect. On this level the rhythmic construction serves to impart a unity to the four-poem cycle. Another level exists within each poem individually and consists of the rhythmic contrast between the movements. On a further level there is the pattern within the movements resulting from the alternation and contrast of the rhythms of the sections within each movement, generally coincident with the musical form. To analyze the pattern of rhythmic changes and contrast would be largely to duplicate the discussion of structure already presented, and herein lies evidence of the integration of rhythm and structure which Eliot achieved. Thus, for example, in the second movement of each poem, which, as we have

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discussed, is structurally binary in form, the first section is in a highly lyrical and traditional metrical form (irregularly-rhyming, sharply four-stressed, generally octosyllabic lines in "Burnt Norton" and "East Coker," a modified sestina in "The Dry Salvages," and regularly-rhyming eight-line stanzas in "Little Gidding") paralleling the poetic lyricism of the passage. In each case the metre and tempo induce a feeling of urgency and movement in the verse, appropriate to the mood of restless inquiry accompanying the question or paradox which this section poses. In the contrasting second section there is a completely altered rhythmic structure; regular metre and rhyme are here dropped entirely and the verse is highly prosaic in movement and rhythm, compatible with the conversational, discursive mood and colloquial treatment of the subject in this section. The second section in "Little Gidding" does depart somewhat from this pattern, since there is a fairly regular rhythm in the four-stressed line. Nevertheless, the total metrical structure of the line presents a marked contrast with that of the first section, and despite the four-stressed line, a narrative, conversational mood is maintained.

Similarly, the brief transitional fourth movement of each poem, in its rapidly-moving, sharply rhythmic four-stress line (and the regular stanzaic form in the last three quartets), provides a rhythmic contrast with the slower, more involved rhythms of the closing section of the introspective and meditational third movement, and the irregular prosaic rhythm of the colloquial, conversational opening section of the

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Rhythm and structure, then, may be seen to be integral and inseparable in Four Quartets, and in its more comprehensive aspect rhythm is a basic element of the total pattern of the whole work.

(The pattern of rhythmic change and contrast within each movement and poem, and in the cycle as a whole, may be viewed most easily in graphic form; to this end a tabulation of metrical modes and rhythmic structure in Four Quartets has been included as Appendix E. If one compares this tabulation with the diagram on the structural form of the Quartets he will readily appreciate the consonance of pattern in form and rhythm.)

Eliot's conception of the other structural level of rhythm, the metrical aspects of the line as opposed to the total rhythmic structure of the work, was in much larger terms than those of a mere pedantic concern with scansion and a sterile preoccupation with foot and syllable. He in fact regarded the rules of scansion as an after-the-fact development, useful for the study and analysis of dead languages, but of little application in the poetry of a living tongue. "A study of anatomy will not teach you how to make a hen lay eggs," he said in discussing the analytical study of metric and versification.³⁹ Eliot differentiated between "verse" and "poetry" and ascribed to poetry musical qualities lacking in verse considered merely in its formal

³⁹ "The Music of Poetry," op. cit., p. 19.

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aspects. Discussing the poems of Rudyard Kipling in an essay included in the edition of Kipling's verse selected by Eliot, he has elaborated on the subject:

The late poems like the late stories with which they belong, are sometimes more obscure, because they are trying to express something more difficult than the early poems. They are the poems of a wiser and more mature writer. But they do not show any movement from 'verse' to 'poetry': they are just as instrumental as the early work, but now instruments for a matured purpose.

Kipling could handle, from the beginning to the end, a considerable variety of metres and stanza forms with perfect confidence; he introduces remarkable variations of his own; but as a poet he does not revolutionize. He is not one of those writers of whom one can say, that the form of English poetry will always be different from what it would have been if they had not written. What fundamentally differentiates his 'verse' from his 'poetry' is the subordination of musical interest. Many of the poems give, indeed, judged by the ear, an impression of the mood, some are distinctly onomatopoeic: but there is a harmonics of poetry which is not merely beyond their range--it would interfere with the intention. It is possible to argue exceptions; but I am speaking of his work as a whole, and I maintain that without understanding the purpose which animates his verse as a whole, one is not prepared to understand the exceptions.⁴⁰

Essentially Eliot believed that the proper language of poetry is that of speech (which may of course be highly lyrical, or musical), and that therefore the poetry of any age must reflect the colloquial speech idiom of the people. "I believe," he said, "that any language, so long as it remains the same language, imposes its laws and restrictions and permits its own license, dictates its own speech rhythms

⁴⁰ A Choice of Kipling's Verse, Made by T.S. Eliot, With an Essay on Rudyard Kipling (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 38.

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and sound patterns."⁴¹ Since language is not static, but continually changing, the tendency is for poetry to lag behind the change in colloquial idiom. Therefore, according to Eliot, "the task of the poet will differ, not only according to his personal constitution, but according to the period in which he finds himself. At some periods, the task is to explore the musical possibilities of an established convention of the relation of the idiom of verse to that of speech; at other periods, the task is to catch up with the changes in colloquial speech, which are fundamentally changes in thought and sensibility."⁴² Eliot felt that Shakespeare, in his lifetime, carried out the task of two poets and accomplished both functions. He divided the development of Shakespeare's verse into two periods.

During the first, he was slowly adapting his form to colloquial speech: so that by the time he wrote Antony and Cleopatra he had devised a medium in which everything that any dramatic character might have to say, whether high or low, 'poetical' or 'prosaic,' could be said with naturalness and beauty. Having got to this point, he began to elaborate. The first period--of the poet who began with Venus and Adonis, but who had already, in Love's Labour's Lost, begun to see what he had to do--is from artificiality to simplicity, from stiffness to suppleness. The later plays move from simplicity towards elaboration. The late Shakespeare is occupied with the other task of the poet--that of experimenting to see how elaborate, how complicated, the music could be made without losing touch with colloquial speech altogether, and without his characters ceasing to be human beings. This is the poet of Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Pericles, and The Tempest.⁴³

⁴¹ "The Music of Poetry," op. cit., p. 31.

⁴² Ibid., p. 28.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 29.

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Whether or not Eliot equated his own development with that of Shakespeare is intriguing to consider; no one, apparently, has suggested that he did. Nevertheless, a very similar, and somewhat more obvious, pattern may be seen throughout the course of Eliot's own works. In the poetry of his early period he was searching for a new poetic language idiom, representative of its time, one which would grasp the colloquial speech of the age and thereby be capable of communicating the poet's ideas not just to a sophisticated audience but also to the man in the street and the reader of the daily newspaper. This was Eliot's period of exploration--even of revolution--and one of the principal elements of his poetic language was that of rhythm.

Rhythmic Elements and the Earlier Experiments

"A poet's individuality is most deeply felt in the rhythms of his verse," Helen Gardner said in her Byron Foundation Lecture on Eliot;⁴⁴ and it is most certainly true that Eliot's bold experiments with new and vivid rhythmic patterns marked one of the distinctive aspects of his early poetry. Underlying the poet's highly individual rhythmic motivation, at least two factors may be found at work: Eliot's acute aural sensibility, which was extremely susceptible to the sounds and rhythmic stimulations of his environment; and his

⁴⁴ Helen Gardner, T.S. Eliot and the English Poetic Tradition, the thirty-sixth Byron Foundation Lecture, University of Nottingham, October 22, 1965, p. 13.

youthful orientation in an age and a place which were teeming with a variety of sounds and rhythms brought into being both by new social forces and by the steadily increasing technological advance of the industrial age. While for Eliot this is manifested as essentially a twentieth-century phenomenon, its roots go back deep into the nineteenth century. The transformation of man's environment resulting from the industrial revolution seems clearly to have had an explicit effect on the aural sensibility of man in general and on the auditory imagination of poets and writers in particular, and Miss Gardner is right when she observes, "It is difficult not to feel that there is some connexion between the alteration of the whole tempo and rhythm of life in the nineteenth century and the extraordinary metrical inventiveness of nineteenth-century poets."⁴⁵ This metrical invention appears primarily in the shorter poems of the period and is particularly apparent in the lyrical verse of Victorian poetry. Browning was especially notable in this respect, as illustrated in such a poem as "Christmas Eve," where he anticipated Eliot in observing that a rhythm can give birth to a "tune" in a poet's head:

A tune was born in my head last week,
 Out of the thump-thump and shriek-shriek
 Of the train, as I came by it, up from Manchester;
 And when, next week, I take it back again,
 My head will sing to the engine's clack again,
 While it only makes my neighbor's haunches stir,
 -- Finding no dormant musical sprout
 In him, as in me, to be jolted out. (IV)

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

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Pointing out that nineteenth-century poetry is rich in what Eliot, in a broadcast talk, called " 'thumpers', poems with an insistent, often mechanically repeating beat," and that Eliot himself, in this talk, confessed that such poems ran in his head, although they were not necessarily very good poems or poems that he would call his favorites, but poems that came to his mind when waiting for a train or in the dentist's waiting-room, Miss Gardner cites Browning:

Such a masterpiece as Browning's 'Up at a Villa--Down in the City', with its

Bang, whang, whang goes the drum,
 tootle-te-tootle the fife;
 No keeping one's haunches still: it's
 the greatest pleasure in life,

is a poem born out of the sounds of the city, though here they are the sounds of a pre-industrial age: the diligence rattling in to the sound of 'the blessed church-bells', Pulcinello's trumpet in the market place, and the little band that follows the procession of our Lady, and that gave, one suspects, the 'tune' out of which the poem was born. But such aural sensitivity, though here aroused by older sounds, is surely connected with the constant assaults of modern life upon our ears. I have the impression that nineteenth century poets at their most natural, when they have not cast their singing robes about them and are writing con amore, tend far more than poets of earlier ages to triple rhythms, that is to a rhythm that is nearer to the 'engine's clack-again' than to the 'clop-clop' of men and horses.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Ibid. Although the lines "And when, next week, I take it back again, / My head will sing to the engine's clack again" are ostensibly in iambic pentameter, Miss Gardner's reference to triple metre and her insertion of the hyphen in "clack-again" indicates that she is reading the lines in dactylic feet--"engine's clack-again"; this would seem clearly to be Browning's intent (the three preceding lines have of course established a four-stress pattern). The equivalent musical notation of the latter line would be:

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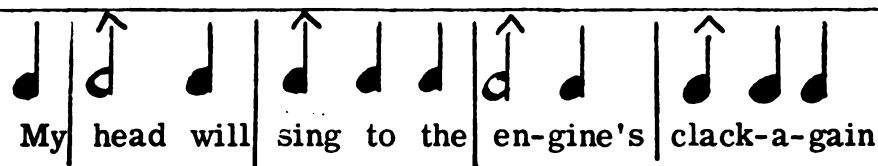
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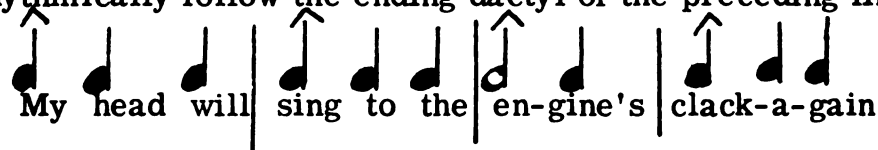
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Certainly Eliot's line of inheritance is clear.

In his early years Eliot's aural environment would have included not only the train, but numerous other steam-driven vehicles and machines, a multiplicity of mechanical, electrical, and pneumatic



or, more properly, since the anacrusis necessary for normal stress cannot rhythmically follow the ending dactyl of the preceding line:



(The advantages often inherent in using musical notation to convey poetic rhymes would seem to be illustrated here. The traditional metrical foot stress marking is frequently inadequate, as is evident in the case of the word "engine's" in this line: syllabically there are only two parts to the foot, but the first syllable, as I read it, has twice the value, quantitatively, of the second; in traditional marking it would appear as a trochee--*én-gine's*--which would fail to take into account the proper syllabic value given the first syllable by the rhythmic context, which actually makes the word dactylic.)

In connection with the "'clop-clop' of men and horses"--clearly a duple rhythm--it might be noted that while some of the lower equine gaits such as jogging or trotting are conveyed by this rhythmic onomatopoeia, the far more prevalent effect in poetry of all ages is that of the canter or gallop, which is evoked by a triple rhythm almost identical to that discussed above (though with more of a lilt which is impossible to annotate precisely); in illustration, Virgil's famous line from the Aeneid comes immediately to mind:

Quadruped- | ante pu- | trem soni- | tu quatit | ungula | campum

Possibly the most outstanding of Browning's onomatopoeic rhythms is the emphatic triple rhythm of the gallop in "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix":

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Dirk galloped, we galloped all three;

This is clearly the nineteenth-century English equivalent of Virgil's

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devices--many of them of recent genesis and therefore much more impressively conspicuous--and above all that phenomenon of twentieth-century life, the internal-combustion engine, soon-to-be ubiquitous and omnipresent. The latter was quickly manifested in many forms both exotic--the airplane was one--and commonplace, and not the least of these was the automobile. Hugh Kenner has written that "Eliot suggested in 1926 that contemporary perception of rhythm had been affected by the internal combustion engine."⁴⁷ Discussing the social environment and psychological orientation of the on-stage characters in Sweeney Agonistes, Kenner says of Wauchope, Horsfall, Klipstein, and Krumpacker that "the lopsided percussion of an idling four-cylinder Ford establishes the beat within which they permute their ragtime formulae."⁴⁸ Anyone who has been exposed to the highly rhythmical, but off-beat and syncopated sputterings and poppings of the early gasoline engines will immediately recognize its rhythms in such a passage as this:

equine gallop, though, characteristically, the syllabic metre is basically accentual rather than quantitative. The quantitative metre of Virgil's Latin gives somewhat more of a rolling gait than does Browning's sharper rhythm.

Concerning poetic rhythms generally, Miss Gardner is right, of course, in that duple rhythms are characteristic of English poetry from Chaucer to Milton; the triple rhythms came in largely in the seventeenth century--mostly after the Restoration.

⁴⁷ Hugh Kenner, The Invisible Poet: T.S. Eliot (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1959), p. 223.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

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DUSTY: How about Pereira? /Pop!/
 DORIS: What about Pereira? /Pw-w-t!/
 I don't care. /Puk!/
 DUSTY: You don't care! /Pop!/
 Who pays the rent?
 DORIS: Yes, he pays the rent
 DUSTY: Well some men don't and some men do /Splut!/
 Some men don't and you know who /Pw-w-t!/
 DORIS: You can have Pereira /Pop!/
 DUSTY: What about Pereira? /Puk!/
 DORIS: He's no gentleman, Pereira: /Splut! Fw-w-t!/
 You can't trust him!
 DUSTY: Well that's true. /Pop!/

In these lines it is the implicit percussion on the off-beat catalexis (indicated, of course, by my bracketed onomatopoeia) which compensates for the missing syllabic elements and completes the metrical value of the verse. The fact of its being implicit, and giving rhythmic accentuation to a beat on which the syllabic value normally anticipated is missing, is of course the source of the syncopation and its resultant kinaesthetic shock. In certain of the lines Eliot has made the rhythmic accentuation explicit in the form of an anacrusis which is actually the missing catalectic element shifted to the beginning of the following line; for instance, in the lines 'Who pays the rent?/ Yes, he pays the rent/ Well some men don't and some men do,' anacruses appear on "Yes" and "Well," but rhythmically these words belong at the end of the lines which precede them.

The motor car, and other noise- and sound-producing devices of the new twentieth-century aural environment, are made explicit in the play by Sweeney himself, who envisions life on the cannibal isle

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without such modern distractions, and "nothing to hear but the sound of the surf," as the epitome of essential existence, with the fecund purity of an egg and nothing at all but three things, "Birth, and copulation, and death":

You see this egg
 You see this egg
 Well that's life on a crocodile isle.
 There's no telephones
 There's no gramophones
 There's no motor cars
 No two-seaters, no six-seaters,
 No Citroën, no Rolls-Royce.

Again, in the last two lines, the caesuras, indicated by the commas, are completed by implicit beats resulting in a syncopated rhythm bearing great affinity to that of the idling internal-combustion engine. One may also easily feel that the line "There's no motor cars" requires a rhythmic repetition to provide metrical symmetry before proceeding to the following line, and the implicit rhythmic echo gives the necessary two additional strong beats.

I find it interesting that Eliot, in a letter to Miss Hallie Flanagan in 1933, quoted by Carol H. Smith in her work on Eliot's dramatic theory and practice, said in connection with Sweeney Agonistes that he had intended "the whole play to be accompanied by light drum taps to accentuate the beats (esp. the chorus, which ought to have a noise like a street drill)."⁴⁹ A street drill is, of course, a pneumatic

⁴⁹ Carol H. Smith, T.S. Eliot's Dramatic Theory and Practice: From Sweeney Agonistes to The Elder Statesman (Princeton: Princeton

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device, and, considering Eliot's powers of eclectic observation coupled with his aural acuity, it is perhaps justifiable to speculate that not only the rhythms of the drill itself, but the syncopated sounds of the compressor which serves it and the gasoline engine which drives the compressor contribute their influence to the shifting, overlaid forceful rhythms of Sweeney Agonistes.

Jazz Rhythms

It will now perhaps be evident that the rhythms we have been discussing are also essentially jazz rhythms; and this introduces a major influence in the early rhythmic experimentations of T.S. Eliot. Jazz was one of the major social and aural manifestations of the milieu of Eliot's youth and young manhood. His birthplace and the scene of his boyhood were close to the heartland of the new indigenous American musical form, and Eliot grew up and matured during the most vital formative period of jazz; from the last decade of the nineteenth century until World War I, instrumental jazz--"Dixieland"--and piano ragtime were evolving and developing simultaneously, and both forms must have exerted a strong influence on the young poet. To Eliot, jazz rhythms seemed to represent the vernacular aesthetic of the age, and in his earlier poetry he boldly experimented with new and vivid rhythmic patterns which were not only influenced by, but

University Press, 1963), p. 52. Helen Gardner, in her Byron Foundation Lecture on Eliot, also points out (p. 13) that "the Ting a ling ling/ Ting a ling ling of the telephone provides the accompaniment to the call girls' conversation."

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often unashamedly imitative of the musical jazz rhythms of the time.

Now, the creation of poetry in jazz rhythms involves a very definite technique and requires the use of specific devices which will immediately and unmistakably elicit the desired rhythmic response pattern on the part of the reader/listener. The jazz rhythm must be inherent in the poem itself and evoked by its natural reading, since there is no pre-existing melody to suggest the rhythm. Strangely enough, this is just opposite to the situation obtaining for most popular jazz lyrics, which have their jazz rhythms imposed on them by the musical setting and do not read in jazz rhythms unless one hears the music behind the words.⁵⁰ For instance, the lyrics

Come to me my melancholy baby,
Cuddle up and don't be blue;
All your fears are foolish fancy, maybe,
You know dear that I'm in love with you.
Every cloud must have a silver lining;
Wait until the sun shines through.
Smile my honey dear
While I kiss away each tear,
Or else I shall be melancholy too.

⁵⁰ The traditional poetic form of the lyric of the "blues"--the most pervasive and influential structural form in the development of jazz--is essentially nothing more nor less than the English heroic, or Elizabethan, couplet--two rhymed lines of iambic pentameter verse--with the first line repeated. Thus:

I hate to see that evenin' sun go down
I hate to see that evenin' sun go down
Because my baby he done left dis town.

(St. Louis Blues)

As set to music in blues form, in a 4/4 metre (four quarter notes to the bar), each line takes two measures and is followed by a "break,"

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have no recognizable jazz quality by themselves, but Ernie Burnett's setting of them has made "My Melancholy Baby" one of the best known popular jazz songs of all time.

The essential qualities of jazz rhythm, which the poet must educe in verbal equivalents, are an insistent, regular, almost incantatory underlying beat; a repetitive pattern; and frequent, often complex, syncopation. In jazz the beat is always explicit, as opposed to the implicit rhythmic structure of much serious music, and is in fact carried and emphasized by separate rhythm instruments. The underlying accent, whether on- or off-beat, is steady, regular, and well-defined, regardless of the syncopated patterns being superimposed on it.

Since the jazz rhythm, normally in 4/4 time, is heavily accented either on 1 and 3 or 2 and 4, the simplest means of effecting the poetic equivalent is by a series of syllabically-exact incisive lines with obvious accents:

Le directeur
 Conservateur
 Du Spectateur
 Empeste la brise.
 Les actionnaires
 Reactionnaires
 Du Spectateur
 Conservateur
 Bras dessus bras dessous
 Font des tours
 A pas de loup.

("Le Directeur")

or poetic prosthesis, of two additional measures, so that each of the three lines is an even four bars and the pentameter verse has been neatly converted to a four-beat duple rhythm.

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These lines may very well be felt in groups of two, with four strong beats to the group; the two opening lines of the poem,

Malheur a la malheureuse, Tamise
Qui coule si près du Spectateur.

which are double the length of the others, therefore serve to reinforce the rhythmic pattern, particularly in view of the very obvious stresses inherent in the French words.

The same effect may be obtained by a word structure which makes the accents obvious and incisive, even though the syllabic structure of the lines is not exact:

The river sweats
Oil and tar
The barges drift
With the turning tide
Red sails
Wide
To leeward, swing on the heavy spar.
The barges wash
Drifting logs
Down Greenwich reach
Past the Isle of Dogs
Weialala leia
Wallala leialala

Elizabeth and Leicester
Beating oars
The stern was formed
A gilded shell
Red and gold
The brisk swell
Rippled both shores
Southwest wind
Carried down stream
The peal of bells
White towers

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Weialala leia
Wallala leialala

(The Waste Land, III)⁵¹

The use of this rhythmic structure in this episode effects a superb multiple irony, for Eliot is here using a vernacular idiom in the parody of Wagner's *Rhinemaidens* to convey the depravity, deterioration, sterility, and lust of the twentieth-century wasteland by bringing within its context the contrasting glory of past history, the heroes of mythology, and the great artistic expressions of past ages; here in this brief passage are allusions to the noble *Odysseus* and the sirens, the great epics of Homer, the pomp and magnificence of Antony and Cleopatra, the Renaissance flowering of the Elizabethan age, the glorious poetic drama of Shakespeare, and the towering achievement of Wagner's music-drama as the crowning artistic expression of a recently-vanished Romantic era.

⁵¹ If it be objected that Eliot's own reading in his recording of *The Waste Land* does not invoke much overt jazz rhythm in this passage (though the refrains are certainly syncopated), I would point out that 1) Eliot's readings, as critics have testified, apparently varied from time to time, particularly over a period of years, and 2) scholars and critics have on occasion taken issue with Eliot's own ideas of what he was doing in certain matters of prosody. Primarily, however, my analysis must be in terms of my own responses and of what Eliot's poetry means to me. I certainly do not feel that my reactions and interpretations in matters of metre and stress exclude other readings. Individual readers may feel different metrical and rhythmic patterns, and their interpretations will be valid for them. Those readings which I propose are, of course, the ones whose probability seems to me to be most thoroughly established--though I will readily admit that in various instances I can as easily accept an alternate reading.

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In the excerpt quoted above from "Le Directeur" it may be noted that part of the rhythmic effect is achieved by the repetition of various words. Repetition is a major poetic device by which jazz rhythms may be evoked, and Eliot utilizes various types of repetition. Besides single words, whole phrases may be repeated, as in the excerpt previously quoted from Sweeney Agonistes:

DUSTY: How about Pereira?
 DORIS: What about Pereira?
 I don't care.
 DUSTY: You don't care!
 Who pays the rent?
 DORIS: Yes he pays the rent
 DUSTY: Well some men don't and some men do
 Some men don't and you know who
 DORIS: You can have Pereira
 DUSTY: What about Pereira?
 DORIS: He's no gentleman, Pereira:
 You can't trust him!
 DUSTY: Well that's true.

At this point the jazz rhythm is highly modified for several lines; however, because the repetitive pattern has been so definitely established right from the beginning, there is sufficient momentum to carry over the feel of the insistent beat through the continuing bridge passage:

(DUSTY:)
 He's no gentleman if you can't trust him
 And if you can't trust him--
 Then you never know what he's going to do.
 DORIS: No it wouldn't do to be too nice to Pereira.
 DUSTY: Now Sam's a gentleman through and through.

It may be noted that though the rhythm has been modified there is

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continuing repetition of words and phrases which helps maintain the rhythmic carry-over. Then the original rhythmic pattern is resumed with a new repetitive theme about Sam.

In another passage from Sweeney Agonistes, every line contains a phrase which is repeated:

Oh I'm so sorry. I am so sorry
 But Doris came home with a terrible chill
 No, just a chill
 Oh I think it's only a chill
 Yes indeed I hope so too--
 Well I hope we shan't have to call a doctor
 Doris just hates having a doctor
 She says she will ring you up on Monday
 She hopes to be all right on Monday
 etc.

Alliteration is a form of repetition which serves to reinforce the beat of jazz rhythms. The device occurs frequently in popular song lyrics:

Lazy-bones, sittin' in the sun
 Never gwine to git yo' day's work done

(Popular song)

K-K-K-Katy, beautiful Katy

(Popular song)

Eliot similarly uses alliteration in writing jazz rhythms:

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
 I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.

(The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock)

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Nonsense syllables also serve to establish a jazz rhythmic pattern quickly, partly because of their incisiveness and also because of the rhythmic flexibility inherent in their construction in terms of syllable length, consonant and vowel sounds, and their ready incorporation of other devices such as alliteration and rhyme. Morris Freedman, in his paper on jazz rhythms in T.S. Eliot, cites the lyric "A flat-foot floogie with the floy-floy" as an example of nonsense syllable usage in popular jazz songs, and further points out, "This line with its heavy alliteration finds an odd echo in a line from Murder in the Cathedral: 'With pleasure and power at palpable price.' "⁵²

We might also consider the rhythmic effects of nonsense syllables in such jazz lyric lines as

⁵² Morris Freedman, "Jazz Rhythms and T.S. Eliot," South Atlantic Quarterly, LI (July 1952), p. 423. Mr. Freedman also quotes as nonsense syllables some excerpts from Sweeney Agonistes:

Telephone: Ting a ling ling
Ting a ling ling

and

Knock Knock Knock
Knock Knock Knock
Knock
Knock
Knock

Actually, these constructions would much more properly be considered examples of onomatopoeia, rather than nonsense syllable; they do evoke the verbal equivalent of a specific, recognizable sound. Nevertheless, their function in expressing jazz rhythm is not made less effective by their proper identification.

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Zippity doo-da, zippity dey
My oh my, what a wonderful day!

(Popular song)

and

Mairzy doats an' dozy doats an' little lamzy divy
A kiddie dee divy too, wouldn't you?

(Popular song)

the latter not strictly nonsense, but more of an elisional transformation.

It will be noted that nonsense-syllable construction usually incorporates substantial alliteration, and the combination of the elements further emphasizes the rhythm through mutual reinforcement. Thus, in Eliot:

Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum,
Such as Munkustrap, Quaxo, Coricopat,
Such as Bombalurina, or else Jellyorum--
Names that never belong to more than one cat.

("The Naming of Cats," Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats)

His ineffable effable
Effanineffable
Deep and inscrutable singular Name.

(Ibid.)

Rhyme is a major device for emphasizing the beat of jazz rhythm, since the repetitive effect makes the rhymed word the strongest sound

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in the line. The primary function of rhyme in jazz poetry is for rhythmic accentuation, not, as in most conventional poetry, to assist in creating structural form. Therefore, rhymes in jazz rhythm usually appear close together, whether close-coupled or coming at the end of the line on a strong beat:

Five foot two, eyes of blue,
 But oh, what those five foot could do,
 Has anybody seen my girl?
 Turned up nose, turned down hose,
 Never had no other beaus,
 Has anybody seen my girl?

(Popular song)

Every star above knows the one I love,
 Sweet Sue, just you

(Popular song)

Eliot does not overlook opportunities for rhythmic emphasis via internal rhyme and closely-coupled rhyme, as well as the more frequent use of end rhyme on strong beats:

The Rum Tum Tugger is a Curious Cat:

Bustopher Jones is not skin and bones--

Well I never!

Was there ever

A Cat so clever

As Magical Mr. Mistoffelees!

The Pokes and the Pollicles, everyone knows,
 Are proud and implacable passionate foes;

(Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats)

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Where the breadfruit fall
And the penguin call
And the sound is the sound of the sea
Under the bam
Under the boo
Under the bamboo tree.

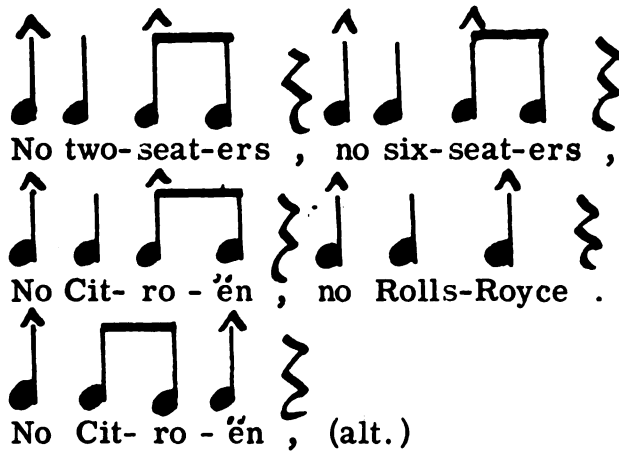
(Sweeney Agonistes)

Finally, one of the major techniques by which jazz rhythms may be represented in poetry is the inclusion of the verbal equivalents of syncopation, achieved in various ways. Syncopation is, of course, essentially the removal of an accent where it is expected or the placement of an accent where it is not expected; the human body reacts kinaesthetically, compensating for the removal of the anticipated accent and reacting by shock to the placement of the unexpected accent. In verse this may be accomplished by pause, by the inclusion of **extra** syllables, ellipsis, or stopping the phrase or line short of the **complete** metrical value.

The pause, which is a prominent feature of jazz lyrics set to music, occurring in the melodic line--either instrumental or vocal, often **a**ccented and, when sung, either aspirated or voiced--appears as a **caesura** in verse not set to music. We previously noted the syncopated rhythmic effect resulting from caesuras indicated by the **commas** in the excerpt from Sweeney's panegyric:

No two-seaters, no six-seaters,
No Citroën, no Rolls-Royce.

While the caesura occurs in the lyric, the strong underlying beat continues, a beat occurring at each comma and the period as well. Musically annotated, the rhythm would be as follows:

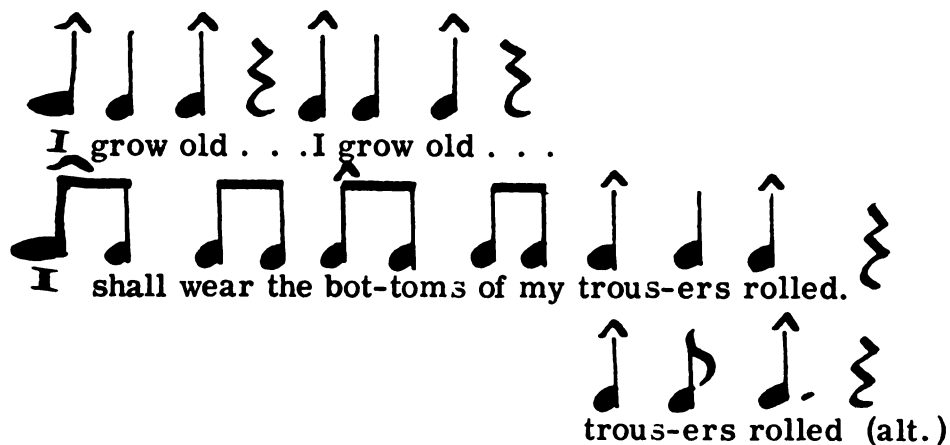


Punctuation also indicates caesura in the syncopated rhythm (referred to by Helen Gardner as "the rag-time melody"⁵³) of:

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

(The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock)

Considering both caesuras in the first line, the musical notation which the **rh**ythm suggests is



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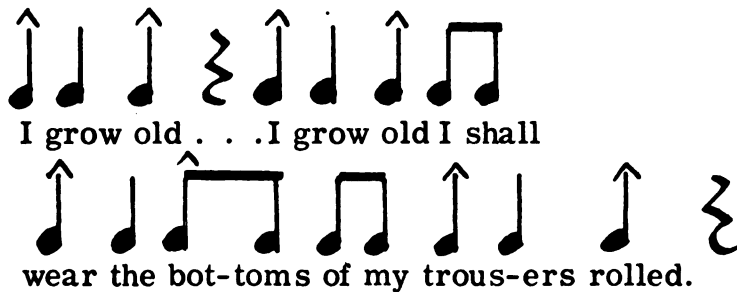
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However, an alternate, and equally valid, jazz rhythm occurs if the second caesura is disregarded and the first two words of the second line are considered as an anacrusis which really belongs at the end of the first line in place of the catalexis represented by the quarter-note rest:



Of course, one can hardly justify ignoring those three dots.

Eliot also gets a series of pauses by word repetition, as in the following, where repeating of the word little is also reinforced by the punctuation:

SWEENEY: I'll convert you!
 Into a stew.
 A nice little, white little, missionary stew.
DORIS: You wouldn't eat me!
SWEENEY: Yes I'd eat you!
 In a nice little, white little, soft little,
 tender little,
 Juicy little, right little, missionary stew.

In **the** following lines, a syncopation is achieved by stopping the lines **sho**rt of the final beat. Since the last word of each line comes on a **strong** beat, the body tends to feel the completing weak beat of the **rhythmic** pattern, and the reaction to the absence of any words

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on the beat strengthens the rhythmic emphasis and its syncopated effect:

Two live as one
 One live as two
 Two live as three
 Under the bam
 Under the boo
 Under the bamboo tree.

Annotated, the rhythm would appear as follows:

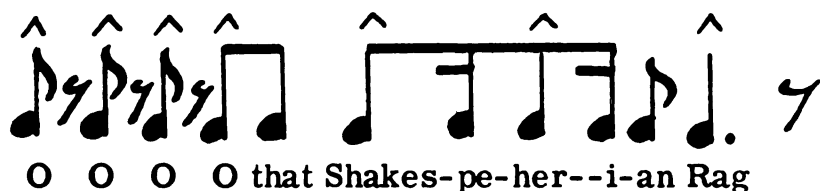


Part of the effect, of course, derives from the repetition of bamboo, which has been stated four times in the preceding three lines of the stanza, and from the breaking up and recombination of the word.

Among the various instances of jazz rhythms occurring in The Waste Land, where Eliot both creates such rhythms in original lines and introduces fragments from the lyrics of popular songs, there appears one well-known line which is among the most highly syncopated the poet ever wrote:

O O O O that Shakespeherian Rag--

Basically, Eliot has merely introduced the title of a 1912 song hit, "That Shakespearian Rag,"⁵⁴ but has adroitly transformed it to yield a verbal rhythm of unmistakable jazz equivalence. The syncopated effect results from the four incisive O's, each emphasized on a strong beat, and from the introduction of the extra syllable in Shakespeherian. Each of the first three O's is followed by an implicit, though obvious, caesura, or off-beat, and a reinforcement of the syncopation is obtained by the placement of that on the off-beat following the fourth O. In musical annotation such a rhythm appears thus:

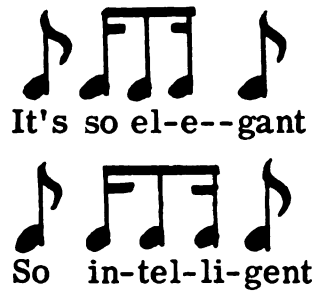


This is by no means the only rhythm which this line will yield. The four O's could just as easily occur on the off-beats, with the rests coming ahead of them; and the word that, instead of acting as a pick-up for the following strong beat, might itself come on the strong beat, dictating a modification in the rest of the pattern, but with just as strong a rhythmic effect:



⁵⁴ "That Shakespearian Rag," Lyric by Gene Buck and Herman Ruby, Music by Dave Stamper. Edward B. Marks Music Corporation. Originally published by Joseph W. Stern & Co., 1912.

And continuing:



What Eliot has done rhythmically with the "Shakespeherian Rag" line seems all the more remarkable when it is realized that syllabically the line is an almost perfect iambic pentameter verse.

Many other examples of rhythms in a strong jazz idiom, as well as rhythmic patterns highly flavored by the jazz influence but much less overt in expression, might be cited in T.S. Eliot's work from the poetry of 1909-1910 through to about 1924-1925, when Sweeney Agonistes marked a culmination of his experimentation with the style.⁵⁵ The

⁵⁵ One of Eliot's most potent uses of jazz rhythm is to be found in a later work. In the second-act scene of Murder in the Cathedral where the four murderous knights enter the cathedral and call Becket to come down to his death, Eliot has couched their taunts in an incisive, sharply-accented, formal stanza structure which incorporates the elements of rhyme, alliteration, repetition, and strong syncopation, all of which combine to produce a vividly marked jazz rhythm:

Where is Becket, the traitor to the King?
 Where is Becket, the meddling priest?
 Come down Daniel to the lions' den,
 Come down Daniel for the mark of the beast.

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
 Are you marked with the mark of the beast?
 Come down Daniel to the lions' den,
 Come down Daniel and join in the feast.

foregoing discussion, however, should adequately show the importance and extent of the poet's work in verbal jazz rhythms in his attempts to create a new colloquial language idiom capable of speaking to his age and effectively communicating through poetry.

Changing Metres and Rhythmic Displacement

Extensive as were Eliot's early experiments in jazz rhythms, they were by no means his only preoccupation in developing new rhythmic patterns, and there are other rhythmic ideas in the early poetry of a non-jazz nature which bear close analogy to musical construction. Chief among these are the use of changing metres and rhythmic displacement--rhythms which in effect cross the bar lines, a form of syncopation.

Interestingly enough, the use of frequently-changing metres within discrete melodic lines and structural sections, while long known to music and employed in past periods, is a particular twentieth-century

Where is Becket the Cheapside brat?
 Where is Becket the faithless priest?
 Come down Daniel to the lions' den,
 Come down Daniel and join in the feast.

Clearly, Eliot resorted to the jazz idiom in this instance to give the knights a vernacular expression which points up their coarseness and brutality and emphasizes the shallow, materialistic, imperceptive aspects of their character which are made so explicit with their address to the audience at the end of the play. This is a further instance of Eliot's continual striving for maximum consonance of medium and content.

phenomenon and has been exploited most fully by composers since Stravinsky. An example is the theme from Aaron Copland's Piano Variations (Cos Cob Press, Inc., 1932):

Example 3



Within these seven measures there are four different metrical markings and four changes of metre.

The shifting of metrical accent with respect to the bar line, so that the metrical unit crosses the bar line and occupies portions of two consecutive measures, while also traditionally known in music, had largely disappeared during the eighteenth century. It was the later nineteenth-century Romantic composers who revived it and developed the full potentialities of the technique; Johannes Brahms in particular made it an integral part of his musical style, and there is hardly a page of his work which does not reveal the use of rhythmic displacement, as in this first part of the sub-theme from the first movement of his Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68. Note that the second (dotted) quarter note of each measure receives the strong accent, while the first, which would normally be accented, gets the

weak beat:

Example 4

The musical score for Example 4 consists of three systems of piano and woodwind parts. The first system is labeled "Basic motive" and "p dolce". The second system is labeled "125 espress." and "dim.". The third system is labeled "p" and "130". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Beginning with his earlier work, Eliot has effectively adapted both of these musical devices to the poetic medium. Note the opening lines of "Portrait of a Lady":

Among the smoke and fog of a December afternoon
 You have the scene arrange itself--as it will seem to do--
 With: "I have saved this afternoon for you";
 And four wax candles in the darkened room,
 Four rings of light upon the ceiling overhead,

The first two lines are, syllabically, iambic heptameter, although each line has a silent but implicit final foot which makes their true metric mode octameter. But with the third line there is a shift to iambic pentameter, which continues in line four. The fifth line changes to iambic hexameter--an Alexandrine. Then, with the next two lines which follow, there is a continuation of the changing metre, but it is now combined with a shift in metrical structure which is equivalent to a musical metre crossing the bar line:

Anatmosphere of Juliet's tomb
 Prepared for all the things to be said, or left unsaid.

Ostensibly, the first of these two lines is in iambic tetrameter, the second changing to an Alexandrine in iambic hexameter (with an anapest on "to be said"). We have here, however, a run-on line construction, and syllabically the logical arrangement would have placed "prepared" at the end of the first verse after "tomb"; this would have resulted in two balanced lines of iambic pentameter, which is, on a quantitative basis at least, the predominant metre of the poem. But Eliot was more concerned with the sense and sound of the lines and, since "prepared for all the things to be said, or left unsaid" is a complete dependent clause modifying "Juliet's tomb" (and probably to emphasize the rhyme of "room" and "tomb" as well), he chose to move the final foot of the first line to the beginning of the second; thus, in effect, he has shifted the "bar line" and

run the metre across it.

In oral reading, of course, the slight natural caesura occurring after "tomb" by virtue of the fact that it is the end of the clause and the ostensible end of the line is sufficient to effect the sense of metrical shift and obviate an equalization into two balanced iambic pentameters; at the same time, the underlying implicit pentameter structure permits a smooth transition which maintains the rhythmic flow and eliminates any raggedness in the poetic line.

A similar construction occurs in the lines

I smile, of course,
And go on drinking tea.

where the first line of two iambic feet is a run-on to the succeeding three-foot line. Metrically, the two lines combine to form a single line of iambic pentameter; Eliot broke it up, in effect running it over a bar line at the end of the second foot, in order to emphasize its function as a brief interruption to the monotonous monologue of the Lady.

Such rhythmic locutions become, at times, fairly complex.

Consider the following lines, also from "Portrait of a Lady":

"You do not know how much they mean to me, my friends,
And how, how rare and strange it is, to find
In a life composed so much, so much of odds and ends,
/For indeed I do not love it . . . you knew? you are
not blind!
How keen you are!/
To find a friend who has these qualities,

Who has, and gives
 Those qualities upon which friendship lives.
 How much it means that I say this to you--
 Without these friendships--life, what cauchemar!"⁵⁶

There is a variety of changing metres in this sequence. Syllabically, they are all basically iambic, the first line being a hexameter, the second changing to pentameter, the third returning to hexameter; the fourth line is in heptameter ("it" plus the caesura constituting an iambic foot) and is followed by a dimeter line, the sixth being in pentameter, with a recurrence of the dimeter following, and finally three lines of pentameter. The rhythmic displacement begins with the fourth verse (note that the caesura, indicated by the dots, occurs on the strong beat of the fourth foot of the line, providing a certain syncopation); in effect this line, syllabically heptametric, is comprised of a pentameter segment with a dimeter tacked on, thus creating a rhythmic shift. Metrically, "you are not blind" could have been carried over to the beginning of the next line and, followed by "How keen you are!"; would have formed a single iambic tetrameter line. Syntactically, however, "you are not blind" relates more closely to "For indeed I do not love it . . . you knew?"; it would also seem logical to infer that the poet wanted to isolate "How keen you are!" in order to emphasize it for its function in portraying the Lady's

⁵⁶ The brackets enclosing ll. 4-5 in ed. cit. were changed to parentheses in the publisher's 1963 edition of T.S. Eliot: Collected Poems 1909-1962.

affectation. The sixth and seventh lines could have been combined to form another heptameter line, but substantively it would have been pointless; in its syntax, "Who has, and gives" runs on into the next line. Isolated, it provides a certain balance for the preceding dimeter; also a rhythmic subtlety results from its position as a concurrent bridge and separation between the two pentameter lines, with either of which it may combine syllabically into a heptameter, a metre already introduced.

In the examples above discussed, the changes of metre, though frequent, do not seem abrupt; this is partly because of the syntactical progression of the verse, partly due to the run-on lines, partly because of the lack of overly-incisive beat in these particular excerpts, with their conversational, almost prosaic flavor. There are other instances where the change is much more obvious, even at times sharp and precipitate, producing an entirely different rhythmic and emotional effect by the emphasis and incisiveness:

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

(The Waste Land, II)

Well, that Sunday Albert was home, they had a hot gammon,
And they asked me in to dinner, to get the beauty of it hot--
HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME
HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME

(The Waste Land, II)

Now they go up to the temple. Then the sacrifice.
 Now come the virgins bearing urns, urns containing
 Dust
 Dust
 Dust of dust, and now
 Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oakleaves, horses' heels
 Over the paving.

(Coriolan, I - Triumphal March)

Section I of "Preludes" contains a rhythmic figure involving abrupt metre change which is interesting because of its anticipation of a jazz style which was to become prevalent some forty years later:

The winter evening settles down
 With smell of steaks in passageways.
 Six o'clock.
 The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
 And now a gusty shower wraps
 The grimy scraps
 Of withered leaves about your feet
 And newspapers from vacant lots;
 The showers beat
 On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
 (etc.)

In the early 1950's, the ever-evolving jazz idiom developed a style known as "be-bop." While there are various specific harmonic and melodic elements which give the style its individual characteristics, one of the hallmarks of be-bop is an extremely rhythmic basic motive, usually fairly short, ending with a sharply-accented two-note phrase which acts as a brief, incisive cadence. It is this two-note cadence from which be-bop takes its name, since performers often got into the habit of shouting the two nonsense syllables on the cadence.

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Eliot's above poetic sequence, with its series of two highly-insistent four-beat lines followed by the short, sharp, two-beat, cadence-like phrase, is a perfect verbal anticipation of the musical style. "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" also utilizes the rhythmic figure, though here the two-beat phrase usually occurs at the beginning of a section.

While this particular figure is not widespread throughout Eliot's earlier work (though other instances or modifications of it may be found), it does help to illustrate the extent of the poet's rhythmic inventiveness, and the close musical affinity of his rhythmic forms.

Eliot's Mature Rhythmic Structure

Now, just as Eliot disdained to consider poetic speech in terms of rigid metrical scansion and syllabic construction, his maturing conception of the rhythm of the poetic line tended to reject a literal representation of musical rhythmic patterns, except where specifically required by context or for special effect. Rather, he sought the inherent music of a natural rhythm which would approximate the patterns and cadences of vernacular speech, while yet serving as a vehicle for the poetic expression of image and idea. Thus, by the time of Ash Wednesday Eliot's rhythmic construction had undergone a considerable refinement and attained a subtlety and ease which the earlier works had not possessed. This rhythmic development was of course a continuous and gradual process, not to be broken down and allocated to distinct and arbitrarily-designated "periods."

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Nevertheless it can be generally stated that his earlier works represented a period of exploration of the musical possibilities of the idiom and experimentation in new, distinct, and often extreme rhythmic construction; that in his middle period he consolidated, developed, and refined the new techniques and ideas of his early works, and evolved his own individual poetic rhythmic style; and that finally, in his mature works, he elaborated and exploited the musical possibilities of the idiom which he had developed as his own. So it is that Four Quartets, probably in all ways Eliot's most mature, profound, and meaning-laden work, displays a rhythm of line which is smooth-flowing and flexible, seeming to be perfectly matched to the image and idea being expressed, varying easily and naturally as the formal and musical structure requires, adapted as needed to either vernacular speech or formal lyric; and, though without the harsh accents, abrupt transitions and sharp syncopations of the early experiments, is still capable of wide contrast, rhythmic excitement, intensity, momentum, and drive.

In illustration, the second movement of "Burnt Norton" may be cited. Here the formal stanza of the opening section is set in a whirling, fast-tempoed, sharply-accented four-stress line (while basically iambic tetrameter, the feet are by no means regular; thus there is a freedom and flexibility to the verse, while the basic rhythm is well defined):

Garlic and sapphires in the mud
 Clot the bedded axle-tree.
 The trilling wire in the blood
 Sings below inveterate scars
 And reconciles forgotten wars.
 The dance along the artery
 The circulation of the lymph
 Are figured in the drift of stars
 Ascend to summer in the tree
 We move above the moving tree
 In light upon the figured leaf
 And hear upon the sodden floor
 Below, the boarhound and the boar
 Pursue their pattern as before
 But reconciled among the stars.

The mood of restlessness, excitement, and insistent motion which this rhythm creates is perfectly suited to the idea of the flux of life being treated, and to the imagery presented--the singing of the trilling wire, the "dance along the artery," the "circulation of the lymph," the movement in light upon the figured leaf. In the contrasting second section, the initial discursive statement contemplating the relation of stillness and movement is in a rhythm consistent with the changed mood and idea; here the line is lengthened to one of six stresses, the sharp accent has been modulated to a smoother, more evenly-flowing pattern, the tempo is moderated to a thoughtful pace, and the entire rhythmic flow takes on a contemplative character apropos of the philosophical mood of the verse:

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh
 nor fleshless;
 Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the
 dance is,
 But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,

Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from
 nor towards,
 Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the
 still point,
 There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

With the transition to the consideration of the pattern which is manifested in stillness there is a return to a line of four stresses, but with none of the urgency of the opening passage; here the relaxed tempo, combined with the firmly-accented and shortened, though flowing, lines, reinforces the feeling of resolution suggested by the theme of the union of change and permanence conveyed in the verse:

Yet the enchainment of past and future
 Woven in the weakness of the changing body,
 Protects mankind from heaven and damnation
 Which flesh cannot endure. . . .

This general rhythm is maintained in the return to imagery at the end, though with a somewhat more meditative pace which augments the contemplation of consciousness at the still point and the conquest of time through time.

By now it will certainly have become evident--even though the limitations of this study have directed a focus on the more closely musically-analogous aspects of Eliot's rhythmic structures--that (and this is true even in the more musically-literal earlier poems) there is much more involved in the rhythms than the technical and mechanical aspects of metrical modes and rhythmic patterns. Just as in music the total rhythmic expression is affected and enhanced by

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such elements as melodic line, harmonic progression, dynamics, instrumentation, and tone color, so in Eliot the poetic rhythms are the integrated product of the syntactic construction, diction, syllable shape and quantity, the pattern of stress and caesura, dynamics, and such devices as alliteration, assonance, rhyme, and onomatopoeia. Even in the case of the more obvious jazz rhythms, our analysis has only been completely meaningful in terms of these elements. And it is in the increasingly effective use and combination of these elements that Eliot's rhythmic development lies.

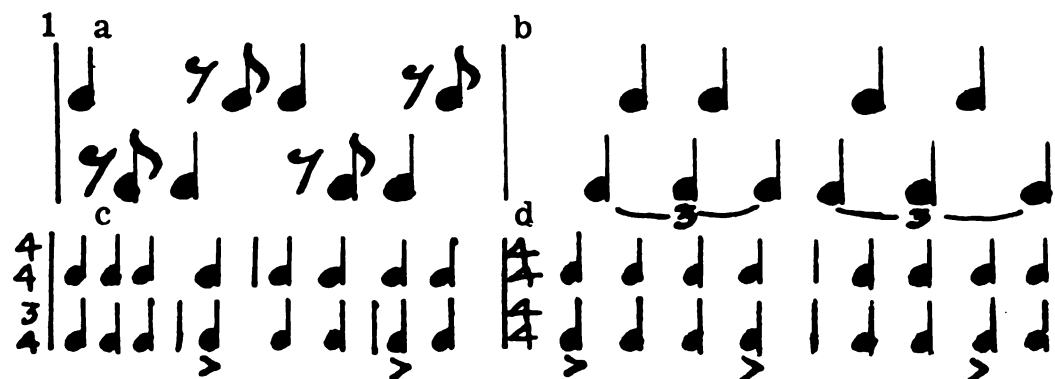
Rhythmic Counterpoint: Polyrhythm and Polymetre

If there is one overriding characteristic--a hallmark even--of T.S. Eliot's mature rhythmic style, it is his magnificently adroit imposition of accentual-stress metres on verse which, though frequently irregular and replete with metrical substitution, is--quantitatively at least--essentially syllabic. "Imposition" is perhaps a misleading term; there is rarely anything of forceful warping or unnatural distortion in the process or the product. Rather it is a combining of accentual and syllabic metres in the formation of the verse in such manner that, while each exists independently, the resultant rhythm is composed of the elements of each. We may consider that this is a rhythmic counterpointing, which in music would be termed the use of polyrhythms, or cross-rhythms.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ In the Harvard Dictionary of Music Willi Apel defines polyrhythm as "The simultaneous use of strikingly contrasting rhythms in different parts of the musical fabric, also known as cross-rhythm . . .

In The Art of T.S. Eliot, Helen Gardner stated, "I suspect that the element which prosodists will concentrate on in the future is the use Eliot makes of quantity to counterpoint his stress."⁵⁸ Strangely enough, despite Miss Gardner's perceptive hint, Eliot scholars seemingly have remained largely unaware of the nature and extent of Eliot's use of this technique--a technique even more complex than Miss Gardner's observation indicates, since it involves syllabic numbers as well as syllabic quantity. Even now, critics are prone to consider that in his later poetry Eliot essentially abandoned traditional syllabic verse for an accentual verse; the stress pattern thus assumes primacy

Generally . . . the term is restricted to those examples in which rhythmic variety is introduced, not as a means to enhance contrapuntal life, but for its own sake (cross rhythm). A distinction can be made between two types: contrasting rhythms within the same scheme of accents (meter) [Ex. 1, a and b]; contrasting rhythms involving a conflict of meter or accents [Ex. 1, c and d]. The latter type is sometimes termed "polymetric."



(pp. 593-594)

On this basis, perhaps we may more properly consider Eliot's combining of strong-stress and syllabic metre to be polymetric.

in their analysis of his prosody, the syllabic aspects of the verse are relegated to a subordinate position rhythmically, and awareness of the contrapuntal interplay between the two, as well as their function of mutual reinforcement, is lost. Therefore, since I feel strongly that Eliot's rhythmic counterpoint is basic to his mature method, and that it has been unjustly neglected, I will treat the subject in some detail.

Now, while this rhythmic construction reached its epitome in Four Quartets, it was by no means a late development in Eliot's verse; it had its beginning in his early work, and the poetry of his earlier periods makes frequent use of it. Consider, for instance, the lines from "Portrait of a Lady" cited above in the discussion of changing metres. In accordance with my reading of the lines (and I hasten to acknowledge that not only are other readings possible, but that in certain instances I can accept alternate readings as readily as those proposed) I am giving both the accentual stress markings and the traditional short and long markings for the underlying syllabic metre:

"You do not know how much they mean to me, my friends,
 And how, how rare and strange it is, to find
 In a life composed so much, so much of odds and ends,
For indeed I do not love it . . . you knew? you are
 not blind!
How keen you are!]

To find a friend who has these qualities,
 Who has, and gives
 Those qualities upon which friendship lives.
 How much it means that I say this to you--
 Without these friendships--life, what cauchemar!"

The metrical stress pattern, in terms of stresses per line, may be seen to be 5, 4, 5, 6, 2, 4, 2, 4, 4, 4. It is an interesting phenomenon in this particular excerpt that, although the stresses in lines of equal stress by no means occur in the same position in the line, the number of stresses in each line is one less than the number of feet in the line, with the exception of the dimeter lines which have two stresses. It is obvious that the lines of four stresses predominate, a fact which is enhanced if we consider the fourth line (as we previously analyzed it in discussing the syllabic metre) to be composed of two parts, with the pentameter section containing four stresses, and the dimeter two. Were the dimeter section moved to the beginning of the succeeding line, which can be done logically both metrically and rhythmically, two additional four-stress lines would result. Alternately, line five could--with metrical and rhythmic logic--be moved to the beginning of line six, resulting in a six-stress line which would balance line four. Thus, while there is a variation in the number and position of lines of varying stresses, an internal consistency exists which imparts rhythmic and structural unity and tends to sustain

the effect of polyrhythmic--or polymetric--movement.

Other sequences are more regular in stress and syllabic construction:

The Octóber night comes dówn; returning as before
 Except for a slight sensation of being ill at ease
 I mount the stairs and turn the handle of the door,
 And feel as if I had mounted on my hands and knees.

("Portrait of a Lady")

The quintuple pulse here imposed on nearly regular iambic hexameter lines results in a metrical counterpoint which is regular and defined.

In the following excerpt from The Waste Land a four-stress pulse is the accompanying rhythmic counterpoint to almost perfectly-regular iambic pentameter metre:

She turns and looks a moment in the glass,
 Hardly aware of her departed lover;
 Her brain allows one half-formed thought to pass:
 "Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over."
 When lovely woman stoops to folly and
 Paces about her room again, alone,
 She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
 And puts a record on the gramophone.

At the same time there begins to be a development in these poems beyond the more easily-recognized and well-defined counterpointing of stress against regular syllabic metres, so that the syllabic metres become more irregular and varied, resulting in a less easily-perceived and more subtle, though not less valid, polyrhythmic movement of the

verse:

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
 When I count there are only you and I together
 But when I look ahead up the white road
 There is always another one walking beside you

(The Waste Land, V)

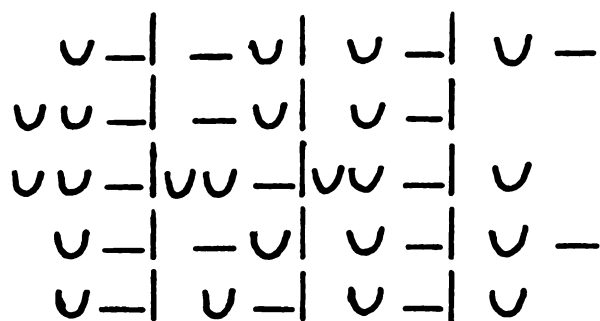
Eliot's developing rhythmic sense embraced and subjected even those passages of essentially prose rhythmic structure. Take the famous borrowing from the prose of Lancelot Andrewes which sets both the mood and the mode, the tone and the tune, of "Journey of the Magi":

A cold coming we had of it,
 Just the worst time of the year,
 For a journey, and such a long journey:
 The ways deep and the weather sharp,
 The very dead of winter.

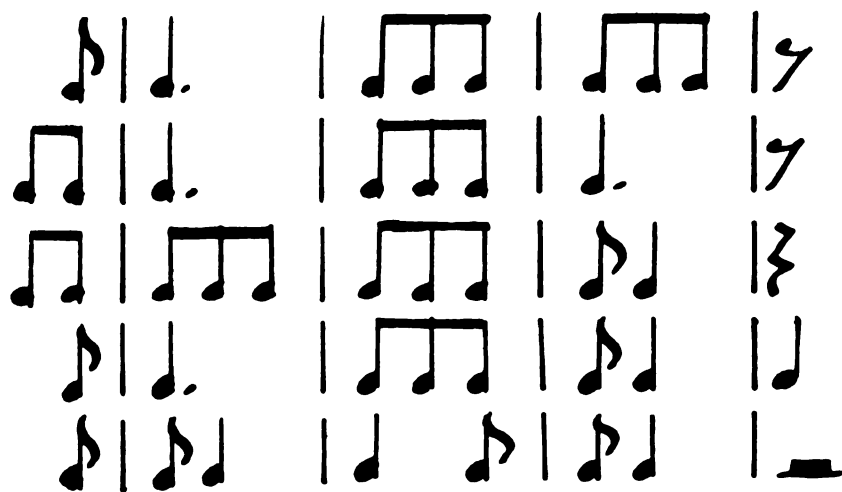
Helen Gardner has noted that this passage, which falls easily and naturally into lines of verse, begins quite clearly by giving a three-stress line; but that "in the first two lines there is no caesura, and as soon as a caesura occurs, in the third line, it leads at once to a line of four stresses, divided in the middle, the characteristic line of Eliot's later verse."⁵⁹ Actually, in this passage there are two cross-rhythms which may be felt running contrapuntally against the strong-stress pattern of 3, 3, 3, 4, 2. First there is the metrical

⁵⁹ Byron Foundation Lecture, p. 19.

syllabic construction which, while irregular, carries a strong and distinct rhythmic pattern:



Against this, there is a musical metre into which the lines might naturally fall:



There are thus three distinct and separate metrical structures which may be heard making up the rhythmic fabric of this verse.

By the time of Ash Wednesday, Eliot had built his polymetric rhythms into a powerful form of expression in which varying stress patterns combined easily and naturally, moving against increasingly

complex syllabic metres:

At the first turning of the third stair
 Was a slotted window bellied like a fig's fruit
 And beyond the hawthorn blossom and a pasture scene
 The broadbacked figure drest in blue and green
 Enchanted the maytime with an antique flute.
 Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,
 Lilac and brown hair;
 Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps
 of the mind over the third stair,
 Fading, fading; strength beyond hope and despair
 Climbing the third stair.

This, then, is the foundation of the sure, fully-matured rhythmic style which T.S. Eliot brought to Four Quartets; a style whose poly-metric construction provided a diversity of metrical and rhythmic modal expression, an adaptability to changing and contrasting mood, and a flexibility in conveying image and philosophical idea. In short, it was a rhythmic style which not only was capable of precise and incisive poetic utterance in traditional and formal metrical forms, but also served the poet as a vehicle for discursive, contemplative, invocational, hortatory, and conversational speech: a speech which, while retaining its essentially colloquial, vernacular idiom, was at the same time transformed into a moving and powerful poetic expression.

"Burnt Norton" opens with a series of falling strong-stress lines, concerning which Harvey Gross, in his essay on Eliot's music of poetry, has pointed out, "These lines present neither images nor metaphors,

the supposed quintessential materials of poetry. Everything is handled through the silent rhythms of syntax and the audible rhythms of isochronism and strong-stress meter."⁶⁰

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.

The developing motive of these lines, with its accumulating, or expanding, idea and emotion, is carried by a rhythmic expansion in the verse within the four-beat strong-stress pattern. The basic beat is constant, however, and the tempo is deliberate, suiting the mood of philosophical speculation, through the end of the exposition section (see the structural analysis of this movement in Appendix B). The move from abstract speculation to the injection of personal experience with "Footfalls echo in the memory," beginning the development section, brings a quickening of the tempo which, though the line remains basically four-stress (the "footfalls" line is three-stress, pointing up the transition into the development), effects a marked change in rhythmic impulse. The move into another dimension, with the lines

⁶⁰ Harvey Gross, "T.S. Eliot and the Music of Poetry," in *The Structure of Verse: Modern Essays on Prosody*, edited with an Introduction and Commentary by Harvey Gross (New York: Fawcett World Library, 1966), pp. 204-205.

Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,
 Round the corner. Through the first gate,
 Into our first world, shall we follow
 The deception of the thrush? Into our first world.

introduces a feeling of excitement, urgency, and anticipation which is largely induced by the quickened tempo and heightened rhythmic drive brought about by the shortened phrases and brief caesural interruptions. The predominance of one-syllable words and short vowels also substantially augments the effect of heightened tempo. Clearly the total rhythmic effect at this point is accomplished by a most apt congruence of sense, syntactic structure, diction, and metre. And, if there were any doubt about the valid rhythmic effect of polymetres within Eliot's verse, it should be easily dispelled by comparing these two lines:

Time present and time past

Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,

Both lines are four-beat strong-stress, but the complete dissimilarity of their syntactic construction and syllabic structures (in terms of both syllable length and numbers of syllables) results in a striking contrast in the counterpoint within each line between the accentual stress and the syllabic metre.

With the projection of the potential in the imagined world--the dream of what might have been--the tempo slows to a more considered pace and the stresses are considerably moderated, so that the flow

of the syllabic structure tends to predominate, and the accentual pattern to be subordinated to it. The result is a rhythm appropriate to, and helping to convey, the mood of contemplation of the ideal which is the substance of the sequence. The final part of the development section, where potential and actual are merged in a series of paradoxes, contains some of the finest imagery of the poem; and while the four-stress line predominates, there are lines of varying stress, all merging smoothly and without abrupt transition:

Dry the pool, dry concrete, brown edged,
And the pool was filled with water out of sunlight,
And the lotos rose, quietly, quietly,
The surface glittered out of heart of light,
And they were behind us, reflected in the pool.

With the reappearance of the bird, and the transition back to reality, and to the present moment in the rose garden, the urgent rhythms briefly return. This leads directly to the three-line recapitulation and the movement closes with a return of the falling, four-stress, deliberate rhythms of the exposition.

I have pointed out that much of the unity of Four Quartets derives from the consistency of structure between corresponding movements of the four poems, and that the rhythmic modes enhance this unity by their correspondence to the form. The first movements of "Burnt Norton," "East Coker," and "Little Gidding" are all set in Eliot's strong-stress rhythmic metre. But, while the normal four stresses largely predominate, line lengths vary, and the great flexibility

inherent in Eliot's syllabic constructions allows a continuing correspondence of rhythm with subject and mood while yet maintaining sufficient variety to obviate the monotony which might otherwise be anticipated. As contrasted with the first movement of "Burnt Norton," the opening lines of "East Coker" are longer and carry more of a forward impetus, which not only fits the more discursive nature of the verse, but also reinforces the subject of continuous cyclical movement and succession. And there is, here, more variation in stress pattern, though the first two lines, in 3 and 5 stresses, move promptly to the four-stress norm:

In my be^ˈginning is my e^ˈnd. In succ^ˈession
 Hou^ˈses ri^ˈse and fa^ˈll, cr^ˈum^ˈble, are ex^ˈtended,
 Are re^ˈmoved, de^ˈstroyed, re^ˈst^ˈored, or in their pl^ˈace
 Is an o^ˈpen fi^ˈeld, or a fa^ˈct^ˈory, or a by^ˈ-pass.

The counterpointing effect of syllabic quantity against accent is readily apparent here. In some cases the stressed syllable is the shortest (in terms of vowel length) in the isochronic word group in which it falls, as in "In my be^ˈginning," "in succ^ˈession," "or a fa^ˈctory," thus emphasizing the polymetric aspects of the rhythm. The syllabic rhythm is also determined by syllabic number (i. e., numbers of syllables), which has a cumulative effect when combined with vowel length. The variation in rhythm deriving from these elements is clearly shown if one compares "In my be^ˈginning is my e^ˈnd" with "Hou^ˈses ri^ˈse and fa^ˈll." Or, compare the two four-stress lines:

And to sháke the wáinscot where the fiéld-mouse tróts
 Tíme présent and tíme pást

The metrical stress may occur on a long vowel, as in "Are removed, destróyed, restóred, or in their pláce . . ." Here the contrapuntal metrical contrast is diminished due to the coincidence of accentual stress with lengthened syllabic stress; but at the same time, and by the same functioning, the rhythmic emphasis is augmented. This particular example is, of course, essentially an iambic pentameter line (with the first foot an anapest) and the accentual stresses occur on the long syllables of the feet in each case. We have here, then, a polyrhythm rather than a polymetre, since the accents coincide.

The first movement of "Little Gidding," again in a mood of profound contemplation, is set in the same basic four-stress measure, though it is diversified through lines of varying stress which merge and modulate smoothly in a pulsing rhythmic flow that is without distortion or apparent syllabic raggedness:

Midwinter spring is its ówn seáson
 Sémpiternal though sódden towards súndown,
 Suspended in tíme, between póle and trópic.
 When the shórt day is bríghtest, with fróst and fire,
 The bríef sun flames the íce, on pónð and díches,
 In windless cóld that is the heart's héat,
 Reflecting in a watery mírror
 A gláre that is blindness in the eárlý afternóon.

Eliot's full range of syllabic constructions and devices are unleashed

here. The long vowel may coincide with syllabic stress:

And glów more intése than bláze of bráñch, or brázier,

Or the stresses may occur on the short vowels, effecting a distinct change of metrical counterpoint:

Stírs the dumb spírít: no wínd, but péntecostal fíre

Occasionally, in a kind of syllabic modulation, a line may have its vowels duplicated at corresponding metrical positions:

When the shórt dáy is bríghtest, with fróst and fíre,

In this instance, the latter device enhances the flavor of 14th-century strong-stress alliterative verse which is evoked in the opening lines of the movement both by the alliteration and the frequent use of caesura.

The rhythmic movement at this point is also augmented by the paralleling of the above line with the one which follows; two blank verse lines, each with five stresses at analogous positions, with almost identical syllabic quantities, each with a caesura marked by the comma:

When the shórt dáy is bríghtest, with fróst and fíre,
The brief sun flames the ice, on pond and ditches,

At times the placement of stress, in relation to syllabic metre, gives the effect of an off-beat accent, as in the first stress in each of the

above two lines. The strong stress on the immediately following syllable strengthens the off-beat, or syncopative, effect.

Long and short vowel patterns may be duplicated within the line, i.e., long, short, followed by long, short:

If you came at night like a broken king,

Or there may be an inversion:

But this is the nearest, in place and time,

In considering the four-stress metre, with caesura, as basic to Eliot's verse in these sections--indeed in all of his late poetry--⁶¹ it should be made clear that the pattern is normative, not merely due to its quantitative predominance, but because it induces the same effect as a tonic key in music. Regardless of the deviations from it, and of modulations into patterns of more or fewer stresses per line, there is always a return to the four-stress pattern, with the accompanying feeling of being "home" again, or returning to the tonic from the dominant or a related key.

In those cases where a section in four-stress metre ends with a half-line of two stresses, there is no destruction of the tonic orientation;

⁶¹ In her Byron Foundation Lecture, Helen Gardner says (p. 19) 'I am well aware of the embarrassing fact that Eliot himself said more than once that the staple line of his later verse was a line of three stresses. I rejoice to find, that whatever Eliot himself thought he was doing, I am supported by Professor Northrop Frye in hearing four stresses.'

rather, the two-stress line acts as a cadence, imparting a feeling of conclusion and finality to the verse:

Where is the summer, the unimaginable
Zero summer?

But this is the nearest, in place and time,
Now and in England.

The opening of "The Dry Salvages" is set in a basically triple syllabic metre, which is counterpointed against an accentual metre of five stresses. Harvey Gross has noted that "although the lines move in almost regular trisyllabic feet, anapests and dactyls, there is neither the solemn torpor of Evangeline nor the galloping frenzy of The Destruction of Sennacherib."⁶²

I do not know much about gods; but I think that the river
Is a strong brown god--sullen, untamed and intractable,
Patient to some degree, at first recognised as a frontier;
Useful, trustworthy, as a conveyor of commerce;
Then only a problem confronting the builder of bridges.

Besides the five principal stresses each line has a strongly felt caesura; the basic metre is anapestic pentameter, with substitutions of dactyls and spondees. But the reader is not conscious of the syllabic and metrical mechanics; the steady underlying pulse of the triple rhythm in conjunction with the distinct though moderate accentual stress pattern, all combined with the regularly occurring caesura

⁶² "T.S. Eliot and the Music of Poetry," op. cit., pp. 211-212.

and the unhurried but insistent syntactic sequence, result in a rhythmic flow which elicits a feeling of the eternal, imponderable Mississippi as it moves implacably and inexorably through the scenes of Eliot's childhood--and through all past, present, and future time as well--to the sea.

It will be noted that after an extended sequence in this metre, there is a modulation to the typical four-stress pattern, and the first section of the movement closes with four lines in that metre.

Now, while we have particularly emphasized the importance of Eliot's four-stress rhythmic mode in his mature work, its prevalence by no means precluded the development of other stress patterns in verse of this idiom. As preceding discussion and analysis will have revealed, Eliot felt a particular affinity for triple rhythms and three-stress patterns, and some of his most effective passages are in triple metres. There are a number of such sequences in Four Quartets, and in fact, it comes as a distinct surprise, considering the functional pre-eminence of the four-stress rhythm throughout the cycle, to find that most of the lines of the concluding sections of all four Quartets are in a triple-stress metre.

In "Burnt Norton" the two sections of the fifth movement are separated by a distinct break. Concurrently there is a change from the four-stress rhythm of the first section to one of three stresses, and with the exception of four lines this is the pattern of the entire section:

The detail of the pattern is movement,
 As in the figure of the ten stairs.
 Desire itself is movement
 Not in itself desirable;
 Love is itself unmoving,
 Only the cause and end of movement,
 Timeless, and undesiring
 Except in the aspect of time
 Caught in the form of limitation
 Between un-being and being.
 Sudden in a shaft of sunlight
 Even while the dust moves
 There rises the hidden laughter
 Of children in the foliage
 Quick now, here, now, always--
 Ridiculous the waste sad time
 Stretching before and after.

In "East Coker" the move from the basic four-stress to the three-stress sequence comes within the second section of the final movement, with no break whatever, with the lines

There is a time for the evening under starlight,
 A time for the evening under lamplight
 (The evening with the photograph album).

and continues up to the last four lines, which conclude the poem with a return to the four-stress line.

Similarly, in "The Dry Salvages" the shift to three-stress rhythm occurs within the second section of the movement, but in this case continues to the end.

"Little Gidding" parallels "Burnt Norton" in that there is a distinct break between the final movement's two sections. The shift to three-stress occurs at the beginning of the second section; all but five of the section's twenty-one lines are in the three-stress pattern, and the

section, the movement, and the cycle as well, conclude in the triple rhythm:

And all shall be well and
 All manner of thing shall be well
 When the tongues of flame are in-folded
 Into the crowned knot of fire
 And the fire and the rose are one.

Generally, the triple-stress rhythms are not nearly as susceptible to polymetric and polyrhythmic variation as are the four-stress patterns. The lines of course tend to be shorter, providing less opportunity for syllabic and syntactic manipulation; but primarily the difference lies in the lack of symmetrical balance within the three-stress line: there is no mid-point for a caesura (though caesura can be interpolated by an adroit poet, as in "But heard, half-heard, in the stillness") and the three stresses tend to group themselves into an overriding isochronic unit.⁶³ As a result, the total rhythmic complex of three-stress verse is much simpler, less expanded, and more straightforward than that of four-stress; and the greater natural

⁶³ This situation is completely analogous to music, where triple rhythms do not naturally lend themselves to syncopation. Since all rhythm is basically duple, triple rhythms are instinctively felt in groups of two, the first assuming the strong, the second the weak, beat; in the Viennese waltz, for instance, the measures, in 3/4 time, tend to pair themselves in groups of two, the first taking a stronger, or rising, accent, and the second a weaker, or falling, stress. In the triple-stress verse, therefore, it is the lines which tend to be felt in groups of two, so that the inherent balance and symmetry derives from pairs of lines.

coincidence of accentual stress and long syllable augments the regularity and emphasis of the beat. This may very well have been what impelled Eliot to the use of this metre at these points in the cycle. The final section of the last movement in each quartet effects a resolution and reconciliation of all problems and ambiguities considered and all opposites posed within the poem; and the essence of resolution and reconciliation is simplification. Eliot certainly concurred with St. Thomas Aquinas in the belief that "God is the first of simple substances." Each quartet attains its resolution--and "Little Gidding" achieves the resolution of the entire cycle--in terms of Love, which to Eliot is synonymous with God, and of the Incarnation, which is the Ultimate Reality, and therefore the Ultimate Simplicity, available to man.

Perhaps also it would not be too immoderate to suggest that in the triple-stress metre, with its three pulses per unit, Eliot saw a rhythmic analogy and a poetic vehicle inherently suited to the expression of his philosophical and religious concept of the Trinity--God Incarnate, the Word made manifest, when the crowned knot, the fire, and the rose are one.

Changing Metres

The foregoing discussion of rhythmic counterpoint will have amply illustrated Eliot's skillful use of the musically-analogous device of changing metres in Four Quartets, and the degree to which

they are assimilated into the basic structure of the strong-stress verse of his late poetry. In Eliot's hands the rhythmic device goes far beyond merely providing for variation and rhythmic interest in long discursive passages and becomes an effective vehicle for an expressive, while well-modulated, syntactic flow. But the use of changing metres is by no means restricted to the strong-stress verse; Eliot frequently employs it with great effect in passages written in formal or traditional metrical forms. The fourth movement of "Little Gidding" consists of two nearly identical stanzas of seven lines each, rhyming ababacc. The metre is a tetrameter, mostly in iambics with some trochaic substitutions where the accent comes on the first syllable of a foot. But in the first stanza the incisive four-stress tetrameter rhythm is suddenly interrupted and slowed down by the insertion of a trimeter line with only three stresses:

The d^ove desc^ending br^eaks the aⁱr
 With fl^ame of incandescent terr^or
 Of whⁱch the tong^ues decl^are
 The on^e disch^arge from sⁱn and ^err^or.
 The on^ly h^ope, or el^se desp^air
 Lⁱes in the ch^oice of p^yre or p^yre--
 To be red^ee^med from fir^e by fir^e.

The change of rhythm and metre on the third line has the same effect as a *ritardando* (retard) in music. It is logical to assume that Eliot wanted a retard at this point, since he could easily have inserted another foot had he desired to maintain the rhythmic impulse; and no doubt he utilized it to prepare the reader for the significant fourth

line and thereby to emphasize the idea contained in that line. I recognize that the effect may be somewhat different for a reader on the first reading of these lines. He is probably anticipating four stresses on the third line because of the pattern established by the first two, and is feeling the rhythm as duple; therefore the missing expected fourth stress and fourth foot will create a pause which has the effect of a fermata, or pause, in music. However, once a reader knows the lines and is aware of the metrical and rhythmic change, the retard will probably occur as a consequence of an inherent tendency to expand the triple pulse line to approximate the preceding lines time-wise.

The same device is used in the parallel second stanza, although here both the third and fourth lines, which together comprise a complete dependent clause, are in trimeter with three stresses each. The effect of the *ritardando* is the same as in the first stanza--to bring the reader up short, so to speak, and prepare him for the impact of the fifth line.

The fourth movement of "East Coker" provides one of the most interesting examples of changing metre in connection with polymetric rhythm to be found in the entire poem cycle. Here we have five identical stanzas of formal construction; each stanza is a cinquain, the five lines rhyming ababb. All lines are in iambic feet, but instead of being metrically identical the first three lines of each stanza are in tetrameter, the fourth in pentameter, and the sixth in hexameter.

The essential rhythmic stress, however, does not follow the syllabic numbers but is constant at four stresses per line:

The wóundéd súrgeón plíes the stéel
 Thát quéstíons the dístèmpèred párt;
 Bénéath the bléeding hānds wē feél
 The shárp còmpāssíon of the héaler's árt
 Résolving the énigma of the féver chárť.

Because of the syllabic increment in the fourth and fifth lines there is present a rhythmic expansion from the third through the fifth lines. This is augmented by the effect of the constant four-stress accentual metre, which means that there are more syllables per stress, or per isochronic unit, which must be worked into the same time period. There is thus a continuous increase in rhythmic concentration, with a resultant build-up of energy and tension, through to the end of the stanza. So, even in a formal--and ostensibly uncomplex--lyric, Eliot has introduced a rhythmic sophistication which is remarkable.

Rhythmic Displacement

The other major musical rhythmic device of rhythmic displacement, which Eliot first introduced into his early poetry, is also found to be effectively integrated in the mature rhythmic constructions of Four Quartets. In the opening movement of "Burnt Norton," once the basic thematic motives have been presented in the exposition section,

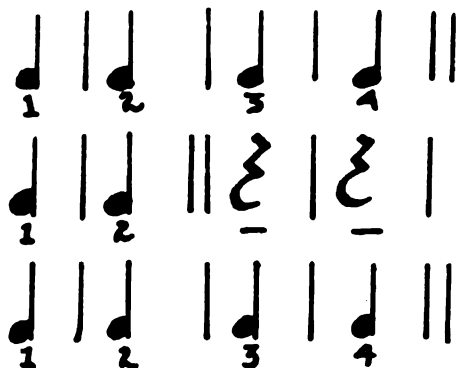
the development promptly moves into a passage of frequent rhythmic shifts with the transition from exploration of time past into time present:

Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo
Thus, in your mind.

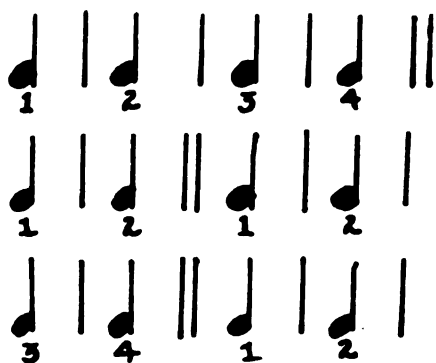
But to what purpose
Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves
I do not know.

Other echoes
Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow?

The logical metrical construction here would have been to make the two-beat phrase "Into the rose-garden" a cadence line--which Eliot frequently does elsewhere, as we have seen. The next line would then have been "My words echo thus, in your mind," which, as a four-beat line, is syntactically complete and logical as opposed to the actual construction above, "Into the rose-garden. My words echo/," and "Thus, in your mind. But to what purpose/." What Eliot has done--in the poetic equivalent to music--is to shift the mensural divisions, i.e., the bar lines, so that the words which would normally come on the first and second beats occur on the third and fourth beats and vice-versa. Thus, in terms of musical beats and metrical division, Eliot has taken lines which would normally be constructed



and shifted the measure to give an off-beat structure:



etc.

The shifted rhythm continues through the end of the passage quoted; then, after a brief return to an on-beat line, or measure--"Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,"--the shift is again introduced in the lines:

Round the corner. Through the first gate,
 Into our first world, shall we follow
 The deception of the thrush? Into our first world.

A composer of music introduces a metrical transposition through "bar line shift," or rhythmic displacement, for very specific reasons: to obtain a rhythmic syncopation, to emphasize the accentual pattern by the off-beat position, or to effect a contrast between the rhythmic pattern of the melody and a regular underlying rhythm, usually in the bass. Eliot, too, constructed his off-rhythms with specific intent. In the passage under discussion, it would seem that he wanted the disjointed effect imparted by the shifted accents in order to emphasize

the disjunctive nature of time in its aspects of past, present, and future when seen from the limited viewpoint of temporal existence. Also, the off-rhythms combined with the sense and syntactic construction tend to build a tension and anticipation which parallel the expectancy and urgency of the flight through the future into potential time and existence.

In the coda to the first movement of "East Coker" the equivalent of a musical mensural shift occurs:

Dawn points, and another day
Prepares for heat and silence. Out at sea the dawn wind
Wrinkles and slides. I am here
Or there, or elsewhere. In my beginning.

The shift begins when the phrase "Prepares for heat and silence," instead of completing the first line, is put at the beginning of the second. This shifts each succeeding half-line through to the cadence "In my beginning," which would normally start on the first, or strongest beat, of the line.

The effect of the shift here, besides lending rhythmic contrast to the movement, is to emphasize the external conditions--the heat and the silence, the wrinkling and sliding of the wind--of the natural environment which has given rise to this poem. And the motive "In my beginning," coming not only at the end of the movement, but the end position in the line also, reinforces the idea with which the poem opened--"In my beginning is my end." Thus there is in this

movement not only a perfect motivic integration of form and content,
but a rhythmic one as well.

Many other instances of this rhythmic device could be cited from Four Quartets, some of a more emphatic and obvious rhythmic character, others less incisive and more subtly interwoven into the metrical pattern; compare these two examples:

It tosses up our losses, the torn seine,
The shattered lobsterpot, the broken oar
And the gear of foreign dead men. The sea has many voices,
Many gods and many voices.

The salt is on the briar rose,
The fog is in the fir trees.

The sea howl
And the sea yelp, are different voices
Often together heard; . . .

("The Dry Salvages," I)

The moment of the rose and the moment of the yew-tree
Are of equal duration. A people without history
Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern
Of timeless moments. So, while the light fails
On a winter's afternoon, in a secluded chapel
History is now and England.
With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling

("Little Gidding," V)

One further example, from the fourth movement of "Burnt Norton," might be cited as combining changing rhythms with mensural shift to create a rhythmic pattern designed for a specific poetic function:

Will the sunflower turn to us, will the clematis
Stray down, bend to us; tendril and spray
Clutch and cling?
Chill

Fingers of yew be curled
 Down on us? After the kingfisher's wing
 Has answered light to light, and is silent, the light
 is still
 At the still point of the turning world.

In the decreasing stress pattern from four per line to two to the monosyllabic line "Chill" there is a rhythmic contraction with an accompanying tempo retardation which effectively conveys in the rhythm the idea of loss of vitality ending in death, which is one of the two opposite possibilities posed in the movement. The retardation, plus the effect of the off-beat shifts, results in added impact on the death metaphor "Chill/ Fingers of yew be curled/ Down on us?" With the reintroduction of the sun, the vital center, symbol of life and the ultimate "still point," there is a return to the original rhythm in a resuscitation, or revitalization, of the life force. Again, then, rhythm has been consciously manipulated through its analogous musical devices in such a way as to produce a close correspondence between the substance and the medium.

Eliot and the Generative Nature of Rhythm

Psychic and Biological Aspects

On a different level entirely, one much more profound and recondite than that of formal musical structure or the rhythmic pattern of the line, Eliot conceived of rhythm as an element not only fundamental and organic to poetic expression, but in large measure a generative

force capable of originating and stimulating the poetic idea. In the passage from "The Music of Poetry" previously quoted the poet stated, "I know that a poem, or a passage of a poem, may tend to realize itself first as a particular rhythm before it reaches expression in words, and that this rhythm may bring to birth the idea and the image . . ." This is not a matter of accident, nor yet does it derive from conscious contrivance; rather, it has its origin in the recesses of the human psyche. Eliot elaborated on his concept at somewhat greater length in discussing what he terms the "auditory imagination":

. . .the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back, seeking the beginning and the end. It works through meanings, certainly, or not without meanings in the ordinary sense, and fuses the old and obliterated and the trite, the current, and the new and surprising, the most ancient and the most civilized mentality.⁶⁴

Thus rhythm for Eliot would seem to be something which is basic to human existence, a psychic phenomenon going back to the very origins of man and retained in his subconscious mind, possibly in the form of archetypal patterns having their genesis in the incantatory rhythms of primitive ritual.⁶⁵ F.O. Matthiessen speaks of Eliot's

⁶⁴ In his essay "Matthew Arnold" (March 3, 1933), included in The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1934), pp. 118-119.

⁶⁵ There is a markedly close relationship between this concept of Eliot and W.B. Yeats's anima mundi, that general mind and world soul, the "Great Memory passing on from generation to generation." In the anima mundi exist all images, all thought, intuition

"understanding of the fact that poetic rhythm by means of its power of incantation is able to renew one of the most primitive elements of man's experience at the same time that it gives expression to the last subtle nuances of civilized feeling . . ." ⁶⁶ Eliot's concept that the feeling for rhythm lies "far below the conscious levels of thought" illuminated what he meant when he stated, in connection with The Divine Comedy, that "poetry can communicate before it is understood." ⁶⁷

In other words, poetic rhythm can begin to stir us and awaken in us an emotional response, a feeling for the image and the expression, before the mind synthesizes and brings to conscious intellectual

and knowledge available to mankind in any age; thus it is a great storehouse of archetypal ideas and psychic phenomena existing from the most primitive times. Discussing the fact that the thought had been repeatedly before him that there is a contact or mingling of minds with minds who had followed a like study in some other age, and that these minds still saw and thought and chose, Yeats wrote, "Our daily thought was certainly but the line of foam at the shallow edge of a vast luminous sea; Henry More's Anima Mundi, Wordsworth's 'immortal sea which brought us hither', and near whose edge the children sport, and in that sea there were some who swam or sailed, explorers who perhaps knew all its shores." From "Anima Mundi," Per Amica Silentia Lunae (1917), in Mythologies (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), p. 346.

⁶⁶ F.O. Matthiessen, The Achievement of T.S. Eliot, Third Edition, revised and enlarged; First Galaxy Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 89.

⁶⁷ In his essay "Dante," included in Selected Essays, New Edition (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1950), p. 200. Eliot in fact poses this ability to communicate before the poetry is understood as a test--"(a positive test, I do not assert that it is always valid negatively)"--of genuine poetry.

understanding what is being said.⁶⁸

By its very essence, this generative aspect of rhythm is something which cannot be isolated and identified, but must be understood intuitively.

⁶⁸ The validity of Eliot's concept, and the fact that he is by no means alone in this reaction to poetic communication, is vividly confirmed by an experience described by Maxim Gorki in discussing the Habima Theatre. Gorki relates:

I have seen three performances of Pinski's The Eternal Jew, where the prophet of the days of the Des-truction of the Temple is shown in all his tragic grandeur. Without understanding the language, and only by the pleasure of listening to the sound and rhythm, did I feel all the anguish of the prophet who was not understood by his people he loved so dearly. I felt the great despair of a painstricken heart. But it wasn't the play itself that made the deep impression. No, this impression was created by the harmony of the performance, by the musical unity of the ensemble at large and each individual in and for himself.

From Appendix 1, "Maxim Gorki on the Habima," in Habima, by Raikin Ben-Ari, translated by A. H. Gross and I. Soref (New York, London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1957), p. 239.

A related phenomenon is discussed by the playwright Michel de Ghelderode in considering the musical aspects of speech in his works:

A kind of education of the ear leads me to demand a certain music in human speech.

On the stage you can feel very strongly that a musical requirement is prevalent in my prose, in my theatrical language.

Then again, many works have come to me with music in their interstices, an underlying music. This is a fact that has often struck me--while I was writing certain plays, I had old refrains in my head and they followed me and pursued me the whole length of my work.

M. de Ghelderode narrates specific examples to illustrate this phenomenon, which he feels is not peculiar to himself. "Many writers as well as the poets have these solitudes of a harmonic order, admit to certain manias . . . It is, moreover, this same eternal music that we demand

Since it exists below the conscious levels of thought and feeling and is a cause rather than a result in the process of poetic expression, it cannot be laid out on the dissecting table and exposed to either gross inspection or microscopic examination. Rather, its influence and presence may only be felt, emotionally apprehended, in the poetry itself. It is therefore manifestly impossible to discuss and analyze it in the same terms in which we have explored the rhythm of the line or the overall rhythmic pattern of Four Quartets within the individual poems and in the work as a whole. At the same time, since this basic rhythmic vitality is so causal to the entire poetic expression, it cannot be divorced from the specific and concrete elements of the poetry. It is thus an inextricable component of the whole poem, primary to, and intuitively bound up with, both idea and image.

Paul Valéry, one of the first and most important of the French Symbolists, and a major influence on Eliot's concepts of the structure and function of poetry, has, with something of a reverse twist, applied this principle rather concretely to the reading and interpretation

from poems that I want to find again in the best theatre, welling up hidden in the dramatic prose, and running beneath it, murmuring and invisible."

These remarks are excerpted from the essay "The Ostend Interviews," translated by George Hauger, which accompanies de Ghelderode's play Pantagleize, included in The New Theatre of Europe, edited with an Introduction by Robert W. Corrigan and containing individual essays by the playwrights (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1962), pp. 227-229.

of poetry. In "On Speaking Verse" in his book The Art of Poetry,⁶⁹ he states that poetry, as an oral form, demands an interpreter and must be read, a poem having in itself no real or precise meaning but being rather a potentiality, an abstraction awaiting the oral interpretation. Valéry proposes that the delivery of poetry should start from song and descend to the proper level, rather than vice versa, since he sees the plan of relating poetry to song exact in principle and in accordance with both the origins and the essence of the art. Song and prose he sees as symmetrically placed in relation to verse, which demands a certain very intimate union between the physical reality of the sound and the "virtual excitations" of sense, and which holds an admirable and very delicate balance between the sensual and intellectual forces of language. In reciting, he says, one should get used to the melody of his lines--sentences doubly organized by syntax and prosody, which comprise a sonorous, spiritual substance and cunningly engender a form full of life.

"Do not be in a hurry to reach the meaning," Valéry admonishes. "Approach it without forcing, and, as it were, imperceptibly. Attain the tenderness and the violence only by the music and through it. Refrain for as long as possible from emphasizing words; so far there are no words, only syllables and rhythms. Remain in this purely musical state until the moment the meaning, having gradually

⁶⁹ Ed. cit., pp. 159-166.

supervened, can no longer mar the musical form. You will finally introduce it as the supreme nuance which will transfigure your piece without altering it. But first of all you must have learned your piece."⁷⁰

It is characteristic of T.S. Eliot that his poetic theories and critical concepts, however precocious and pregnant with insight, bear a strong analogy to the proverbial deceptive iceberg in that there is always much more implicit and existent below the surface than is specifically expressed and immediately apparent. This is certainly true of his ideas of the primal and psychic nature of rhythm as a motivating force of aesthetic expression in man. It is notable that there is implicit here an intuitive understanding and an expressed anticipation of a new science: the science of biological rhythm, which is even at the present day a very young discipline, and one that hardly existed at the time Eliot was writing, except as a group of sporadic and unrelated experiments and observations by a few individual scientists. Research in biological rhythms has in the last few years spread all over the world and is now an important, expanding, and highly interdisciplinary study embracing many fields: botany, forestry, and agriculture; various branches of zoology; veterinary and human medicine; biochemistry, physiology, psychology, and pathology; mathematics, statistics, cybernetics, and philosophy. But it was only as recently as 1937 that the Society for Biological Rhythm, the first

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 165.

international society for the study of biological rhythms, was founded by seven scientists--five physicians, one botanist, and one zoologist. T.S. Eliot, however, as early as 1925, proposing various qualifications for the ideal student and critic of the dance, had stated, "And, finally, he should track down the secrets of rhythm in the (still undeveloped) science of neurology."⁷¹

What Eliot both intuitively apprehended and consciously perceived is what scientific research in biological rhythm has been increasingly documenting: that man, like all living organisms, not only exists in an essentially rhythmic universe, but is himself a creature whose very life forces are rhythmically generated and subsequently directed and controlled by a complex multiplicity of rhythmic periodicities. It has long been recognized of course that man lives in a universe, a world, and a physical environment whose structure pulses with a manifold variety of external rhythms--diurnal, tidal, seasonal, solar, sidereal; and most theories of material creation, such as that of the expanding and contracting universe, the "big bang" theory, and others, are essentially rhythmic in concept. Too, rhythmic phenomena in the animated world has long claimed the attention of naturalists; as, for instance, Linnaeus' famous flower clock, based on the fact that the flowers of various plants open and close at different times

⁷¹ In "The Ballet," in The Criterion, III, No. 11 (April 1925), pp. 441-442. The article was essentially a review of Cecil J. Sharpe's The Dance and Tyra de Kleen's Mudras.

of the day, but so regularly in each case that one could set a clock by them. But it has remained for present-day biological rhythm research to discover the nature and extent of man's subjection to endogenous rhythms--those inherent in his physiological and psychological make-up and which operate independent of external factors--and of the exogenous rhythms developed under the influence of external periodic phenomena. The magnitude of the subject is immense; Dr. Arne Sollberger, in Biological Rhythm Research, discussing the endogenous rhythms as being caused by biological oscillators, states, "They run with frequencies from 1000 c/sec to durations of one day, month, year or more. There are: rhythmic nervous activity (nerve impulses, electroencephalogram, tremor; tapping, chewing, walking and breathing rhythms); other rhythmic muscular contractions (wing beats, ear movements in bats, periodic opening of mussel valves, contraction waves in worms, peristalsis, gastric or uterine contractions, heart rates, pulse waves, blood pressure variations, etc.); mental activity rhythms (in reaction times, interpretation of ambiguous optic illusions, judgment of time durations and creativity); variations in depth of sleep or frequency of dreaming; protoplasmic rhythms (contracting vacuoles, ciliary motion, circumnutating movements of growing plant tendrils); cyclic water and ion exchange over cell membranes or electric biopotential fluctuation in plant roots; rhythmic glandular secretion; sexual cycles."⁷²

⁷² Arne Sollberger, Biological Rhythm Research (Amsterdam, London, New York: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1965), p. 9, par.

The complexity of the rhythmic orientation of man is illustrated by the fact that the exogenous rhythms involve not only the circadian (24-hr), lunar, and seasonal, as well as others such as the solar sun-spot cycles, but also occur as harmonics and subharmonics of these periods. (And note that there is not just one specific lunar period, but, depending on which astronomical reference points are used, we have the calendar, synodic, anomalistic, sidereal, tropical, and nodal, or draconic, months, varying from 30.44 to 27.21 days.) Dr. Sollberger's discussion of the twenty-four hour exogenous rhythm alone includes, as related to man, activity rhythms, temperature rhythms, metabolic rhythms, rhythms of body electrolytes, rhythms of enzymes and hormones, rhythms of blood constituents, circulation and respiration rhythms, urine rhythms, rhythms in the nervous system, sensitivity rhythms, rhythms in obstetrics and gynecology, and rhythms of morphology and mitosis. Thus, when Eliot, in "Burnt Norton," II, talks of "The dance along the artery/ The circulation of the lymph," he is not indulging as pure a flight of poetic fancy as might at first be thought.

On the level of the psychic, or subconscious, as opposed to the purely physiological (if such a simple differentiation can be made),

1. 15. This relatively recent work reviews and sums up all pertinent research and experimentation relating to biological rhythm up to the date of its publication. It appears to be truly comprehensive; one notes that its bibliography consists of approximately 3600 items.

while the evidence is much less tangible and demonstrable, modern biological rhythm science has tended to corroborate Eliot's ideas. Sollberger frequently cites rhythms in the cells, not only in plants and lower animals, but in the body cells of man, as they relate to behavioral phenomena. "Even in the basic parts of cellular protoplasm," he observes, "the oscillatory capacity still rests."⁷³

He notes that it is clear that rhythms appear even in unicellular organisms, and, considering the evolutionary aspects of cell development, points out that what develops is an increasing complexity in the apparatus which carries the rhythms and the coupling to the external world. Discussing endogenous clock mechanisms, he says, "The universality of the biological clock indicates that it must be localized in the most fundamental aspects of the cells."⁷⁴ In connection with protoplasmic streaming in cells he states that "rhythmic fluctuation in protoplasmic flow must be closely connected with the basic energetic metabolic processes of living matter."⁷⁵ And from certain experiments conducted on this subject he concludes that there are deep-seated mechanisms existent in the cells which are not even influenced by rather drastic changes in the protein state.

Approaching even more closely to Eliot's concept, Sollberger,

⁷³ Ibid., p. 309, par. 27.11.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 69, par. 5.13.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 85, par. 6.29.

discussing the female menstrual cycle of 28 (or perhaps 29.5) days in relation to lunar periodicities in Homo, suggests "the possibility of a genetical memory (caused by selection) from our ancestral shore life" ⁷⁶ Other studies in the rhythms of memory, cited by Sollberger, have been made by A.I. Gates and W.A. Lay. ⁷⁷ Rhythms have also been found in the psyche, according to the study reported by H. Hampp in the article "Die Tagesrhythmischen Schwankungen der Stimmung und des Antriebes beim gesunden Mensch," appearing in Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten, 201 (1961), p. 355. While the relationship between the different levels of rhythm organization are not yet clearly understood, Sollberger reports that in higher organisms the nervous system is important in the control of the rhythms; he also reports on the work of F. Halberg, who distinguishes between several developmentally determined levels of rhythm activity, which are interacting: the cellular, endocrine, and neural, or central nervous system--"where the neural may be entrained chiefly by dominant synchronizers, the cellular perhaps by weaker synchronizers, and where there is a feedback between the

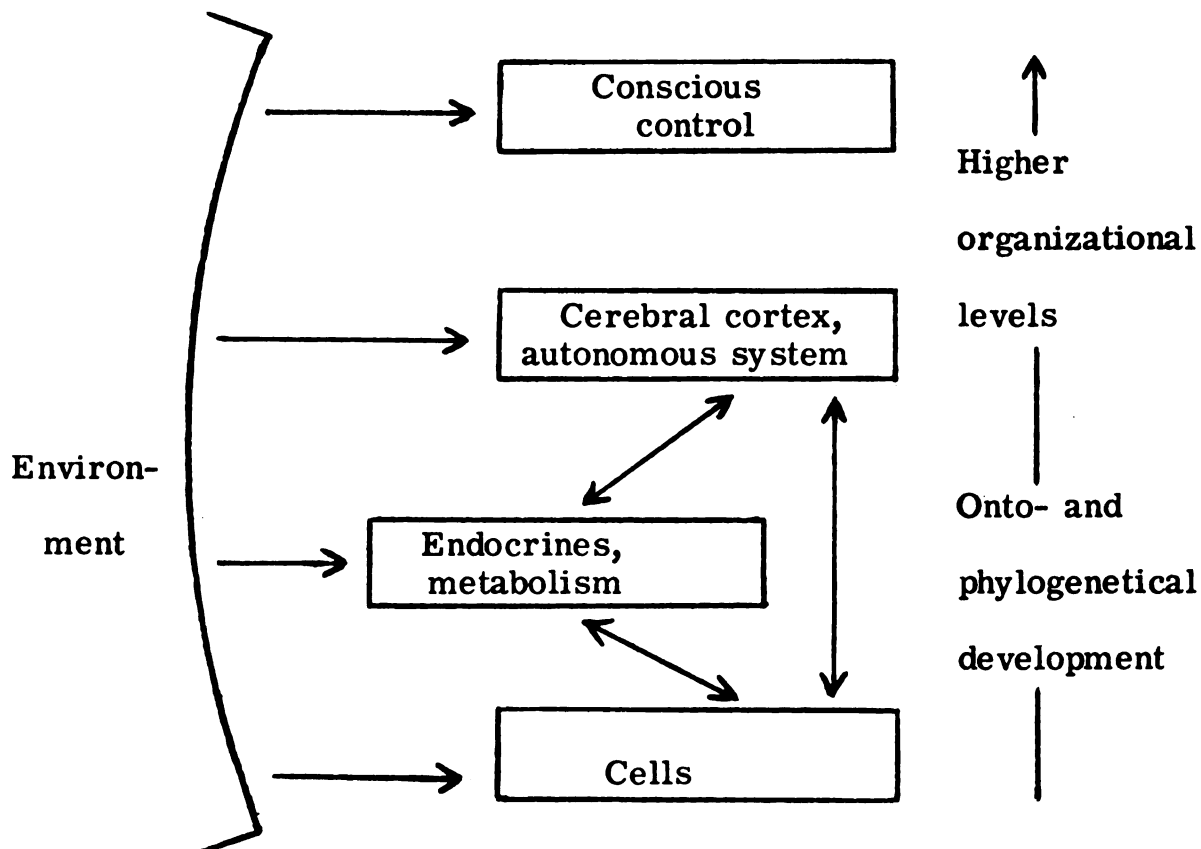
⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 281, par. 24.46.

⁷⁷ A.I. Gates, "Diurnal Variations in Memory and Association," University of California Publications in Psychology, I (1916), pp. 323 ff.

W.A. Lay, "Über das Morgen- und Abendlernen," Zeitschrift für die Erforschung und Behandlung des jugendlichen Schwachsinn auf wissenschaftlicher Grundlage, V (1912), pp. 285 ff.

levels."⁷⁸ He then proposes, "In man there is perhaps a fourth, psychological level with more or less conscious attempts to modify the rhythmic control, creating new complicated feedback channels."⁷⁹

The organizational levels and their rhythm control are presented schematically by Dr. Sollberger in the following diagram:⁸⁰



This subject of the organizational levels as they relate to rhythm, and the relation of the conscious and subconscious levels of control, finds a sympathetic, and previously-existent, understanding on the

⁷⁸ Sollberger, op. cit., p. 309, par. 27.11.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 271, Fig. 24.18a.

part of Eliot. This is evidenced in his essay on Rudyard Kipling cited earlier; in considering the function and intent of the author's verse, he writes:

For Kipling the poem is something which is intended to act-- and for the most part his poems are intended to elicit the same response from all readers, and only the response which they can make in common. For other poets--at least, for some other poets--the poem may begin to shape itself in fragments of musical rhythm, and its structure will first appear in terms of something analogous to musical form; and such poets find it expedient to occupy their conscious mind with the craftsman's problems, leaving the deeper meaning to emerge, if there, from a lower level. It is a question then of what one chooses to be conscious of, and of how much of the meaning, in a poem, is conveyed direct to the intelligence and how much is conveyed indirectly by the musical impression upon the sensibility--always remembering that the use of the word 'musical' and of musical analogies, in discussing poetry, has its dangers if we do not constantly check its limitations: for the music of verse is inseparable from the meanings and associations of words. If I say then, that this musical concern is secondary and infrequent with Kipling, I am not implying any inferiority of craftsmanship, but rather a different order of values from that which we expect to determine the structure of poetry.⁸¹

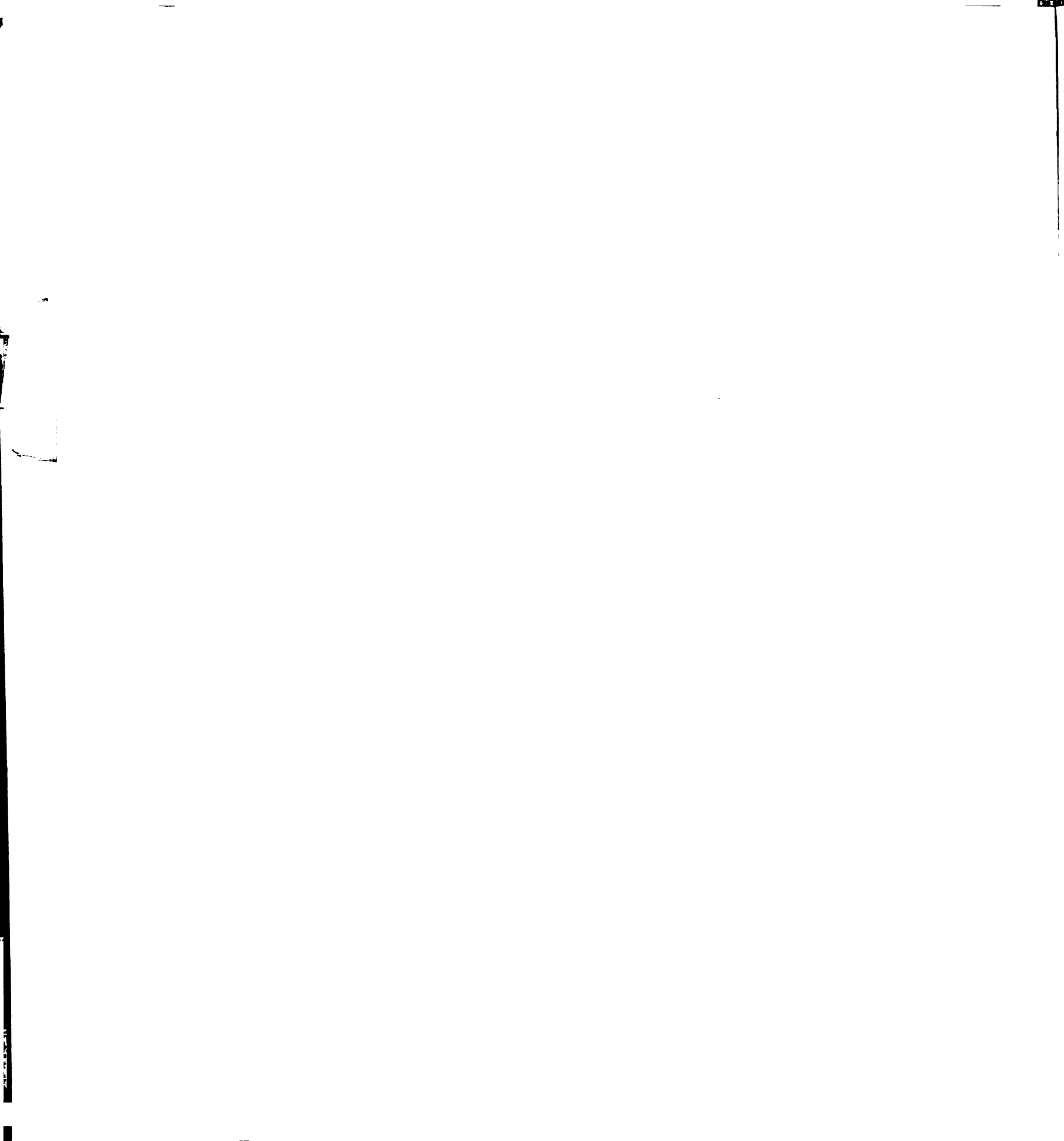
Thus it would seem that Eliot's perception of the primal and generative nature of rhythm as it relates to man physiologically and psychologically anticipated the recent findings and continuing investigations of the young science of biological rhythm. Clearly, for Eliot, poetic meaning, which is developed and shaped both on the levels of conscious intellection and subconscious stimulation of the sensibilities, has its initial overt manifestation in terms of musical rhythm whose genesis lies in the fundamental rhythms of man's

⁸¹ Op. cit., p. 21.

material and psychic being. Certainly his concept of "the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back, seeking the beginning and the end," appears as deeply rooted in scientific fact as in poetic intuition.

The Rhythmic Genesis of Four Quartets

It is readily apparent that the phenomenon of time is of basic importance to the science of biological rhythm. In this connection Dr. Sollberger's book contains speculation as to the nature of time and consideration of various theories of time and their implications; and while much too long to be examined here, his explorations are of particular interest for their philosophical inquiry which finds common ground in Eliot's concern with the reality of time as explored in Four Quartets, and conversely for the scientific implications abounding in Eliot's philosophical-religious cycle. The interesting parallels which keep recurring between the scientific and poetic works in their consideration of time as flux and as duration, and of pattern and stillness as it relates to time, provide continuing corroboration of Eliot's insight into the rhythmic nature of man's physical existence and psychic motivation. And since the element of rhythm is fundamental both to music and to Eliot's views on the analogies of music and poetry, it may be pertinent to examine some of the



disciplinary parallels which emerge.

Dr. Sollberger points out that living matter displays incessant movement in space and time and that indeed, complete cessation of movement means death. The relation of stillness and movement is a major theme of Four Quartets, and Eliot likewise perceives the relationship of continuous motion and physical existence:

Internal darkness, deprivation
And destitution of all property,
Desiccation of the world of sense,
Evacuation of the world of fancy,
Inoperancy of the world of spirit;
This is the one way, and the other
Is the same, not in movement
But abstention from movement; . . .

("Burnt Norton," III)

Similarly, our physical surroundings are incessantly moving, from the parts of an atom to celestial bodies. In both the external world and in living organisms there is an unceasing redistribution of material in space and time, and some of these changes are rhythmic.

In space we may have rhythmic spatial patterns such as the arrangement of thread in lace, grooves in a phonograph record, crystal lattices, earth crust configurations . . . or even the curves in our rhythm graphs. In time we may have rhythmic temporal patterns, as in a melody or the rattle of a machine gun. Often, spatial and temporal patterns may be combined, as in the movement of machinery, falling drops, sounding strings, nerve signals, or pulse waves. If we shake the ends of a cord sideways we will generate spatial waves moving in time. The two patterns may sometimes be interconverted. A record may be played, the sound of a singer may be recorded on tape. In such cases the spatial pattern may be regarded as a memory of the temporal one.

Our rhythm graphs are spatial memories of temporal happenings.⁸²

Time, notes Sollberger, is the medium in which biological rhythms revolve, and the events in biological rhythms are chiefly temporal, though there are exceptions such as spatial patterns resulting from rhythmic growth (i.e., seasonal tree rings, ramifications in trees or pinecones, growth of mushrooms in concentric rings, segmentations of the body in animals, rhythmic color pattern in butterfly wings, bird feathers, tiger furs, bands in the enamel of deciduous teeth). Eliot too sees time as the medium in which rhythmic pattern is generated. The search for the pattern as the key to meaning is fundamental to Four Quartets, and pattern is frequently imaged in spatial terms.

Words move, music moves
 Only in time
 Words, after speech, reach
 Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
 Can words or music reach
 The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
 Moves perpetually in its stillness.

 The detail of the poem is movement,

("Burnt Norton," V)

Discussing theories of time, Dr. Sollberger speculates:

⁸² Sollberger, op. cit., p. 166, par. 19.3.

We may even postulate a hierarchy of times in a serial universe, in which we envisage future and past as existing alike, with an observer moving in the direction future, his progress being, however, timed by an observer moving in another time dimension, who is in turn timed by yet another observer in yet another time dimension, and so on ad infinitum. In this case we accept the existence of precognition.⁸³

Similarly, Eliot considers the simultaneity of discretely-perceived time schemes--which includes all events and knowledge as well.

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.

("Burnt Norton," I)

In discussing events, Sollberger states:

Many things only exist for a certain time. We may regard them as events, with the dimension energy-duration. If the duration of an event is very long, the energy may approach zero, a quite appropriate description of ghosts and materialisations, if we choose to accept such phenomena. Since events have a duration we may also define a frequency for them. Actually, a periodic process is the perfect event, possessing a definite amount of both energy and duration.⁸⁴

Eliot's concepts of time and event embraced these scientific projections. We may note, for example, a passage from "Little Gidding," I, expressing implicitly beneath its metaphor the idea of energy duration approaching depletion:

⁸³ Ibid., p. 66, par. 5.3.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 67, par. 5.5.

. Now the hedgerow
 Is blanched for an hour with transitory blossom
 Of snow, a bloom more sudden
 Than that of summer, neither budding nor fading,
 Not in the scheme of generation.
 Where is the summer, the unimaginable
 Zero summer?

The entire first section of the first movement of "Little Gidding" is of course concerned with the cyclical season change, though Eliot uses the event as a ground, or point of departure, for a metaphorical treatment of existence both outside time as well as in eternal time. Even further, however, the poet has implicitly introduced the idea of entropy change as related to time. Sollberger, discussing homeostasis, advises that "a spontaneous, truly endogenous alternation between utilization and storage of energy, of actio and reactio, of entropy increase and reversal, is necessary for the maintenance of life."⁸⁵ (Previously, in considering the energy storage rhythm, he had noted that there is an incessant change between feeding and resting, i.e., between energy storage and energy utilization in the body, this being a basic physiological phenomenon, conditional for our adaptation for the need for rapid action and survival.)⁸⁶ In the poetic passage, Eliot is writing of a moment in time, a point in the seasonal cycle--"Midwinter spring"--when the entropy

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 23, par. 2.2.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 4, par. 1.4.

of the natural cycle has reached its point of change, of reversal, and is therefore--for a moment so infinitesimal as to be practically non-existent--at the still point, the point of zero energy, when actio has reached its terminus and reactio has not yet begun. Since at this still point there is no movement and no change, since winter has reached its moment of exhaustion but spring has not quite begun its entropic increase, the moment is "Sempiternal," and "Suspended in time, between pole and tropic." Thus, "There is no earth smell/ Or smell of living thing," for "This is the spring time/ But not in time's covenant." The poet is, for this brief micro-moment, truly outside of time, a condition attained as a function of the rhythmic nature of existence and the entropic rhythm of the physical universe.⁸⁷

In the second movement of "Burnt Norton," both the idea and image and the specific rhythm and tempo of the opening section are clearly generated by the basic concept of the rhythmic structure of the cosmos. The whirling of cosmic bodies is elicited by the whirling tempo which propels us in fifteen short lines from the earthly reality of clotting mud to eternal sublimity among the stars. Here again are all of the basic elements required for the redemption and reconciliation

⁸⁷ For an interesting study of entropy applied to various areas outside the realm of traditional thermodynamics, see Stanley W. Angrist and Loren G. Hepler's "Demons, Poetry, and Life: A Thermodynamic View," in The Texas Quarterly, X, No. 1 (Spring 1967), pp. 26-35. The paper includes a brief discussion of entropy as applied to literature and language.

of time: incessant rhythmic movement, as carried in the imagery of the "trilling wire in the blood," the "dance along the artery," and the "circulation of the lymph"; the pattern, manifested in the "light upon the figured leaf" and the eternal pattern pursued by the boarhound and the boar; and the resultant still point reached in reconciliation among the eternal stars. Thus, originating as a rhythmic concept, the rhythmic structure generated by the underlying rhythmic motivation, and defined in images of rhythmic substance, the poetry expresses the reconciliation of all opposites and finds in eternity the resolution of the apparent flux of life.

Nowhere in Four Quartets is the connection between rhythm and substance more apparent than in the third, or development, section of the first movement of "East Coker." Here the poet, stimulated by his physical and spiritual return to the place of his ancestors, has reached far back into the subconscious levels of thought and feeling and, from the vantage point of the present timeless moment intersecting the eternal stream of timeless moments in which all such moments have simultaneous existence, he is united with his forebears in their summer midnight country revels. The rhythmic expression in which the poem manifests itself is that of a dance. But this is not the dance of a drawing-room minuet or the classical ballet; this is the dance of a peasant people and its rhythms are rooted in the soil and are indigenous to the whole ethos of a country folk. The picture which emerges, the idea and the image which the rhythm

brings to birth is not a Degas rehearsal scene in impressionistic pastel, but rather a full-blooded, earthy and stolid Breughel. For these are rustic people, "Rustically solemn or in rustic laughter/
Lifting heavy feet in clumsy shoes," and their shoes are covered with good rich loam, and lifted in country mirth. While virile and moving, the beat of the rhythm is sombre and tends to an alternation of heavy and light, evoking the stamping of heavy peasant boots--"Two and two . . . by the hand or the arm . . . Round and round . . . Earth feet, loam feet . . . Keeping time, / keeping the rhythm . . ."

In the final lines of the section Eliot conjoins the rhythm of the farmers' dancing with the rhythm of "their living in the living seasons," and deftly implants their existence within a hierarchy of rhythmic cycles, including those of the seasons and the constellations. Thus the rhythmic essence of man's being is manifested in his dancing and is implicit in "The time of milking and the time of harvest/ The time of the coupling of man and woman/ And that of beasts," and both the bucolic dance rhythms and the cyclic images of "Feet rising and falling./ Eating and drinking. Dung and death" become metaphors for the eternal cosmic cycle.

The opening of the second movement of "East Coker" is interesting for its rhythmic parallel to the corresponding section of "Burnt Norton." Here again, in a brief seventeen lines, is the fast, whirling, four-stress tempo which moves from opening to resolution without pause or hesitation. The idea and imagery generated by the

rhythmic ground is markedly similar to that in the other quartet; there is a move from the phenomena of earthly reality to that of the cosmos. What is depicted is an ostensible confusion in the seasons and their concomitant natural events accompanied by a similar chaotic condition in the constellations. Essentially, however, the disharmony is merely apparent, and exists only as a result of the uncertainty of human perception and knowledge. The events are not truly incongruous, but result from a point of cyclical reversal having been reached in the seasonal pattern. The overlapping of the seasons is but a visible effect of the congruence of end and beginning, which is the thematic motive of "East Coker." The underlying rhythmic harmony of the universe is undisturbed and is imaged in the larger cosmic terms of the resolution which sees the world returned to "that destructive fire/ Which burns before the ice-cap reigns." Rhythm again is the generative and substantive force of the poetic expression.

One might readily anticipate that in a poem as deeply religious, and as vitally rooted in rhythmic genesis, as Four Quartets there would be passages of an incantatory nature. There are, in fact, passages ranging from a few brief lines to an entire section whose rhythms and moods combine to evoke the most ancient poetic expression known to man, in which the verbal and musical elements coexisted inseparably. Possibly the most direct example is that of the prayer to the Virgin comprising the fourth movement of "The Dry Salvages."

The verse here is typically in an accentual metre with a free syllabic pattern, but the syntactic flow is without strong stress and produces an effect of incantation, or liturgical chant. The three stanzas evidence a strong affinity both in style and structure with the Catholic or Anglican litany. Each stanza is composed almost entirely of run-on lines, comprising just one complete grammatical unit per stanza; and the final two-stress line of each stanza (two final lines in the second), following the group of four-stress lines (four- and five-stress in the third stanza), strongly evokes the cadence-like phrases of antiphonal response which run through much of the litany. One can readily hear, for instance, the priest intoning, "Repeat a prayer also on behalf of/ Women who have seen their sons or husbands/ Setting forth, and not returning:/," to be answered by the choir and congregation: "Figlia del tuo figlio, / Queen of Heaven." An appropriate melodic progression of the cadence is needed for the full effect, as:

Example 5

Re-peat a prayer al-so on be-half of Wom-en who have seen their

sons or hus-bands Set-ting forth and not re - turn-ing

Response

Fi-glia del tu-o fi-glio Queen of Heav-en

It is not necessary, of course, or probably even desirable, to read these lines in such a literal liturgical style; nevertheless, this idiom seems to be implicit in the mood and style of the poetry, and the explicit verbal expression would seem to have taken form from a preceding and underlying rhythm of incantation.

Of all of the magnificent imagery of Four Quartets which takes its being from a movement of syllable and rhythm existent far below conscious levels of thought, none reaches farther back to the origins of man's physical and psychic existence than the primordial imagery of the sea which underlies "The Dry Salvages," most particularly in its first two movements. Man has always been inextricably bound to the sea. Aeons ago he was born in it and of it, and it has never ceased to exert on him an irresistible attraction which has manifested itself not only in his material and physical life but in all of his varied forms of aesthetic and religious expression. The sea, as Eliot says, has--and always has had--many gods and many voices. In man's most primitive time it was literally a god; as he lost some of his aboriginal innocence it became transmuted with symbolic significance. But it has ever been to man the source and genesis of life, fertile womb of the great Earth Mother, symbol of birth and generation. All of man's great mythologies have embraced the sea at some vital point; the sagas of all nations have found it indispensable in delineating the life-experience of their heroes; and in man's great epic poems the

sea, or a variant of it, has been a powerful force, often acting as a mighty supernatural protagonist, frequently with seeming personified powers, binding man with man and defining man in his temporal environment while also serving as foil for his most exalted aspirations. In these productions the sea has often seemed man's enemy and has frequently brought him death; but it seems highly significant that in such experience there is always implicit the idea of healing and rebirth. In folk mythology and primitive religion death by water is linked to resurrection and rebirth, as evidenced, for instance, in the vegetation cult rituals, and the continuation of the natural cycle is closely linked to the restorative powers of the sea. Thus the sea is eternal and is the source of eternal life.

All of this is implicit in Eliot's sharp and cutting evocation of the sea, of its endless expanse, its myriad life forms, its varied moods of deceptive quiet and capricious destructiveness, its sights and sounds and smells, the surging power of its eternal, imponderable being. And in combining the "hints of earlier and other creation:/ The starfish, the hermit crab, the whale's backbone" and other primitive sea creatures such as algae and sea anemone, with such images of painful and poignant reality as "the torn seine,/ The shattered lobsterpot, the broken oar/ And the gear of foreign dead men . . . The sea howl/ And the sea yelp," the heaving groaner, the seagull, the silent fog, the tolling bell, Eliot has surely fused the old and the new, the primitive and the current, in a powerful metaphor of

eternal time.

The underlying, essential rhythm which gives rise to the whole image and idea is that of the eternal ground swell. The ground swell is, of course, as ancient as the earth itself, one of the primordial rhythms of man's environment, generated by the natural forces of the solar system which are themselves rhythmic in nature. It may be noted that the first section of the first movement, which presents the river as a metaphor of temporal time, time as succession, is in a straightforward, conversational, almost prose rhythm; while there is a definite regularity of stress, it is not heavily accented. The rhythmic effect is thus one of straight line movement without undulation, and is most appropriate to the metaphor. The river becomes a liquid and flowing umbilicus joining man, in his cities, to the great matrix of his first birth, the sea.

With the introduction of the sea image in the second section of the movement, there is an immediate change, beginning with the transitional line "The river is within us, the sea is all about us," to a verse rhythm which is highly onomatopoeic in conveying the steady, languorous heaving of the ground swell. This is effected by the tempo and the accentual rhythm in conjunction with the syllabic construction. The tempo here is deliberate and unhurried, as accords with the ground swell movement. The accent is basically four-stress, but now entirely different from the sharp, undifferentiated, fast-moving stress pattern of, say, "The wounded surgeon plies the steel,"

or "Garlic and sapphires in the mud/ Clot the bedded axle-tree."

Generally, each line falls into two rhythmically-equivalent halves, separated by a natural caesura, which may or may not be reinforced by punctuation. Each half-line contains two stresses, the second of which tends to be more lightly stressed than the first. Perhaps the effect is more properly described by saying that the first stress is one of arsis, and is marked by a rising accent, while the second carries a falling accent, or thesis. The accentual rise and fall is reinforced by the predominance of feminine endings in both halves of the line. Thus the rise and fall of the rhythm evokes the rise and fall of the ground swell, and its repetition within the line, and from verse to verse, augments the feeling of the regular, incessant, and eternal movement of the ground swell, "that is and was from the beginning."

The brief, three-syllable cadence with which the first movement of "The Dry Salvages" closes--

Clangs
The bell.

is a masterpiece of rhythmic and syllabic onomatopoeia. It may not be obvious to the reader who has never been near the sea, but one who has ever heard the rhythmic clanging of a bell-buoy rolling with the heave and ebb of the ground swell will immediately recognize its verbal equivalent in the long, deliberate, almost hesitant vowel of "clangs," followed by the short, sharp vowel of the article--in a dotted rhythm

relationship to the first vowel--and the immediately succeeding final vowel, which dies away on the terminal liquid consonant. While the rhythm is almost impossible to annotate musically, as are, for instance, subtle nuances of jazz syncopation, it would probably look approximately as follows:



The extent of Eliot's mastery of the use of syllabic quantity is well illustrated by this brief three-word phrase, which achieves a precise rhythmic effect almost entirely through its syllabic structure.

The first section of the second movement, taking its theme from the preceding movement, continues the rhythm of the ground swell; but now, elaborating on its underlying motive that "there is no end, but addition," and portraying the eternal procession of mankind in endless generations through its never-ending cycle of birth and death, regularizes the rhythmic pattern even further in the formal stanzaic structure of the sestina. The ceaseless undulation of the ground swell is thus emphasized by the rise and fall, the rhythmic balance, of the even number of lines within each sestet, the even balance of the six stanzas and balance of pairs within the total structure, and the recurring rhyme scheme from stanza to stanza, the final one repeating the rhyme words of the first verbatim and so establishing a further cyclical recurrence of the whole.

This continued reduplication and reinforcement of arsis and thesis, recurring in structural level upon structural level throughout the sestina-- within the foot, the half-line, the verse, verse pairs, stanza pairs, and so on--serves to build the undulation of the ground swell, the ebb and the flow, to the point where it becomes one, as it is in its rhythmic essence, with the rhythmic flux of life with which the Four Quartets are essentially concerned.

The rhythmic genesis of form, idea, and poetic substance which we have been considering in specific application may, on a very broad basis, be detected in the whole vital idea and concept of Four Quartets. For Eliot's theme of the union of the flux of time with the stillness of eternity encompasses the concept of the essentially rhythmic nature of universal existence. Flux itself--a regular, continuing, cyclical reversal, at each end of which (i.e., at each point of reversal) is an imperceptible moment of complete stillness--involves rhythmic regularity, and is in fact a manifestation of rhythmic action. Further even, the very essence of rhythm is contained in the theme of Four Quartets. Rhythm is basically a regular alternation of growth and decay, of expansion and collapse. It embodies both the lasting of change and a change of the lasting, thus both permanence and impermanence are implicit in it. The opposites which are the grounds of existence of rhythm are the very elements whose conflicts Eliot is concerned to resolve: endurance or lasting vs. passage and disintegration;

persistence as opposed to succession; the reality of the present moment in conflict with the unreality of timelessness (or more properly, perhaps, the unreality of the present moment and the timeless reality). These are, of course, all terms expressing the same idea. And it is essentially in terms of rhythm that Eliot finally attains his resolution. For just as rhythm by its very nature unifies opposites, flux or change being a permanent condition, and permanence therefore being achieved through an eternal lasting of change, Eliot reconciles the temporal and the eternal by finding them to be reciprocal elements, each implicit in, and dependent for its existence on, the other, each incapable of independent identity. Thus he finds all time to be eternally present, time past, present, and future all implicit in each other and simultaneously existent, timelessness attained as an eternal succession of timeless moments. In the endless rhythmic cycle of the universe, the end and the beginning are always one and the same; and the still point exists only at the moment of beginning and end and is only possible as a function of the rhythmic cycle.

CHAPTER V

THE MUSICAL MODELS FOR FOUR QUARTETS

The Critical Background: Survey and Evaluation

The evidence of musical influence in Four Quartets is weighty and diverse; the title of the cycle, the extensive use of musically-analogous techniques, the general similarity to musical composition in form and structure, and Eliot's own statements about the analogies of music and poetry and the musical aspects of poetry. Consequently, many scholars and critics have, from the first publication of the four poems under their collective title, attributed to Four Quartets a structural correspondence not only to musical form generally but to that of the string quartet in particular. Few studies exist among the copious and ever-expanding critical work which do not at least acknowledge an underlying musical analogy and recognize Eliot's debt to music in the form and structure of these poems. Even further, the music of Beethoven has become widely accepted as Eliot's primary inspiration for Four Quartets; and even more precisely, it is frequently suggested that Beethoven's late string quartets, Opp. 127, 130-133, and 135 provided the specific musical

models for the poems. The single Quartet No. 15, Opus 132, in A minor is, in fact, sometimes isolated as the immediate prototype because of its five-movement structure--unique among the last quartets--and certain similarities of form and mood between its movements and those of Eliot's quartets.

Probably the majority of Eliot scholars tend to refrain from too specific an identification of actual musical models and prefer to speak in more general terms or merely suggest the possibility of more exact analogy; a number of these have strongly posed the probability of exact models but have disclaimed the musical knowledge requisite to a valid inquiry into the subject. Some critics have considered the structure of Four Quartets as more of an evolutionary phenomenon resulting from Eliot's search for the most effective and expressive form for the long poem.⁸⁸ And of course

⁸⁸ Raymond Preston, for instance, in 'Four Quartets' Rehearsed (London: Sheed & Ward, 1946), comments, "It has been pointed out that the technique of Eliot's poetry resembles the thematic statement and development of music . . . Another point to which the title draws our attention has been stated by Herbert Read in a comment on some of his own poems:

'They constitute a search for a form for the long poem which is not merely a continuation of the same thing more or less indefinitely (blank verse, rhymed couplets, etc.), or an addition of identical units (a sonnet sequence), but a poem on the analogy of the Quartet in music, with separate movements, forms within the form, diversity within unity . . .'¹

¹ Quoted from Herbert Read, an Introduction to his Work, edited by Henry Treece. (Faber & Faber, 1944)" (p. vii).

there are those critics who either ignore or reject the musical-analogy approach.⁸⁹ What might be considered an early representative critical view is given by D. Bosley Brotman, who, writing

John Gould Fletcher, on the other hand, is somewhat more general in his article "Poems in Counterpoint," in *Poetry*, LXIII (1943-1944), when he says, "The Four Quartets, in their use of leit motifs and variation, in their contrapuntal effect, are the work of a theologically-minded poet determined to explore difficult ground, the ground of the technical analogies between poetry and music. They are by intention and accomplishment musical poems" (p. 45).

⁸⁹ Note, for example, R.W. Flint's unequivocal view as stated in "Four Quartets Reconsidered," in the Sewanee Review, LVI (January, 1948):

The pattern of Eliot's Quartets is as rigid and formal as that of a musical quartet, but the internal texture of thought and feeling is quite different from anything we know in music. No one has ever assimilated Der Zauberberg, I suspect, the better for knowing Mann's avowed debt to Wagner and interest in reproducing his methods. Whatever Eliot's speculations in "The Music of Poetry" about musical-verbal analogies, we are really left, in this instance, with no better clue than a recurrent structural pattern of five "movements" of alternated lyric and discourse and not appreciably nearer enjoyment of the poems than if we had never heard of the string quartet, or the familiar cliché that Beethoven turned to them in his last years to express his ultimate "wisdom" (pp. 75-76).

There is a progressive richness, a steady broadening of reference and expansion of feeling in the last Quartets that finally belies any analogy with the musical form (p. 80).

Mr. Flint's article is of course an early one (although a "reconsideration") and lacks the benefit of the last twenty years of criticism. His determined refusal to see more than a superficial relationship between Eliot's Quartets and musical form, or to recognize any value in exploring the analogy, would seem to constitute as extreme a position as the opposed statement by Harvey Gross that "hearing Eliot read the Quartets is as genuine a musical experience as hearing the Budapest Quartet play Beethoven's Opus 132" (in "T.S. Eliot and the Music of Poetry," op. cit., p. 208).

in the University of Toronto Quarterly in 1948, stated that "it is not startling to find that in Four Quartets Eliot has achieved a structure analogous to that of the classical sonata form at its apogee as exemplified in the last quartets of Beethoven. To what extent the musical structure has been consciously contrived by the poet is not known by this writer; but that lack of information does not detract from an understanding or enjoyment of the poetry. For the unity is an organic one: the form is implied in the kind of thing the poet is saying and the way in which it must be said."⁹⁰ Eschewing the claim that music and poetry are the same thing, Brotman expresses the belief that "poetry can . . . approach the condition of music, and in Four Quartets the poet has, through particular kinds of rhythm and structure, suggested meaningfully both definite ideas and emotions and the forms which they must take. These forms, suggested by the nature of the ideas presented, are implicit in the poetic structure, and in the kind of musical composition already suggested."⁹¹

Eliot himself apparently said nothing in print regarding any direct connection between Beethoven's late quartets and the Four Quartets, and apparently made only one significant reference to the influence which Beethoven may have had on his work. F.O. Matthiessen,

⁹⁰ "T.S. Eliot: 'The Music of Ideas'," University of Toronto Quarterly, XVIII (October 1948), p. 20.

⁹¹ Ibid.

in The Achievement of T.S. Eliot, has cited some remarks by Eliot included in an unpublished lecture on "English Letter Writers" delivered in New Haven, Connecticut during the winter of 1933. A reflection in one of Lawrence's letters that "the essence of poetry with us in this age of stark and unlovely actualities is a stark directness, without a shadow of a lie, or a shadow of deflection anywhere. Everything can go, but this stark, bare, rocky directness of statement, this alone makes poetry, to-day," stimulated Eliot to these remarks:

"This speaks to me of that at which I have long aimed, in writing poetry; to write poetry which should be essentially poetry, with nothing poetic about it, poetry standing naked in its bare bones, or poetry so transparent that we should not see the poetry, but that which we are meant to see through the poetry, poetry so transparent that in reading it we are intent on what the poem points at, and not on the poetry, this seems to me the thing to try for. To get beyond poetry, as Beethoven, in his later works, strove to get beyond music. We never succeed, perhaps, but Lawrence's words mean this to me, that they express to me what I think that the forty or fifty original lines that I have written strive towards."⁹²

It may be noted that Eliot (as quoted by Matthiessen) does not refer specifically to the late quartets, but rather mentions the "later works" of Beethoven.⁹³ Now, while the last five string quartets do comprise

⁹² Quoted in Matthiessen, op. cit., p. 90. Eliot's familiarity with the early work of Beethoven, and indeed his awareness of Beethoven's early innovations, is attested to by his remarks in the "Note to 'Poetry and Drama'" quoted previously (pp. 35-36).

⁹³ The process by which inadvertent critical errors gain currency is illustrated by a statement of Raymond Preston's in 'Four Quartets' Rehearsed, p. 41. Preston says, "But to the reader who

a substantial portion of Beethoven's latest works, and certain of them represent the last music which he composed before his death, the composer's last period, as generally classified and recognized by musicians and scholars, includes other works; among these are the last piano sonatas, Opp. 106, 109, 110, and 111, the "Diabelli" variations for piano, the Missa Solemnis in D, and, above all, the great Ninth Symphony in D minor, known as the "Choral Symphony." These works are all as innovational and advanced in their musical genres as are the final quartets. We might note, for instance, a passage from Grove's Dictionary in connection with the style of the last of the three major periods into which Beethoven's works are placed:

The difference between the Ninth Symphony and its predecessors--not only in dimensions and in the use of the chorus, but in elevation and sentiment, and in the total impression produced--is unmistakable. The five Pianoforte Sonatas, op. 101 to 111, are perfectly distinct from any of the earlier ones, not only in individuality--for all Beethoven's works are distinct--but in a certain wistful yearning, a sort of sense of the invisible and vision of the infinite, mingled with their power. The last Quartets, op.

is attending, if Beethoven reached beyond music in his last Quartets, Eliot reaches beyond poetry in these poems¹." The footnote then states that "In an unpublished lecture quoted on pp. 89-90 of Matthiessen's book, The Achievement of T.S. Eliot, Mr. Eliot used this comparison in stating his aims as a poet. Perhaps it is no accident that the association is prompted by his title, Four Quartets." Other critics have spoken of Eliot's reference to the late quartets of Beethoven without citing a source, and it is probable that either they too are careless in their reading of Matthiessen or that they are relying on the authority of other critics similarly careless or misinformed.

127 to op. 135, have the same characteristics as the Sonatas; but they are also longer, full of changes of time, less observant than before of the traditional forms of expression, less careful to make obvious the links of connection, and still more full of intense personality and of a wild unimprisoned spirit. All the sentiment and earnestness of Schumann, all the grace and individuality of Schubert, are there, with an intensity, breadth, and completeness which those masters might perhaps have attained if they had bestowed the time and pains on their work which Beethoven did. In this period he passes from being the greatest musician to be a great teacher, and in a manner which no one ever did before, and probably no one will ever do again, conveys lessons which by their intense suggestiveness have almost the force of moral teaching.⁹⁴

Thus it would seem logical to assume that if Eliot knew the work of Beethoven's last period--and the evidence that he did is substantial--he would be at least as familiar with most of these other compositions as with the quartets, and that they as well as the quartets would qualify for his regard as works in which Beethoven strove to "get beyond music."⁹⁵

A consideration of Eliot's own remarks, then, taken in conjunction with the sparseness of such statement available to us, indicates that other evidence is required in order to adduce a specific musical analogy for the Four Quartets.

⁹⁴ Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, edited by J. A. Fuller Maitland (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1911; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), I, pp. 261-262.

⁹⁵ J. B. Trend, regular music writer for The Criterion, of which Eliot was editor from 1922 to 1939, writing on "The Adventure of Modern Music" in Vol. V, No. 1 (January 1927), referred to L. M. Dent's (the well-known British musicologist), in his Terpander, or Music of the Future, "speaking of the 'metaphysical labyrinth' of Beethoven's last works" (p. 91).

The first critical attempt to link Eliot's work with that of Beethoven was by Stephen Spender, who, in The Destructive Element in 1935 (at which time only "Burnt Norton" had been written), noted parallels between Eliot's work and Beethoven's last quartets, and specifically proposed that the second section of Ash Wednesday corresponded in structure with the second movement of Beethoven's quartet Opus 130 in A minor (sic).⁹⁶

Some years later Stanley Edgar Hyman, in The Armed Vision (1948),⁹⁷ briefly considering the possibility of musical influence in Eliot, referred to Spender's previous proposals, but suggested that Spender had presumably meant to specify the third movement of Beethoven's quartet in A minor, Opus 132 (Opus 130 is actually in B flat major). Hyman further suggested that although, when Four Quartets appeared, critics noted all the superficial parallels between them and Beethoven's last quartets--parallels primarily concerned with aspects of the lives of the composer and poet--no

⁹⁶ Stephen Spender, The Destructive Element: A Study of Modern Writers and Beliefs (London: Jonathan Cape, 1935), pp. 149-151. Grover Smith, referring to Spender's theory, comments, "Although it seems unlikely that Beethoven influenced Ash Wednesday, Spender's supposition may have influenced 'Burnt Norton'!" (Grover Smith, op. cit., p. 253).

⁹⁷ Stanley Edgar Hyman, The Armed Vision (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948).

one seemed to have noticed the possibility of a formal parallel to the musical structure of the Beethoven works. Hyman then proposed an analogy of Four Quartets specifically to the quartet Spender had mentioned (presumably Opus 132), primarily by reason of its five-movement structure, unusual among quartets. He also noted the short transitional fourth movement of Opus 132, pointing out the parallel with The Waste Land and all four Quartets. Disclaiming the requisite musical knowledge, Hyman proposed that "a detailed comparison of themes, voices, transitions, and counterpoint in the Eliot poems and the Beethoven quartets by some musically informed reader of poetry might prove very rewarding."⁹⁸

Although The Waste Land was one of Eliot's earlier poems, dating from 1921, and unquestionably his best known work, no one apparently had considered its five-section structure in relation to musical form until Helen Gardner, writing in New Writing and Daylight in 1942, before "Little Gidding" had been published and therefore prior to the publication of the four poems under the title Four Quartets, pointed out the similarities of its structure to those of "Burnt Norton," "East Coker," and "The Dry Salvages," interpreting the form of the poems in terms of musical analogy. Miss Gardner wrote:

The structure of the poems is seen very clearly when they are read together, and can be recognized as being essentially the

⁹⁸ Ibid., footnote to p. 90. The 1955 revised and abridged edition of this book omits this discussion.

same as the structure of The Waste Land . . . Mr. Eliot has invented for himself a kind of poetic equivalent of "sonata form," containing what are best described as five "movements," each with an inner necessary structure, and capable of the symphonic richness of The Waste Land, or the chamber-music beauties of Burnt Norton.⁹⁹

After discussing the structure of the movements of "Burnt Norton," "East Coker," and "The Dry Salvages" in general terms, Miss Gardner continued in connection with The Waste Land:

The Waste Land, if one allows for its much wider scope, dramatic method, and hosts of characters, follows the same pattern. The Burial of the Dead contains far more than two statements, but formally it is a series of contrasts of feeling toward persons and experiences. The Game of Chess opens with the elaborate description, in ornate style, of the lady at her dressing-table, which contrasts violently, though not in its theme, with the talk of the women in the public-house. The Fire Sermon, the poem's heart, with its suffocating intensity, has moments when the oppression lifts, and a feeling of release and purification floods in . . . The fourth section is as always a brief lyric, and the fifth, while being naturally far more complex than the final movements of the later poems, fulfils the same function of resolution.¹⁰⁰

Writing subsequently in 1947, after the publication of "Little Gidding" and Eliot's titling of the four poems as Four Quartets, Miss Gardner included her analysis practically without change in discussing Four Quartets in an article included in Balachandra Rajan's T.S. Eliot: A Study of his Writings by Several Hands.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ "The Recent Poetry of T. S. Eliot," in New Writing and Daylight, Summer 1942 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1942), p. 85.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁰¹ "Four Quartets: A Commentary," in T.S. Eliot: A Study of His Writings by Several Hands, edited by Balachandra Rajan (London: Dennis Dobson Ltd., 1947), pp. 58-60.

She later included the same ideas, largely in the same language, in her own book The Art of T.S. Eliot, published two years later, but, in discussing the analogy with musical form in the first movements, adds a cautionary note: "The analogy must not be taken too literally. Mr. Eliot is not imitating 'sonata form,' and in each poem the treatment of development of the two subjects is slightly different."¹⁰²

In 1943 F.O. Matthiessen commented on the parallel structures of the Quartets and The Waste Land.¹⁰³ However, he did not pursue the musical analogy to any length, but rather emphasized the contrasts in form and structure, correlating the differences with the poet's highly altered intent and style in the later works. In this connection, Matthiessen wrote:

. . . with "Little Gidding" (1943), . . . we are now able to see the full significance of the experiments with structure which he inaugurated in "Burnt Norton" eight years previously. He speaks of the four poems which form this cycle as "quartets," and has evolved for them all the same kind of sequence of five parts with which he composed "Burnt Norton." The Waste Land was also composed in this fashion, but the contrast is instructive. In his

¹⁰² Op. cit. (in Footnote 25), p. 40. Miss Gardner is of course referring specifically to the single-movement sonata allegro form, not sonata structure. In connection with her statement, one might well speculate that her modified approach on this point may have been in response to a private word from Eliot, who said in a letter that her book was the best on his work.

¹⁰³ In "Eliot's Quartets," Kenyon Review, V (Spring 1943), pp. 161-178. This article was later included as Chapter VIII in the 1947 (second) edition of Matthiessen's The Achievement of T.S. Eliot, and similarly appears in the 1959 edition cited in Footnote 66.

earlier desire for intense concentration the poet so eliminated connectives that The Waste Land might be called an anthology of the high points of a drama. It was as though its author had determined to make his poem of nothing but Arnold's "touchstones," or had subscribed to Poe's dictum that no longer poem could exist than one to be read at a sitting . . .

None of the four quartets is much more than half as long as The Waste Land, but he has included in them all transitional passages that he would previously have dismissed as "prosaic." His fundamentally altered intention is at the root of the matter. The dramatic monologues of Prufrock or Gerontion or of the various personae of The Waste Land have yielded to gravely modulated meditations of the poet's own. The vivid situations of his Inferno have been followed by the philosophic debates of his Purgatorio.¹⁰⁴

By far the most comprehensive and ambitious attempt to identify Beethoven's A minor quartet, Opus 132, as the specific model for Eliot's Four Quartets was undertaken by Herbert Howarth in a study entitled "Eliot, Beethoven and J.W.N. Sullivan" appearing in 1957.¹⁰⁵ In support of his thesis that Eliot chose this one quartet, electing to exploit its resources in preference to the others for all four of his poems, Howarth marshalls an array of both internal and external evidence. His arguments and conclusions would seem, on first impact, to be strongly convincing; however, a careful consideration reveals them to be in the main highly conjectural and largely based on unsubstantiated supposition. The primary evidence advanced by Howarth for Eliot's knowledge of the music of Beethoven

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. (pp. 161-162 in the Kenyon Review article; pp. 177-178 in The Achievement of T. S. Eliot).

¹⁰⁵ In Comparative Literature, IX (Fall 1957), pp. 322-332.

and of the late quartets in particular, is the assumption that Eliot was familiar with a study of Beethoven which appeared in London in 1927: Beethoven--His Spiritual Development, by J.W.N. Sullivan. In support of his claim Howarth cites the fact that both Sullivan and Eliot were, along with Conrad Aiken, Aldous Huxley and others, contributors to The Athenaeum between 1919 and 1921; refers to Aiken's mention in Ushant of a luncheon in the early 1920's which he attended along with Huxley, Sullivan, and Eliot; and infers that Eliot, as a conscientious editor who read all contributions to his periodical, would no doubt have been impressed by an article by J.B. Trend on appropriate and inappropriate literary approaches to music, appearing in The Criterion (of which Eliot was editor) for March 1928, in which he singled out Sullivan's Beethoven as one of the few recent instances of a really useful study. ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ The highly suppositional nature of much of Howarth's thinking may be illustrated by the following excerpt:

I believe that either Eliot had looked through Sullivan's book already, out of an interest in both the man and his subject, and was confirmed in a positive response to it by Trend's remarks; or that Trend's remarks sent him to the book. It is striking that, when Spender writes about Eliot and Beethoven in The Destructive Element, he quotes from Sullivan to characterize the late music. I am inclined to speculate that Eliot himself had mentioned Sullivan to Spender. Perhaps at a Criterion lunch or a Bloomsbury-set encounter Eliot told Spender that he was desirous of creating poetry of the late-Beethoven transparency and referred him to Sullivan's work of interpretation. Whereupon Spender, wrongly thinking that Eliot had already attempted an equivalent to Beethoven, sat down and read Sullivan and forcibly correlated what he found with Ash Wednesday (p. 328).

Somewhat more convincing is a list of phrases culled by Howarth from Sullivan's book which find a striking counterpart in the Quartets. Briefly, the following are specifically cited by Howarth:

1. Sullivan quotes from Beethoven's journal: "Submission, absolute submission to your fate . . . O hard struggle! Turn everything which remains to be done to planning the long journey." Howarth correlates this spiritual journey of Beethoven with certain actual and metaphorical journeys of Eliot, and links the "submission" which made Beethoven's journey possible with the lines from "East Coker":

. what there is to conquer
By strength and submission, has already been discovered
Once or twice, or several times, by men whom one cannot
hope
To emulate . . .

2. Three times Sullivan refers to "Beethoven the explorer," which Howarth relates to the line "Old men ought to be explorers" from "East Coker."

3. Howarth connects Sullivan's "quick, poignant discussion of Beethoven's intense but mishandled affection for his nephew" with Eliot's line from "East Coker":

. Do not let me hear
Of the wisdom of old men, but rather of their folly,

4. Sullivan quotes a letter from Beethoven's physician, who relates that upon promising the composer alleviation of his suffering with the coming of spring, Beethoven replied, "My day's work is finished. If there were a physician could help me his name should be called Wonderful." Howarth draws an analogy between this reference to the Saviour of Handel's Messiah and the "East Coker" lyric imaging Christ as the wounded physician.

5. Sullivan tells of Beethoven's statement upon finishing the B flat quartet, Opus 135, at Gneixendorf: "The name sounds like the breaking of an axle-tree." Howarth cites this as Eliot's source for the "Burnt Norton" lines

Garlic and sapphires in the mud
Clot the bedded axle-tree.

and also suggests the breaking axle-tree as a simile for Beethoven's mind, accordingly carrying the suggestion of the danger to the mind of the artist exploring a frontier. Connecting this with the borrowing from Mallarmé, Howarth believes Eliot to be making a montage, superimposing himself on Beethoven's history.

6. Citing Sullivan's statement that "The first movement ends as only Beethoven would end with what sounds like a startling and celestial trumpet call," Howarth suggests the first section ending of "The Dry Salvages"

Clangs
The bell.

as a dramatic musical analogy.

7. Sullivan tells how Beethoven copies "mystical sentences from Eastern literature." Howarth suggests that the references may have stimulated Eliot's own sympathy for Eastern mystical literature, possibly prompting the passage on Krishna and Arjuna in "The Dry Salvages."

8. Howarth states that "Eliot's theme of illness and suffering and sterile hiatus in creation is of course implicit in the whole Beethoven biography." He notes one particularly relevant passage in connection with the Grosse Fuge, in which, Sullivan states, "the apparently opposing elements of life are seen as necessary and no longer in opposition." Sullivan continues, "Beethoven had come to realize that his creative energy, which he at one time opposed to his destiny, in reality owed its very life to that destiny. It is not merely that he believed that the price was worth paying; he came to see it as necessary that a price should be paid. To be willing to suffer in order to create is one thing; to realize that one's creation necessitates one's suffering, that suffering is one of the greatest of God's gifts, is almost to reach a mystical solution to the problem of evil . . ." Howarth proposes this as Eliot's starting point for his own exploration of illness and suffering, and his own mystical reconciliation of opposites, and quotes Eliot's sequence from the closing lines of the last section of "Little Gidding":

A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)

9. A final connection which Howarth considers of considerable thematic importance originates in Sullivan's description of Beethoven's lack of the "language mentality"--not merely a lack of facility in the use of language, but a mental orientation in which his states of consciousness, or "thoughts," were of a kind not easily expressed in language. Howarth suggests that this passage prompted Eliot's inquiry, through each of the quartets, into the difference between words and music, the tenuousness of language for the expression of difficult thoughts, and the poet's struggle in learning to use words effectively and expressively.

In advancing the A minor quartet, Opus 132, as Eliot's specific and immediate model, Howarth's primary evidence lies in a posited parallel of overall form and structure; in this connection he outlines in very general terms the form of the five movements of the Beethoven work and then discusses the similarities which he finds in the four Eliot poems.¹⁰⁷ It does not appear that a protracted consideration or detailed discussion of Howarth's presentation in this area would be particularly fruitful. His analysis of musical elements is non-specific

¹⁰⁷ Describing the musical model, Howarth states, "Beethoven's first movement is an allegro; his second a scherzo with a markedly contrasting trio; the third a slow movement of 'unearthly beauty,' with a contrasting section at a rather quicker, more animated pace; the fourth a very short alla marcia; the fifth an allegro appassionato in rondo design leading to 'an extended coda, breathless, brilliant, fully-scored, yet airy.' (These quotations are from the H.M.V. program notes available in England in the 1930s.)" (p. 322).

and very much in lay terms, and in fact frequently betrays the highly romantic, non-objective style of musical description which J.W.N. Sullivan himself epitomized. Some of Howarth's analysis is questionable, and would seem to indicate that his knowledge of the Beethoven work is obtained second-hand from literary sources rather than from a real familiarity with the music itself. An example of this may suffice to illustrate the point: Howarth says, "His second section of 'Burnt Norton' candidly attempts the three-four impetus of a late Beethoven scherzo, and his 'trilling wire' image is a grasp at the excited pitch of the music. For the contrasting trio he changes to long lines in his special introspective idiom. By an act of poetic intuition he saw that he could thus adapt Beethoven's contrast to his needs . . ." Now, the fact is, that while the second movement of this Beethoven quartet, Opus 132, is technically in classical scherzo-and-trio form, it is a highly restrained, even sombre, movement completely atypical of the Beethoven scherzo.¹⁰⁸ The contrast in mood and tempo of its sections is actually just the reverse of that of the Eliot movement with which Howarth has paralleled it, and its trio section, rather than being introspective, has a folk quality

¹⁰⁸ Roger Fiske, in Beethoven's Last Quartets (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), says of this movement, "Its mood can hardly be explained in words; much of it seems curiously impersonal, with an aloof melancholy tinge. Nothing could be less like a scherzo in spirit" (p. 62).

somewhat in peasant dance idiom. And in the Eliot movement, of course, there is no return to or restatement of the first section of the movement, as in the true scherzo-and-trio, which occurs in the Beethoven movement. There is, rather, as previously discussed, a brief return to the imagery of the first movement, which does not occur in the Beethoven (except insofar as the return of the scherzo brings another variant of the work's fundamental motive). Structurally, the Beethoven scherzo-and-trio is a ternary form, with an A B A structure, while the second movements of the Eliot Quartets, as we previously analyzed them, thematically take the form of a theme and variations which are embedded within a two-part, or A B, structure whose two sections are prosodically and metrically contrasting, with the B section presenting variations on the theme delineated in A. Even further, Beethoven's movement elaborates the basic A B A form--uniquely in the late quartets--by having a da capo (i.e., "from the beginning") at the end of the middle section, so that it becomes an A B A B A structure.

Thus, it would seem to be evident that if Eliot did have a specific model in mind, with which he was attempting a literal poetic analogy in the form and structure of this movement, it could not very well have been the second movement of Beethoven's Opus 132. As a matter of fact, Stephen Spender's original suggestion as to the correspondence between the second movements of Ash Wednesday and Beethoven's A minor quartet (assuming he actually meant to specify Opus

132, which seems probable) is much more tenable than Howarth's analogy. Structurally, the Ash Wednesday movement is in ternary form with an A B A construction. The short, terse, two-stressed lines of the middle section contrast sharply with the long, prosaic, mixed-stress (mainly five-stress, with four- and some three-stress intermixed) lines of the opening section; the return in section three brings back the metrical construction of the opening. The contrast of mood between the sections parallels that of rhythm and tempo, the end sections being introspective while the middle part is essentially lyric. This is appropriate to the thematic contrast within the movement, which presents in symbolic terms the basic conflict of the poem between the values of flesh and spirit, objectifying the former through highly imaginative imagery, while expressing the striving for spiritual grace in the lyrical apostrophe to the Lady. So the form generally bears a close correspondence to the Beethoven scherzo-and-trio of Opus 132; and the contrasts of mood, rhythm, and tempo are just the reverse of those of the second movements of the Four Quartets.

Unquestionably Howarth has developed some very interesting evidence of Beethoven's influence on Eliot, both in general inspiration and as reflected substantively in Four Quartets; and he has shown the possibility of some valid relationships between Beethoven's quartets and the Eliot cycle. However, the errors and weaknesses of his own analysis do illustrate that a specific and consistent analogy

cannot be drawn between the A minor quartet and all four of Eliot's quartets, and that any case for the Beethoven quartet as Eliot's sole and immediate model is at best a tenuous one. And, if Beethoven's work is approached in a detailed and professional manner, the analogy becomes even more difficult to support.¹⁰⁹ There are, certainly, many general similarities, and it is possible to find some impressive parallels within the two works. Eliot's third movements, for example, are deeply meditative in mood and engage the mystical experience more fully than any other section of the Quartets. Similarly, the third movement of Beethoven's A minor quartet, the Heiliger Dankgesang--written by the composer after recovery from a serious gastric illness, and headed by him "Holy Song of Thanksgiving of a Convalescent to the Deity"--is a work of deep religious feeling, incorporating hymn and chorale-prelude; and the use of modal tonality helps produce an atmosphere of remoteness, a mystical other-worldly feeling of awe and mystery. Beethoven's apparent growing interest

¹⁰⁹ In complete fairness to Howarth, it should be pointed out that in writing on the form of the Quartets in his book Notes on Some Figures Behind T.S. Eliot (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.), published in 1964, he apparently had some second thoughts since the publication of his earlier article. Here he no longer proposes the A minor quartet, Opus 132, as the specific and unquestioned model, but rather suggests certain analogies in the Four Quartets. At the same time he points out lack of similarity in various instances and discusses Eliot's points of departure from the A minor quartet. Certain definite propositions in the earlier article are tentatively posed in question form in the book. It is to Howarth's credit that, having come to recognize some untenable aspects of his earlier views, he did not hesitate to revise his published opinions.

in Eastern mysticism late in his life is often cited in connection with this movement. Also, as previously discussed and as illustrated in Appendix B, the first movement of "Burnt Norton" may be analyzed to show a remarkable structural equivalence to sonata-allegro form, which is the form of the first movement of the A minor quartet (as it is of all the quartets, except Opus 131 and, of course, the Grosse Fuge, Opus 133). In other instances, however, there is little correspondence between the works. And even with respect to the analogies just cited, we find that the musical third movement, sometimes called the Canzona, is in an A B A B A form, to which Eliot's binary structure bears little resemblance; and Beethoven's first movement, while essentially sonata-allegro, has a structure of unusual proportions, with a short development and extended coda, as well as some variations on the main theme introduced into the recapitulation.

In connection with the proposed similarity between the fourth movements of the musical and the poetic quartets, it is necessary to point out that the relative brevity of the movement is the main element of correspondence; each of Eliot's movements is in essence a brief prayer, whereas Beethoven has interposed a short march between the third and fifth movements. It is true, however, that the rather quick tempo combined with the regular and emphatically accented rhythm of the verse in the poetic movements (to a somewhat lesser degree in "The Dry Salvages") does impart a rhythmic movement which has an affinity to that of the march.

If the five-movement structure of the A minor quartet be advanced, by reason of its rarity among quartets, as particularly cogent evidence for its prototypal use by Eliot, it may be pointed out that of Beethoven's five late quartets, only two--Opp. 127 and 135--are comprised of the usual four movements. Opus 130 consists of six movements and Opus 131 has seven movements. Moreover, the Grosse Fuge, Opus 133, originally written as the sixth and final movement of the B flat major quartet, Opus 130--subsequently replaced by a new finale written by Beethoven at the suggestion of the publisher Artaria because of the musical and technical difficulty of the Fugue for players and listeners--is subdivided into five sections similar to separate movements. Following the five-movement rationale, it might be asked whether Ash Wednesday--unique among Eliot's poetry by its six-movement structure--should not logically be considered to have been modeled after Beethoven's Opus 130. Certainly, as we have seen, there are many analogies with music to be found in its construction and in various poetic devices which Eliot has used in the poem. The separate sections bear a similarity in their contrasting but integrated relationship to the movements of a musical composition in sonata form. Each movement has its own individual, logical, and coherent structure generally equatable with some specific musical form. But the truth is that even though the second movement is structurally similar to the scherzo-and-trio second movement of Opus 130, and while certain other resemblances may be found, there is no close

correspondence in basic structure and overall design to be found between the two works--no more, in fact, than may be genuinely discovered to link Opus 132 with Four Quartets as their exclusive model.

The pertinence of the five-part structure to this consideration is somewhat diminished when it is realized that Eliot seemed to have a natural proclivity for the construction and that much of his poetry even from his earlier periods is built in five sections, whether intrinsically or in gross outline. "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" falls naturally into five parts, determined by its episodic clock-time sequence. Though not quite so distinctly road-mapped, "Gerontion" essentially has a five-part form, with a short transitional stanza between the first and second parts and a brief coda, or cadence, at the end. The Waste Land is of course the most notable earlier example of construction in five distinct sections, specifically marked and titled by the author. The Hollow Men similarly is comprised of five separately-marked sections. Five-Finger Exercises consists of five short poems which, while essentially separate and independent, are related in style and in their function as exercises in allusiveness and musical imitation. And the short vignettes which make up Landscapes, unified in style and mood and bearing certain underlying thematic analogies, are similarly five in number, individually titled by the poet. It is apparent, then, that Eliot was utilizing the five-sectioned form over a long period prior to the time of Four Quartets, and that it is structurally basic to a good deal of his poetry for which

neither Beethoven's quartets nor any other compositions have been suggested as specific musical analogues.

An investigation of the motivations which impelled Eliot to the frequent use of this general structure would make a fascinating study. One might speculate as to the influence of the numerical quantity (five) itself and its various geometric, graphic, symbolic, and imagistic permutations as they appear in numerology, necromancy, cabbalistic writings, mythology, religion, magic, and folklore, with which Eliot was certainly familiar (as note his reference to the Tarot pack in The Waste Land). What is much more likely is that Eliot's whole intuitive and conscious concept of poetic form was in terms of a time-space structure of organized, limited, and formally-coherent component units, each devoted to the statement and expansion of given thematic elements in a peculiarly appropriate form, while bearing certain unifying relationships in subject, style, and thematic development. (Eliot could no more have written a Childe Harold than Byron could have produced Ash Wednesday or Four Quartets.) Eliot's essential aesthetic orientation, then, was inherently parallel to that of the sonata structure in music which had developed over three centuries as the most fertile and viable form for the expression of pure musical idea. As in music, the work might fall into three, four, five, six, or even more movements, depending on subject and context; but for Eliot five sections, or movements, usually proved most apt to best accommodate the movement and flow, the development

and working out, of the basic subject, while providing for the necessary contrast, tension, balance, and unity. In other words, the structural analogies exist because they were implicit in Eliot's approach and his method, and not as a consequence of his purposeful imitation of a given specific model.

One of the most recent studies which draws direct parallels between Eliot's Quartets and the Beethoven late quartets is Harvey Gross' paper on music and the analogues of feeling.¹¹⁰ Deriving his basic premises largely from the work of Suzanne Langer, and supplemented by his reading of J.W.N. Sullivan, Gross proposes that poetry provides verbal analogues to feeling just as music, in its own medium, presents such analogues. Music, not itself emotion, has meaning lying outside a context of purely abstract musical relationships; referring to the human world of gesture, action, and feeling, it communicates its content of emotion to the listener through the symbolic forms of its structures. Similarly, Eliot uses his poetic resources in ways that music operates: just as "the significance of music is 'with the ways of living and dying and feeling'; its meaning is 'a knowledge of how feelings go',"¹¹¹ Eliot's poetic language is structured to induce equivalent extra-cognitive states of feeling and

¹¹⁰ Harvey Gross, "Music and the Analogue of Feeling: Notes on Eliot and Beethoven," The Centennial Review of Arts & Science, III (1959), pp. 269-288.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 279.

emotion whose content has universal value.

The point I wish to establish is that Eliot, through syntax and prosody, evokes a complexity of feeling in ways that music evokes analogous states in the mind of sensitive listeners. Eliot is attempting to extend the limitations of language by entering the domain of another art. He uses syntax and prosody like music to enlarge the available means of expression. But he is not approaching the condition of music because he wishes to lose his ideas in his form, or to create mere patterns of pleasing sounds. He is striving to evoke states of consciousness which cannot be expressed by the purely cognitive aspects of language.¹¹²

Gross finds the analogues to Eliot's "world of feeling" of Four Quartets in the last quartets of Beethoven. To demonstrate the spiritual affinities which he finds between Eliot's works and those of Beethoven, from which Eliot seems to derive his title, much of his form, and elements of his tone and content, and to show that such affinities are more than mere literary recognitions in the mind of the listener, Gross selected the Quartet in C# minor, Opus 131 as revealing the deepest analogies. His analysis is not in terms of literal parallels, but rather in the correspondence of their essential elements of polarity and dramatic conflict, opposition and contradiction moving ultimately to conciliation and resolution, and in their general patterns of tension and release, of modal and rhythmic contrasts. In the final analysis, however, Gross feels that Eliot was not influenced by a specific quartet and that literal resemblances cannot be found. "Rather," he observes, "the musical qualities of

¹¹² Ibid., p. 278.

Beethoven's late quartets evoke responses relevant to Eliot's poetry: we respond to ambiguity, surprise, contradiction, unexpected delay; we experience a world of stress, of exultation, or recognition, and final affirmation. I choose the Quartet in C# Minor because of its great variety in mood and technical effect, and because its vast musical scheme offers a rich context of contrasting feeling."¹¹³

Gross feels that Beethoven's music "means" what Eliot's poetry means. "Eliot," he concludes, "starts with aspects of Beethoven's external form in the overall organization of his poems. More importantly, Eliot handles his syntax and prosody like musical sequences. Most importantly, Beethoven and Eliot work with a root experience: to see and understand an ordered universe as the inevitable expression of its conflicts and tensions, and to see disorder as the very patent of order."¹¹⁴

The Beethoven Late String Quartets Considered

In propounding any musico-poetic analogy, whether specific or of a general nature--and this certainly applies to analogy with and between the other art forms as well--the really objective critic always finds himself asking to what extent the close apparent analogies

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 282.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 288.

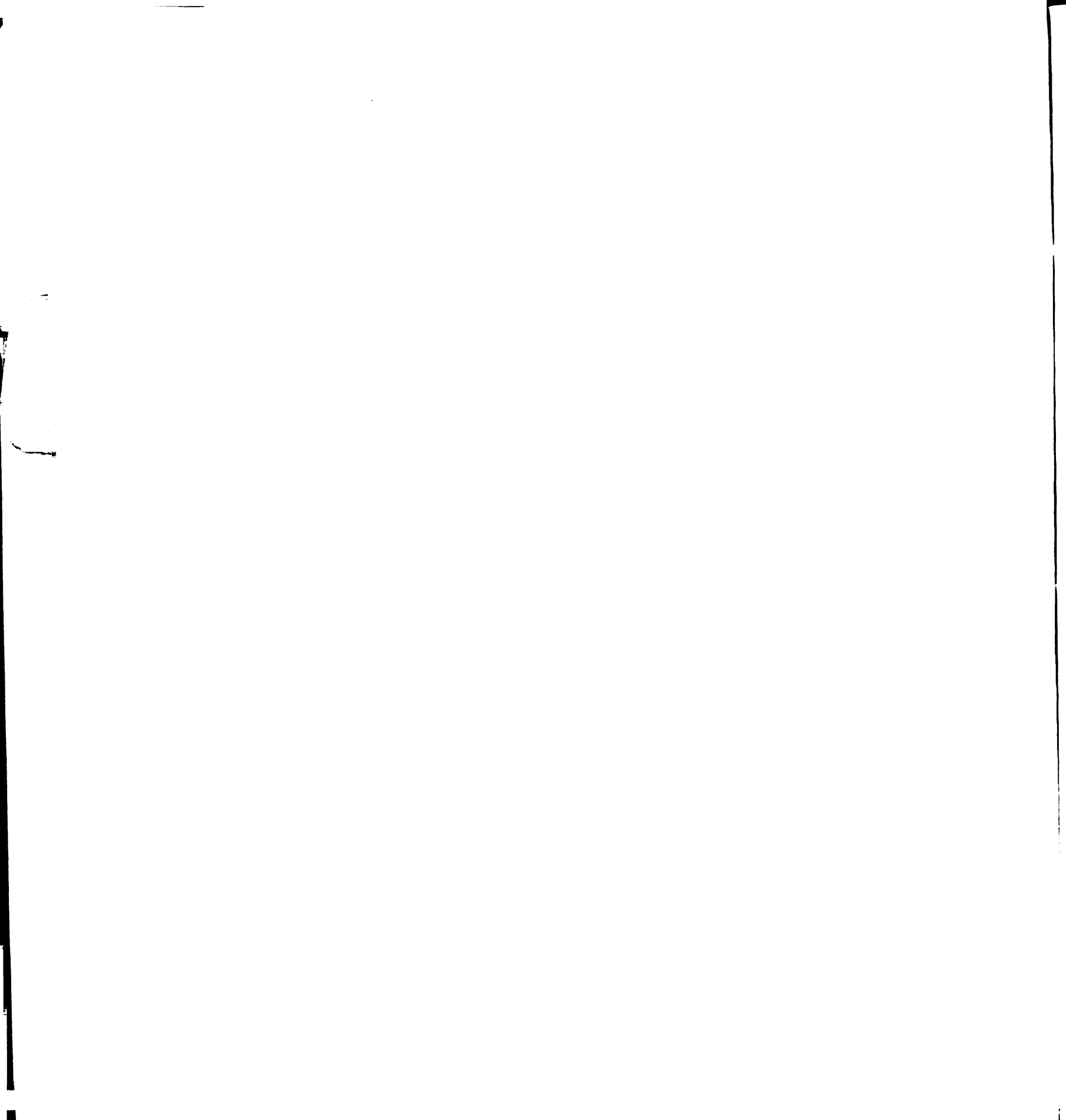
are valid, and how much they have been contrived, or at least influenced, by a desire--conscious or unconscious--to prove the point. While music is an extremely technical art form supported by an extensive and highly developed theoretical canon, musical analysis is by nature far from absolute, and, within certain general limitations, varying interpretations of structural elements are possible even among the most competent scholars. Add to this the flexible and diverse nature of poetic interpretation--both thematically and technically--and a predisposition to a given rationale for a specific analogy may tend rather readily to become a matter of sincere conviction and even serious partisan espousal.

Eliot himself, of course, in "The Music of Poetry," cautioned against the poet working too closely to musical analogies; this warning, coupled with his disclaimer of a technical knowledge of musical form, would--even aside from the lack of substantiating internal evidence--seem to obviate his having too literally imitated any one model in writing his Four Quartets. What seems much more likely is that Eliot--whose poetry, as we have seen, even from his earliest works had revealed the poet's inherent musical concepts--being familiar with the music of Beethoven, and inspired not only by the music itself but by the individual genius of the great master, was moved to attempt in Four Quartets the achievement of the ideal he had posed in his New Haven lecture; that is, to write poetry of such "transparency," of such immediacy of communication coupled with

depth of meaning, that it tended to get beyond poetry to the extent that Beethoven's late music tended to surmount the musical idiom. Now, patently, no artist can transcend his medium; to do so somehow would be to effect a transformation to an entirely different art form. But an artist may so utilize the elements of his art and so order his artistic materials that in the finished product the technical aspects are completely submerged in the meaning and communication of the work, and the technical limitations of the idiom cease to be apparent. This is rarely accomplished; but certainly Beethoven achieved it in his late music if any artist ever did.¹¹⁵ No doubt Eliot was particularly attracted to the quartets because of the nature of the genre. The string quartet is in essence transparent, simple, and stark. Limited to the technical capabilities of its four instruments--two violins, viola, and violoncello--it has none of the tremendous resources of the symphony orchestra in respect to tonal range, color

¹¹⁵ Eliot himself, in his essay "Poetry and Drama," previously cited (see Footnote 18), stated, "We can never emulate music, because to arrive at the condition of music would be the annihilation of poetry, and especially of dramatic poetry" (p. 93).

We may note, however, a pertinent statement by Arthur Symons in the Introduction to his book The Symbolist Movement in Literature, Revised Edition (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1919). Discussing the motive for the careful elaboration of form by Symbolist writers, he says, "There is such a thing as perfecting form that form may be annihilated" (p. 5). Symons' book of course exerted a strong influence on T. S. Eliot, as the poet has attested. Certainly the "annihilation" of form, in the sense of sublimation, or its being transcended through a complete and inseparable integration of form and substance, is an aspect of the late Beethoven quartets which Eliot strove to achieve in the poetic medium.



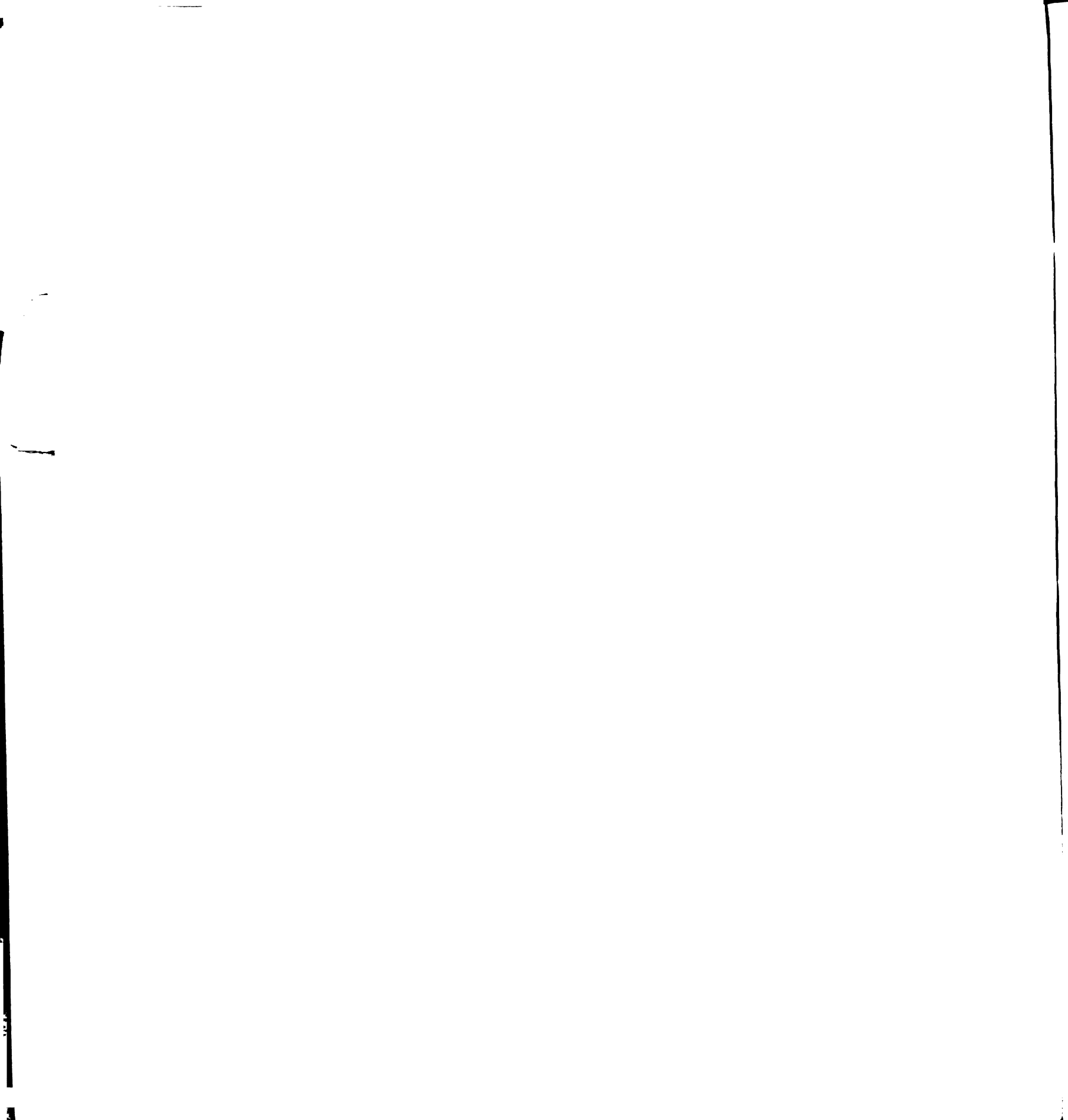
variation, sonority, and special effects. Thus, in writing for this instrumentation the composer is restricted to the basic musical elements of his craft; he is dependent on his creative ability in terms of thematic idea and development, of musical form and structure, with no technical crutches to lean on. The resultant product will therefore directly reflect the depth of his creative imagination and the breadth of his musical vision. Certainly this is what Eliot attempted in Four Quartets, and surely the medium of the string quartet is the closest musical equivalent to Eliot's "poetry standing naked in its bare bones . . . poetry so transparent that we should not see the poetry, but that which we are meant to see through the poetry, poetry so transparent that in reading it we are intent on what the poem points at, and not on the poetry."

If we approach the late Beethoven quartets from this standpoint, and consider them collectively rather than attempting to isolate a single model, we will find a considerable correspondence with T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets in aesthetic concept and artistic achievement; moreover, we may discover some close parallels in the compositional techniques and general structure of the two bodies of work. There is, in fact, a remarkable similarity in the basic generative aspects of the music and the poetry. We have discussed Eliot's use of germ-motives and thematic metamorphosis, and have seen the extent to which Four Quartets grows organically from the primary thematic materials. These musical devices are

to a large extent basic to the structure of Beethoven's quartets, and the evolution of themes and thematic treatment from germ-motives and primary themes may be followed within individual movements, throughout whole quartets, and even between various of the quartets.¹¹⁶ Musical scholars have pointed out that three of the quartets--Opp. 130, 131, and 132 (as well as the Grosse Fuge, Opus 133--originally the final movement of Opus 130)--are very closely related in their basic motivic elements. Philip Radcliffe notes, in fact, that Paul Bekker, who brought attention to the similarity of the opening motives of these quartets, "suggested that Beethoven had conceived the three works as a thematically connected triptych. In view of the fact that Beethoven was working at all three works at about the same time, the thematic resemblances are not surprising; some twenty years before he was haunted by a familiar and insistent rhythm which found its way into the fifth symphony, the 'Appassionata' Sonata and the fourth piano concerto."¹¹⁷ All four works use pairs of semitones as basic thematic source material. Opus 132 opens with a very short slow introduction:

¹¹⁶ Beethoven is, in fact, generally credited with having originated the germ-motive concept and technique; certainly he is the first composer to have incorporated and developed it as a fundamental element of his compositional method.

¹¹⁷ Philip Radcliffe, Beethoven's String Quartets (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1965), p. 110.



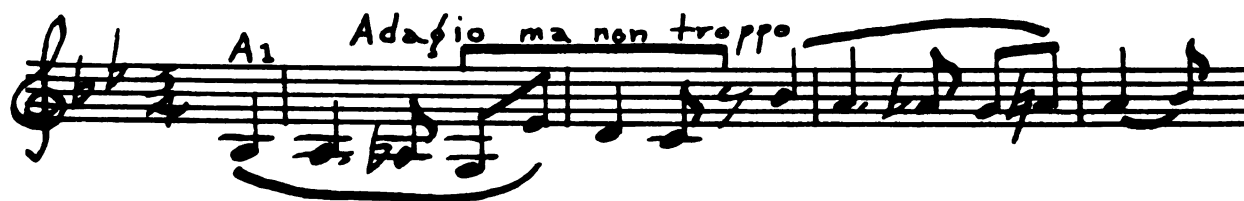
Example 8



According to Michael Steinberg, "The connection of the second and third notes, B#-C#, is at once clear, but at the same time everything about the dynamics and phrasing throws a spotlight on the fourth note, A, making it the destination of the whole idea from its initial G#. Thus a double relationship becomes audible: the semitone B#-C# in the middle is bracketed by the semitone G#-A."¹¹⁸

The first movement of Opus 130 opens with a straight chromatic descent (B^b-A, A^b-G)--actually three juxtaposed semitone sequences--the first theme then being repeated an octave higher and resolved:

Example 9



¹¹⁸ From the Notes to Concert-Disc Connoisseur Series
Album No. SP-502: Beethoven: The Late Quartets.

Thus all of these themes are developed from closely similar semitone sequences and their resulting relationship is a highly intimate one, just as in the Eliot cycle where the poetic counterpart of the method produces a close thematic linking of the four poems through the essential identity of their basic motives (although of course the Eliot quartets are intentionally much more thoroughly integrated than the musical quartets by reason of their ultimate thematic genesis from just one basic theme). Beethoven also makes extensive use of the technique of thematic metamorphosis, which we have seen to be so fundamental to Eliot's method, to provide much of the basic thematic material throughout various movements of each of the quartets; and the same primary and inherent elements of unity and contrast which are so in evidence throughout Eliot's poems may be seen to derive from Beethoven's use of thematic metamorphosis throughout his late quartets. A detailed analysis of the thematic development through even one of the quartets is clearly outside the province of this work; one or two examples may, however, suffice to illustrate.

The first subject of Opus 132, which breaks abruptly from the introduction of the Allegro, plays an important function in counterpoint against the introductory motive; and while it is obviously derived from and clearly related to the motive, it bears an entirely different rhythmical and melodic character:

Example 10



The entire movement is unusually unified in its material, even though it encompasses many changes of mood, tempo, and texture.

In the second movement a triple metre is established and again the pairs of semitones appear, the first four notes being G $\sharp$ -A, C $\sharp$ -D; the figure of the first three notes constantly pervades the fabric of the movement. The remarkability of Beethoven's thematic economy is illustrated by the fact that all of the thematic material of the main (scherzo) section of the movement is contained in the fifth and sixth bars:

Example 11



Organic growth is therefore basic and vital to the Beethoven quartets, and is everywhere in evidence as the process by which theme evolves from theme, and one section or one movement grows from another. In the famous third movement of Opus 132--the Heiliger Dankgesang--in which Beethoven used the Lydian mode (the fifth church mode; essentially the major scale with a raised fourth scale degree) alternating with the major, the hymn becomes an organic outgrowth of a preceding, searching figuration; the figuration itself, in the manner of a chorale-prelude, being based on a modal variant--C-A-G--of the main motive (G#-A-C#) of the preceding second movement.

One of the most deeply integrated of the last quartets is No. 14 in C sharp minor, Opus 131. Discussing the evolution of the second movement from the opening one, Michael Steinberg writes:

Toward the end of the fugue, powerful dynamic and harmonic impulses propel the music toward a great climax with a strong coloring of the subdominant minor, F sharp, thence to subside onto chords of C sharp major which softly throb into almost silence. All disappears from the final chord except the C sharps themselves: an octave rise of C sharps in the cello is echoed by a similar skip in the viola and first violin, and then echoed again by all three instruments a half step higher, D to D. The second movement, Allegro molto vivace, has begun. Growing thus organically out of the Adagio . . . /the/ manner is that of a rather gentle scherzo, the structure that of a sonata form of remarkable subtlety in the harmonic leanings, designed to keep the connection with the first movement ever in the listener's ear. 119

119 Ibid.

Thus, T.S. Eliot's basic thematic method of Four Quartets may be seen to have a closely similar counterpart--even prototypical in aspect--in Beethoven's late quartets, where thematic evolution within individual quartets proceeds by an organic process, and the separate works are linked thematically through the use of identical or similar germ-motives, from which many of the major and secondary themes of the individual quartets are derived by motivic and thematic metamorphosis.

A second major area of basic equivalence between the Eliot and the Beethoven works lies in their extensive use of counterpoint, which has been illustrated in some detail in connection with Four Quartets. The string quartet format tends inherently to stimulate contrapuntal writing because of the texture and voicing of its four single-family instruments; although it may be, and often is, used in a homophonic style (that is, in chordal movement, or where one leading voice is supported by chords), the homogeneous timbre of the ensemble demands separate and individually moving voices for the maintenance of thematic and musical interest. Certainly Beethoven's primary concept in these late quartets was essentially contrapuntal; and in fact the contrapuntal texture of his whole instrumental fabric was something which resulted directly from the organic process of motivic and thematic development. As themes evolve from motives, and counter-themes are generated by primary thematic materials, the whole technique of stating, restating, and developing

them in juxtaposition is inherently one of counterpoint. Then too, Beethoven was a tremendous innovator in developing thematic elements; he went far beyond his period and in fact established the technical and aesthetic standard for the whole of the nineteenth century in the complexity, breadth, and intensity of his development sections. He was further noted for frequently going into development within exposition sections and even in recapitulation sections and sometimes codas. This is as true of his late quartets as of anything he ever wrote; we might note, for instance, the first movement of Opus 132, where Beethoven in effect has two recapitulations, the first one in the dominant key: music theorists are unable to decide whether the more proper analysis would not place the first one--in E minor--within the development and regard the coda, where the tonic key returns, as the true recapitulation.

Beethoven's contrapuntal writing was of a varied, advanced, sometimes simple but often complex style which went well beyond classical counterpoint. The writing in the late quartets embraces free contrapuntal style, canonic imitation (shorter passages in free fugal style), and fugal writing. The fugue is of particular importance throughout the late quartets, as it is in most of Beethoven's late music. While fugal passages in his earlier works had been mainly incidental, he became increasingly interested in Bach and Handel in his later years, consequently producing some highly individual fugues. Fugal writing permeates the late quartets; the C

sharp minor, Opus 131, starts with one, and all of the quartets contain fugal passages ranging from a relatively strict to very free fugal form. Beethoven's individual fugal style was responsible for much of the contrast which exists in the quartets concurrent with the underlying thematic and structural unity, and in this respect is closely comparable to the Eliotian poetic counterpoint which produced the same elements. Philip Radcliffe, mentioning the variety of counter-subjects in the Grosse Fuge, states, "It has often been pointed out, with some justice, that for Beethoven counterpoint was not the instinctive medium for musical expression that it had been for Bach. But it should be borne in mind that in Beethoven's time any fugal writing could degenerate only too easily into a fluent but dull imitation of an earlier idiom, and that he himself refused to regard the writing of conventional, routine fugues as a vital form of composition."¹²⁰ Radcliffe further suggests that Beethoven's counterpoint was extraordinarily varied in character, that it could be graceful and light-hearted, as in the second movement of the C minor quartet; that in the late works it could be uncompromisingly rough and angular, but also, as in the Finale of the Piano Sonata in A^b major, Opus 110, smooth and thoughtful. He feels that Beethoven often seems to be making a deliberate contrast between the two types, and that this contrast can be seen expressed with immense power and on the largest scale in the Grosse Fuge.

¹²⁰ Op. cit., pp. 146-147.

The Grosse Fuge, Opus 133, most thoroughly understood thematically in relation to its original position as the Finale of the B^b major quartet, Opus 130, does stand alone as one of Beethoven's most remarkable achievements in the quartet genre and his most extended and complex treatment of the fugue idiom. It is a tremendous work which strains at the very limits of the musical medium to contain the composer's concept; considered an enigmatic monstrosity both technically and musically until our own time, it is only recently that it has become musically and aesthetically accessible--probably as a result of continuing orientation to modern musical developments and idioms--to performers and audiences alike. Beethoven, who once said "Today a new and really poetical element must be introduced into fugues,"¹²¹ headed this one with the words "Grande Fugue tantôt libre, tantôt recherchée." Radcliffe considers that "the work is best understood if regarded, not as a highly eccentric fugue, but as a kind of symphonic poem consisting of several contrasted but thematically related sections and containing a certain amount of fugal writing."¹²² Roger Fiske, in his study of the last quartets, states, "The Grosse Fuge may be considered as a one-movement symphony, in five sections: Introduction, First Fugue (fast), Second Fugue (slow), Third Fugue (scherzo) and Coda."¹²³ The Introduction--

¹²¹ Quoted by Roger Fiske in op. cit., p. 41.

¹²² Op. cit., p. 138.

¹²³ Op. cit., pp. 41-42.

entitled Overtura--first presents the basic motto, or Theme (previously quoted in Example 7) as well as briefly anticipating the three transformations of the Theme as they will appear in the three fugal sections. Essentially, the Great Fugue is a series of fugal variations upon its main theme, which is the germ from which the entire work grows, and from which subjects and counter-subjects throughout the work are derived. Both first and second fugues have three variations; the third consists of a development of the two fugues in a series of sections, or divertissements;¹²⁴ the Coda acts as a summing-up and a recapitulation of the principal subjects and concludes with a massive restatement of the motto theme.

The pertinence of this (admittedly cursory) summation of the Grosse Fuge is to illustrate how close a correspondence can exist between Eliot's four poems and a specific work of Beethoven, in respect to the two fundamental structural aspects of organic development and contrapuntal writing. If any one of the late quartets were to be proposed as a specific model for Four Quartets, this one might well be the easiest to substantiate, despite the lack of strict parallels of form between their respective five movements. The basic

¹²⁴ Joseph de Marliave, in his work on the Beethoven quartets, analyzes the last two sections of the Third Fugue as a re-exposition and repetition of the first variation of the Second Fugue, and development of the Second Fugue; he makes this Part V of the Fugue, which thus falls into six rather than five main sections. See Beethoven's Quartets, with an Introduction and Notes by Jean Escarra and a Preface by Gabriel Fauré; translated by Hilda Andrews (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1928).

motto, or motive, of the Grosse Fuge corresponds to Eliot's basic concept of "time." The two contrasting primary themes--subject and counter-subject--which evolve from the motto are equivalent to the two contrasting and complementary aspects of time--temporal and eternal time--derived from Eliot's basic motive. In both the Eliot and Beethoven works the primary themes undergo continuing transformation and their various permutations become the thematic materials for continuing statement, restatement, and development in contrapuntal juxtaposition. And in both works the transcendent accomplishment, which is at once intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic, is the working out of the conflict, and the ultimate resolution, through an organized, coherent, and organically developed artistic process, of the ostensibly opposed primary thematic elements. Both works are cyclic in that each one starts with a single, fundamental, unit concept, proceeds by differentiation to extract two primary thematic components whose implicit thematic evolutions are organically developed and which are examined and evaluated through modulation, inversion, expansion, augmentation, diminution, and other devices, and finally synthesized and reintegrated to attain a resolution which returns to the original unit concept. The end is thus the beginning and the cycle is ready to start anew.

It is not seriously suggested, of course, that Eliot used the Grosse Fuge as a specific model for Four Quartets, any more than he can convincingly be shown to have used the quartet in A minor, Opus 132,

or any one of the other single works. But if he knew the late quartets of Beethoven at all well, or even if he knew of them mainly by reputation, he must have been particularly aware of this unusual and magnificent work. It is a vital--possibly even the crowning--part of these last string quartets which stand as such a tremendous musical and artistic achievement. As such, it is of no small relevance to Eliot's inspired attempt to accomplish with poetry what Beethoven had done in music.

The Other Musical Influences

Despite the fundamental conceptual and structural similarities, and the apparent inspirational function served for Eliot by Beethoven's late string quartets, it would be a mistake to attempt to limit Eliot's models and sources of direct inspiration to the quartets alone. Many structural parallels may be drawn between Four Quartets and various of the other late musical works of Beethoven. The Ninth Symphony, for example, provides a number of analogies. One of the outstanding structural features of Four Quartets is that in each poem the final section incorporates a recapitulation and resolution of conflicting themes previously stated in foregoing sections; and "Little Gidding" acts as a resolution to all four quartets with a recapitulation of themes from the first three poems occurring in its final movement. Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is notable for its musical use of this

technique; its final movement opens with a restatement of all the major themes from the preceding movements, and the movement itself, with its choral treatment of Schiller's Ode to Joy (An die Freude), might easily be considered the most inspired expression of the resolution of universal conflict in all music.

The use of the germ-motive is basic to the thematic development of the Ninth Symphony; and it is interesting that the primary motive of the entire work is the interval of the fifth (and its inversion, the fourth), i. e., dominant and tonic. It is a descending fifth which opens the symphony, as it does the second movement also; the motive reappears frequently throughout the work, and is implicit in most of the primary themes, which are derived from it. And it is a descending fifth which closes the work as the final cadence of the Finale's coda. Ergo, "In my beginning is my end." Interestingly enough, too, the great main theme of the final choral movement encompasses exactly the interval of the fifth (with just one lower dominant which thus provides the complementary fourth and completes the octave). In music the dominant and tonic, whether as scale degrees or harmonic elements, represent the two most opposed positions in any mode, and define the limits of maximum traversal required for resolution.¹²⁵ No motive could be more apt as the

¹²⁵ In the "Circe" episode of James Joyce's Ulysses, Stephen Dedalus, playing "a series of empty fifths" on the brothel piano, expounds what Stuart Gilbert refers to as the "ritual perfection of the fifth,"--which is also the perfection of the octave. ". . . the fundamental

germinating element for a work whose transcendent emotional and aesthetic expression is the emergence from a condition of discord into a state of ultimate and enduring harmony and spiritual grace, the resolution of all conflict in a time when "alle Menschen werden Brudern," when all mankind will be at peace within an ethos of universal joy.

There is a further implicit parallel with the Ninth Symphony in the last movements of the poems of Eliot's cycle. Beethoven's final movement begins with an introductory section in which themes from the preceding movements, as we have noted above, are restated: these are brought back in a brief and somewhat fragmented form, interspersed among recitative passages in the lower strings. The

and the dominant are separated by the greatest possible interval which . . . is the greatest possible ellipse. Consistent with. The ultimate return. The octave." From Ulysses (New York: The Modern Library, 1934), p. 494.

In the "Sirens" episode, the rendering of the climax of the aria from Martha interweaves the technical process of resolution with the narrative: "Quitting all languor Lionel cried in grief, in cry of passion dominant to love to return with deepening yet with rising chords of harmony" (p. 271). The dominant is inevitably followed by the return to achieve harmony.

Commenting on the important part played by numbers in Ulysses, Stuart Gilbert states, "The 'nine-men's morrice' . . . is an allusion to the Arabic origin of the decimal system, which replaced the quinary or five-finger method of calculation. Readers of the Wake will have noticed that it contains a fantasia on the quinary scale. There is probably an allusion to this scale in Stephen's 'hollow fifths,' 'the greatest possible interval' between the notes of the octave . . . ; here, too, we find, doubtless, the recall of a Pythagorean dogma, the treatment of the octave as the reconciliation of the unlimited and the limiting." From James Joyce's Ulysses (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 1952), p. 68ⁿ.

recitatives, initially tentative and inquiring, realize fully their implicit nature in their evocation of the human voice; and at first it is that of a voice groping, searching for expression in broken and halting utterance. But slowly the searching voice begins to find its shape, its form, and with each return it grows in confidence and sureness of statement until the moment of realization when it bursts forth, fully blown, into the magnificent theme which is to become the primary vehicle for the choral expression of the Ode to Joy. Having thus evolved his main theme organically as a triumphant culmination of the search for vocal articulation, the composer then turns to the actual human voice itself, individually, in small ensemble (Beethoven uses four solo voices, which he frequently employs, it should be noted, as a vocal quartet) and en masse, combining poetry with music, to achieve the ultimate resolution implicit in the opening motive and toward which everything preceding has striven.

Eliot's final movements similarly open with a search for expression, a struggle for mastery of the use of words adequate to convey the poetic concept and achieve an ultimate reconciliation toward which the preceding movements have pointed. Although Eliot does not attempt a literal equivalent of vocal striving for articulation, this section of each quartet is in a colloquial speech idiom and conveys thematically the poet's fight to master the intractabilities of language and achieve the form and pattern through which poetic expression may attain a permanent, independent existence surviving change and carrying

universal meaning. From this search and conflict the form and pattern do evolve, and the ultimate reconciliation, the final resolution, is achieved in the emergent music of poetry of the movement's concluding section.

Beethoven's last great piano sonatas also exhibit a radical change of mood and style from that of the earlier works in the genre, much as do the late string quartets and the Ninth Symphony.¹²⁶ There is a corresponding feeling of transcending the medium of the instrument and a tendency toward a musical expression which, in its purity, intensity, and sublimity of feeling and idea, seems to surpass the restrictions of the artistic medium itself. Here may be found the same continuing expansion of structural form, the same exploration into new key and note relationships, innovative melodic and harmonic progressions, and constantly evolving rhythmic patterns, which are so basic to the late quartets and the Ninth Symphony. And in the piano works will be found the same growing use of basic motivic elements from which evolve principal and secondary themes, and the same expanding use of contrapuntal writing and fugal development so evident in the quartets.

Similarly, the Thirty Three Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Opus 120, for piano, marks a comparable high point for the form.

¹²⁶ Paul Nettl, speaking of the piano sonatas in Beethoven Handbook (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1956), notes, "The last three sonatas are the most sublime and intimate pieces that Beethoven wrote for the instrument" (p. 176).

The variation form was much beloved by Beethoven and used extensively by him in all musical genres; it is in fact an important structural element of the late quartets, where Beethoven developed its possibilities past anything which had previously been accomplished and subtly integrated it into the other sonata movement forms.

The Diabelli variations, composed in 1823, are to the piano in a way what the Grosse Fuge is to the string quartets. Called by Hans von Bülow the "Mikrokosmos of Beethoven's genius," the variations are an important segment of Beethoven's late work; as such, they could well have exerted their proportionate influence on Eliot and contributed a commensurate share of inspiration for his effort to achieve a poetic equivalent to the singular accomplishment of Beethoven in his late music.

Eliot's familiarity with music was by no means limited to the works of Beethoven. As an enthusiastic music-hall devotee in his earlier years he was thoroughly exposed to the popular music of the times; and his earlier poetry, as we have seen, attests well to his knowledge of the jazz idiom. The St. Louis of Eliot's youth was a major Midwest musical center which had a symphony orchestra, several choral societies, grand and light opera groups, and a plethora of music schools and conservatories. The city was a principal booking stop for the leading international concert artists as well as the major opera companies from the East. In addition, there

were many local instrumental groups, both professional and private, and musical activity was rife in the performance of chamber music. Given his background and interests, Eliot must have had an early and wide exposure to serious music, not only in the more popular genres, but in the literature of the string quartet and other chamber ensembles as well. His college years in Boston--one of the East's leading music centers--would of course have provided him with increased opportunity for indulging his musical tastes. Eliot's quotations from Wagner's works in The Waste Land--the lines from the song of the young sailor and the words of the shepherd from the first and third acts of Tristan und Isolde worked into "The Burial of the Dead"; and the call of the Rhinemaidens from the third act of Die Götterdämmerung included in the parody of the Rhinemaidens' song in "The Fire Sermon"--suggest much more than a superficial acquaintance with the works of the great Romantic composer. He was, at least for a number of years, something of a balletomane, and this alone would have brought him into intimate contact with a wide diversity of serious music, much of it by the great composers from at least as far back as the Baroque period. Apparently Stravinsky's works made a strong impression on Eliot (a fact which would readily be anticipated, since Stravinsky was easily the dominant influence--the fountainhead even--of twentieth-century music). Grover Smith discusses Eliot's criticism of the disparity between Massine's choreography and the music to Stravinsky's ballet Le Sacre du Printemps, which Eliot had seen in London the summer

before writing The Waste Land; and he quotes Eliot writing on the subject in October of 1921:

"In everything in the *Sacre du Printemps*, except in the music, one missed the sense of the present. Whether Stravinsky's music be permanent or ephemeral I do not know; but it did seem to transform the rhythm of the steppes into the scream of the motor horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel, the roar of the underground railway, and the other barbaric cries of modern life; and to transform these despairing noises into music."¹²⁷

Then too, Eliot would have had a particularly intimate exposure to contemporary musical criticism as editor of The Criterion from 1922 to 1939. The periodical published many reviews and articles on music and the allied arts, and J.B. Trend was a regular contributor. Trend had a particular interest in certain of the modern and contemporary composers, and his extensive articles on such composers as Bartok and de Falla would most certainly have been of substantial motivation, all other influences aside, for Eliot's expanding awareness of contemporary music.¹²⁸ Pound too occasionally

¹²⁷ Quoted in *op. cit.*, p. 71. From Eliot, "London Letter," Dial, LXXI (October 1921), p. 453.

¹²⁸ In his article "Music: Contemporary Principles" in Vol. III, No. 11 of The Criterion (April 1925), Trend made a cogent connection between certain of the modern composers and Beethoven which certainly would not have been lost on Eliot. Speaking of the contemporary vitality of Bartok and de Falla, he said, "The leaders of contemporary music (we shall agree with Jarnach) have been Schönberg and Busoni. They are, undoubtedly, the representatives of an aristocracy of musical intellect, without which a period can never be said to have a style of its own. Yet it is precisely in style that they differ. Schönberg has

contributed articles on matters musical, and his discussion of such contemporary composers as George Antheil, Stravinsky, and others--always in his own pungent, audacious, and highly individual style--would assuredly have had a stimulating effect on Eliot's appreciation of their music. And of course Eliot's own columns and reviews appearing throughout his editorship of The Criterion attest to his vital interest in and continuing inquiry into music along with the other arts. The particular relevance of such literary musical criticism to Four Quartets lies in the fact that it would have given Eliot an understanding of the technical and formal aspects of music which listening alone could not have done, and would have provided an insight into the aesthetics of music which the study of Four Quartets reveals him to have had.

Any final conclusion as to Eliot's use of specific models for Four Quartets must, then, recognize that the poet's interest in music stemmed from an early age, broadening throughout his life, and that it encompassed a diversity of musical styles, periods, and genres. The very breadth of his musical orientation alone would almost seem to have precluded too narrow a concentration on one isolated musical prototype. In addition, our analysis has shown that throughout all of his creative work, even from his earlier

been influenced by the last quartets of Beethoven; it is he and his pupils, and not 'le bon père Franck,' who have begun where Beethoven left off" (p. 435).

periods, Eliot was experimenting with musical analogies in structure and form, and we noted parallels to those poetic constructions in a wide variety of music ranging from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century contrapuntal and free fugal forms to twentieth-century jazz. Also, of course, many of the devices Eliot used are of a general musical applicability and are common to music of all periods and styles. And finally, the detailed structural analysis we have made of Four Quartets, coupled with a consideration of those works most often proposed as providing Eliot with his specific models--the last quartets of Beethoven--seems to show conclusively that, while Four Quartets possess a remarkable structural equivalence to music generally, both in their overall sonata structure and in the construction of their individual movements, there is no direct correlation with the structural form of any one of the individual quartets; certainly not to a degree which would justify a conclusion that Eliot was trying to create a literal poetic counterpart of that music.

At the same time, however, it is clear that the music of Beethoven, and particularly the late music, held a special appeal for Eliot and exerted a profound influence both on his perception of musical-poetic analogies and on his attempt to infuse his poetic work with comparable musical elements. The late music of Beethoven, in its aesthetic development and artistic achievement, is largely comparable to the last plays of Shakespeare--Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Pericles, The Tempest--to which Eliot pointed as representing the

epitome of Shakespeare's second major period, in which he was concerned with experimenting to see how elaborate, how complicated, the music could be made without losing touch with colloquial speech altogether and without his characters ceasing to be human beings. Beethoven similarly in his late music pushed the elaboration and complexity of his musical language to the very confines of the medium and stretched the elements of his artistic form to the limits of their ability to communicate--as witness the Grosse Fuge.

From the standpoint of pure artistic achievement the string quartets stand at the apex of the master's work; for, stripped of all extraneous instrumental resources and limited to the barest minimum of performing ensemble--a format in essence simple, stark, and transparent--these works are entirely a product of pure musical idea and invention shorn of all accessory aids. Consequently, in their sublimity of musical expression and their seeming sublimation of the musical language itself, in their projection of a musical ethos which tends to transcend the performing medium so that one is conscious only of the music qua music and awareness of the performing ensemble fades into the background, the late quartets are an eloquent testament to the genius of their creator. In this respect the quartets most logically serve as the primary inspiration for Eliot's Four Quartets. Then too, aside from the evidence of Eliot's own (admittedly meagre) statements, the bits and pieces of information garnered and transmitted by various scholars and critics, researches such as those of

Howarth, Harvey Gross, and others, and the nature of Eliot's own concert-going activities while yet a youth in St. Louis and throughout his life, the internal evidence of Four Quartets alone is most revealing. One is struck by their relative transparency, i.e., the clarity and intensity with which the philosophical and religious idea speaks to the reader in a seeming transcendence of poetic medium; by the essential simplicity of their language idiom, which is at once direct and vital, capable of immediate and forceful impact but also of the most delicate imagery and subtle implication; by the nearly perfect mingling of form and content; and, upon analysis, by the complexity and elaboration of their poetic construction which finally belies the apparent transparency of design and simplicity of method.

In these qualities Eliot's quartets not only provide a poetic equivalent to their musical counterparts, but also bear the same relationship to the earlier works of their author that Beethoven's late quartets bear to his preceding work. Four Quartets are to The Waste Land in effect what Beethoven's late quartets are, say, to the Fifth Symphony. For in Four Quartets the rich symphonic textures of The Waste Land have given way to the sparse, unencumbered timbres of the string quartet; here the overlaid sonorities and swirling orchestral colors of "A Game of Chess," "The Fire Sermon," and the rest have been replaced by the translucent voicings of the smaller ensemble. The language of the earlier work is sensuous, opulent, and wide-ranging, well adapted to the diverse experience and variety of rich allusion with

which it deals; in Four Quartets this has become modulated into a poetic expression of contrapuntal clarity capable of effectively handling the abstract and often complex thematic materials while still retaining the capacity for emotional intensity, vivid imagery, and subtlety of symbolic statement. Thus the colorful, graphic death by drowning of Phlebas the Phoenician is now transmuted in "The Dry Salvages" to the "drift of the sea and the drifting wreckage," to the beaches littered with the torn seine, the shattered lobsterpot, the broken oar, the gear of foreign dead men. The highly romantic, intensely-imaged approach to Chapel Perilous where the Fisher King undergoes his trial becomes, in "Burnt Norton," the acerbic "place of disaffection," empty of sense and meaning, the dark and twittering world through which the poet must descend during his dark night of the soul. And the dramatic, powerful confrontation of the narrator-Tiresias-Fisher King with the voice of Divine Reality speaking through the awesome utterances of the Thunder finds its transformed counterpart in the meditation stimulated by the discourse of Krishna and Arjuna in the third Quartet, or in the discursive colloquy with the dead master of "Little Gidding." Even in the intensely metaphorical sections of Four Quartets the imagery cuts through with a preciseness and clarity which leaves well behind any virtuoso poetic medium such as that which carries the multi-layered music of The Waste Land. The imagery of the hyacinth girl and the Hyacinth garden is powerful and moving in its sensuous appeal; but the spring time of "Little Gidding,"

no less affecting, where ". . . the hedgerow/ Is blanched for an hour
 with transitory blossom/ Of snow, a bloom more sudden/ Than that
 of summer, neither budding nor fading,/ Not in the scheme of genera-
 tion," and where ". . . you will find the hedges/ White again, in May,
 with voluptuary sweetness," is couched in a music more intuitive,
 more pellucid, and of a much more delicately complex elaboration.

There would seem to be little question, then, that Eliot's Four Quartets are the aesthetic and artistic analogues of Ludwig van Beethoven's last string quartets; and certainly Eliot achieved the ideal of which he conceived when, inspired by both the music and the individual accomplishment of the composer himself, he set out to create poetry which, "standing naked in its bare bones," would speak through the medium and communicate directly with the heart and mind of the reader or auditor.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of all of the presently available evidence--that is, Eliot's own general and specific statements about the analogies of music and poetry; the internal evidence from Four Quartets and from his other poetry as well; the critical observations of scholars who have brought facts of diverse kinds to bear on the subject; and the comparative analysis of Eliot's poems with certain musical works most closely and logically associated with Four Quartets--we may arrive with relative assurance at three specific conclusions: First, that in its structural, formal, rhythmic, technical, and general aesthetic design and construction, Four Quartets bears an analogy with music which is so close, often so detailed, and so pervasive, that the poems cannot be finally and completely evaluated without reference to the musical elements; second, that in the musical aspects of their construction Four Quartets derived from a broad musical background of classical, Romantic, and contemporary music and cannot readily be attributed to the specific example of isolated models; third, that while Eliot was not attempting a direct structural analogy in the poetic medium with any one specific prototype of musical

composition, it is highly probable that his principal inspiration was the late music of Ludwig van Beethoven, even largely the string quartets; and that, inspired by the composer's individual genius and personal accomplishment, he apparently was most concerned with emulating in poetry Beethoven's magnificent artistic achievement in the string quartet form.

Certainly there can be no doubt as to the musical influence operating on Eliot throughout his creative life. His critical work has constantly reverted, as we have seen, to a consideration of musical analogies in poetry, whether in terms of elements overtly common to both arts, such as structure and rhythm, or of more specifically musical techniques such as the contrapuntal arrangement of subject matter; and his perception of the larger aspects of musical design encompassing entire works--as in whole plays of Shakespeare--has been amply manifest. Eliot has been most unequivocal in imputing to musical analogies much of the formative influence--even generative, as with rhythm--on his own poetry. The use of musically-analogous construction is evident from Eliot's first work, appearing in the earlier poems primarily as the exploitation of individual techniques and devices, such as jazz rhythms, changing metres and cross rhythms, juxtaposed restatement of themes, modulation of key, rubato, suspension and cadence, and stylistic imitation; then moving in later poetry to a more subtle incorporation of these elements coupled with a growing application of musical form

and structure to the total design of the work. We have noted the emergence of both binary and ternary forms and such musically-analogous forms as rondo, theme and variations, and, above all, Eliot's poetic equivalent of the sonata structure. We have observed the poet's intuitive feel for the sonata structure as most aptly accommodating the movement and flow, the presentation, development, and resolution of his ideas, and we have seen Eliot's refinement of the form through the conscious application of constantly-evolving musico-poetic techniques. The culmination of Eliot's maturing concepts and developing techniques occurs in Four Quartets, where each poem utilizes the poetic equivalent of the musical sonata in a multiple-movement structure which provides for contrast, both within and between movements, of mood, tempo, rhythm, metre, and form, and allows each movement to be most suitably adapted, in both structure and texture, to the individual treatment of its thematic materials. And in Four Quartets Eliot's use of musically-analogous elements reached its crowning point through his integration in the sonata structure of a complexity of musical techniques: motivic development, thematic metamorphosis, and various contrapuntal devices including statement, re-entrance, and juxtaposed restatement of themes; varied rhythmic devices including changing metres, shifted rhythms, polyrhythms, and polymetres; and numerous poetic parallels to such musical elements as suspension and cadence, modulation of key, use of transitional passages, handling of a theme by different groups of

instruments, rubato, accelerando, and other devices. In short, the analogy with music is everywhere manifest throughout Four Quartets; and further, is so broad in its application and so pervades both the structure and texture of the total work, that it must be considered a major aspect of any serious study of the work. Clearly, no English-language poet before Eliot has approached him in the comprehensiveness of his view of the possibilities for the use of musically-analogous elements in poetry or in the concrete application of those techniques; and, while there have been many poets who have been vitally conscious of the musical aspects of poetry, and many whose verse has been highly "musical" in a lyrical, and sometimes even very literal, sense, none has come near to Eliot's achievement in Four Quartets in making closely-literal musical analogy a fundamental vehicle in the creation of the serious long poem.

Walter Pater, that sensitive spokesman of the pre-Raphaelites, writing in 1877 in his essay "The School of Giorgione," formulated his thesis that all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music. He did not mean, of course, as sometimes misinterpreted, that the other arts seek a metamorphosis into the musical idiom, for, as he observes, "The sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind."¹²⁹ Nevertheless,

¹²⁹ Walter Pater, "The School of Giorgione," in The Renaissance, with an Introduction by Arthur Symonds (New York: The Modern Library, No. 86 [N.D.7]), p. 107.

despite the unique qualities of each individual art, he finds it noticeable that, in its special mode of handling its given material, each art may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art, by what German critics term an Anders-streben--a partial alienation from its own limitations, through which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of the other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces.¹³⁰ All the arts in common, Pater holds, aspire towards the principle of music, since music is the typical, or ideally consummate art, "the object of the great Anders-streben of all art, of all that is artistic, or partakes of artistic qualities."¹³¹ For, while in all other kinds of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, and the understanding can always make this distinction, it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it. In music this obliteration is most complete, and essentially music presents no words, no matter of sentiment or thought, separable from the special form in which it is conveyed. Thus music is an art in which form and idea, medium and substance, are perfectly consonant. In fact, in music form is idea, the nature of the medium being such that one cannot exist without the other, and both are created simultaneously in a common birth.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 110.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 111.

So poetry--and for Pater the true poetical quality comes of an inventive handling of rhythmical language, and from an inherent element of lyrical song--constantly seeks the same purity found in music, and strives toward an equivalent mating of form and idea. And the greater the obliteration of the distinction between the two, and the more nearly the two elements approach identity, the purer and more nearly perfect will be the poetic expression.

Very simply, it is here that one finds the ultimate criterion of Four Quartets. For, as we have seen demonstrated time and again throughout our study, Eliot achieved in this work an identity of form and idea, a melding of poetic medium and poetic substance, approaching complete congruence; it is certainly far in excess of anything he had previously done, and, in terms of the longer poem, has seldom if ever been equalled by poets in the English language. In Pater's context, Four Quartets approaches the condition of music about as closely as it is possible for poetry to do. It is a remarkable accomplishment, attained primarily through T.S. Eliot's acute perception of the nature and the potential contributions of the musical elements of poetry, and by his adroit manipulation of those elements in creating a serious poetic work of depth, intensity, and universal meaning which superbly realized his artistic ideal.

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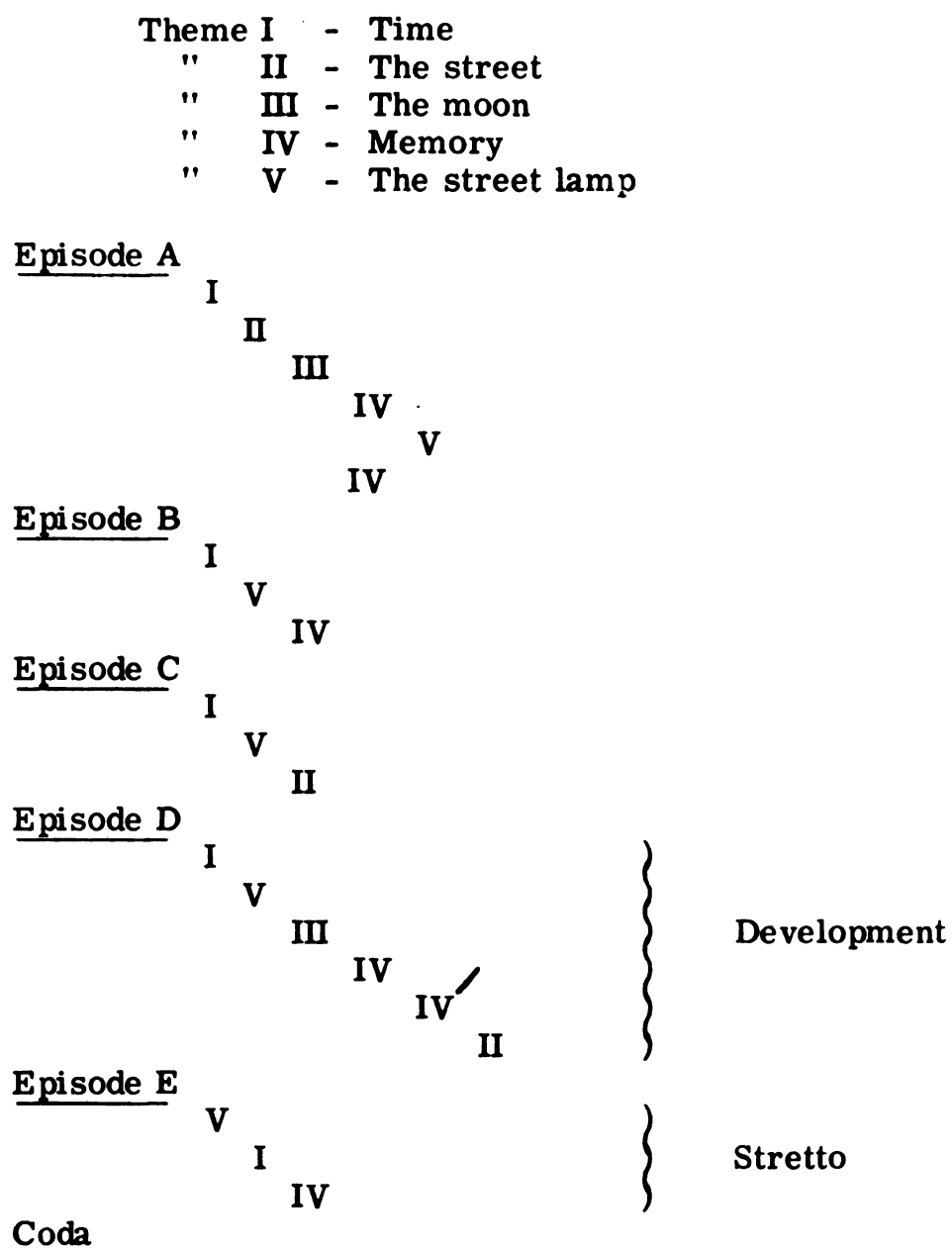
APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night"

Illustrating thematic contrapuntal re-entrance structure providing equivalence to late 17th-century ricercare and early 18th-century free fugue.



APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

This appendix presents an analysis of the structural form of Section I of "Burnt Norton" in terms of analogy with the sonata allegro musical form (see footnote 21).

It should not be inferred that this is the only musical analogy which this movement will support; other analyses are certainly possible. However, the equivalence to the musical form of the structure developed by this particular analysis is striking, and is probably much more literal than that which may be discerned in any of the other movements of the Four Quartets. It is therefore of particular interest for the subject under consideration.

As foregoing discussion in this paper has indicated, it is a moot question, and will probably never be known with certainty, to just what extent Eliot attempted a literal poetic counterpart of the musical form; he probably did not conceive of any such exact equivalent as the analysis of this section discloses. Regardless of his conscious intent, however, this is the structure which he created, and in its close musical analogy it provides for the same concentration, intensity, and unity in the poetic work which the musical form makes possible for its medium.

APPENDIX B

MUSICAL ANALOGY: SONATA ALLEGRO FORM: "Burnt Norton," I

EXPOSITION	Theme I { Are both perhaps present in time future, I Inverted (But future contained in time past.	Time as progression	Time as eternal	Time as potential	Potential and actual result in present moment	Past	Present	Future	Potential	Further modulation and juxtaposition of expanded themes	Further modulation and juxtaposition of expanded themes	Restatement of themes, counterpointed
	Theme II { All time is undecomposable.											
	Theme III { Only in a world of speculation. I, II, III Combined { What might have been and what has been Point to one end, which is always present. Footfalls echo in the memory Down the passage which we did not take Towards the door we never opened Into the rose-garden. My words echo Thus, in your mind. But to what purpose Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves I do not know. Other echoes Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow? Quick, said the bird, find them, find them, Round the corner. Through the first gate, Into our first world, shall we follow The deception of the thrush? Into our first world. There they were, dignified, invisible, Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves, In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air, To the edge of the wood, through the noise The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery, And the unseen eyebrow crossed, for the roses Had the look of flowers that are looked at. There they were as our guests, accepted and accepting. So we moved, and they, in a formal pattern, Along the empty alley, into the box circle, To look down into the drained pool. At the end, where the sun edged And the pool was filled with water out of sunlight, And the lotos rose, quietly, quietly, The surface glittered out of heart of light, And they were behind us, reflected in the pool. Then a cloud passed, and the pool was empty. Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children, Hidden excitedly, containing laughter. At the end, where the sun edged Cannot bear very much reality.	Potential and actual										
DEVELOPMENT												
RECAPITULATION	I, II, III { Time past and time future What might have been and what has been Point to one end, which is always present.											

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

THE STRUCTURAL FORM OF FOUR QUARTETS

SONATA STRUCTURE

I - BINARY

II - THEME AND VARIATIONS

"Burnt Norton"

Sonata Allegro

- A. Exposition
Time as progression, eternal, and potential
- B. Development
Time and experience as past, present, future, potential, and actual
- C. Recapitulation
Potential and actual result in eternal progression of present moments

- A. The apparent flux of life reconciled in eternity
- B. 1. Reconciliation in terms of stillness and movement
2. Resolution in terms of the union of change and permanence
- Coda. Time the only medium of reconciliation

"East Coker"

Song-Form

- A. Cycle of birth, growth, death; time as recurrent progression
- B. Experience of the present timeless moment
- C (A/B). The passing of generations viewed from the vantage point of eternal time
- Coda. Return to the temporal actuality

- A. Uncertainty of human perception, deception of human knowledge
- Transition. Difficulty of poet's craft
- B. 1. Deception of knowledge taught by elders
2. Limited value of knowledge derived from experience
3. Blindness and uncertainty of man in the mortal world
4. Deception of wisdom in old age; humility the only wisdom
- Coda. Transience of human existence

"The Dry Salvages"

Song-Form

- A. The river - time as succession (temporal)
- B. The sea - time as eternal and all-encompassing
- Transition. The ground swell
- C (A/B). Intersection of eternal time with the present temporal moment. Metaphor of the ground swell.
- Coda. Eternal succession

- A. Inquiry into the meaning of man's endless cyclical succession
- B. 1. Meaning attained through the pattern of past experience
2. Experience restored through approach to the meaning
3. Meaning attained through pain and suffering of others past
- Coda. Permanence in transience through time, the vehicle of experience and medium of reconciliation

"Little Gidding"

Song-Form

- A. Eternal time - eternity contained in midwinter spring
- B. Experience of a given moment in the flow of time - nature in May time
- C (A/B). Experience in the chapel - outside time but within time
- Coda. Eternity and timelessness in the timeless moment

- A. Decay of the mortal world resulting from human neglect of what the past has taught and achieved
- B. 1. Present decay through mankind's willful destruction
2. Colloquy with the dead master: lessons of experience; change and decay of individual human existence; redemptive power of spiritual insight and "fire"--purgation--of vocation
- Coda. Emergence from introspection

THEME AND VARIATION

The apparent flux of life reconciled in eternity

1. Reconciliation in terms of stillness and movement
2. Reconciliation in terms of union of change and permanence

Time the only medium of reconciliation

Uncertainty of human perception
 Perception of human knowledge
 Difficulty of perception
 Deception of knowledge taught by others
 Limited value of knowledge derived from experience
 Boundaries and uncertainty of man in the mortal world
 Deception of wisdom is old age
 Humility the only wisdom
 Transcendence of human existence

Entry into the meaning of man's life as cyclical succession
 Meaning attained through the pattern of past experience
 Experience restored through approach to the meaning
 Learning attained through pain and suffering of others
 Permanence in transcendence
 With time, the vehicle of experience and medium of reconciliation

Of the mortal world resulting from human neglect of what has taught and achieved
 Present decay through man's willful destruction
 Dialogue with the dead man's lessons of experience
 Change and decay of individual human existence, redemption
 Power of spiritual insight and fire--purgations of vision
 Emergence from introspection

III - BINARY

- A. The time-bound nature of the human condition
- B. The "downward way" through mystical experience as the release from the bondage of time

IV - STROPHIC (UNIT) FORM

- a Ultimate salvation of escape from the temporal world to the "still point" is only attainable through a knowledge of, and acceptance by, God the Father

V - BINARY

- A. Contemplation of the poet's struggle to achieve the form and pattern through which poetic expression may attain a permanent, independent existence surviving change and carrying universal meaning
- B. Love, the unmoving mover, in its highest form, the Incarnation, realizes all potentialities, resolves all ambiguities; ultimate meaning exists at the still point

- A. The agonized wait for the mystical illumination
 1. All mankind disappears into the dark, we with them
 2. a) Necessity for submitting to b) the darkness of God, c) illustrated metaphorically
 3. Necessity for waiting detached from hope, love, thought, in faith
- Transition. Intimations of immortality
- B. Illumination via negative way of self-denial of St. John of the Cross

- a Acceptance of Christ the Saviour and His sacrifice for man is the only means of redemption from the human condition; the Church is the true guide to salvation

- A. Reflection on the arduousness of the poet's continuing fight to master the intractabilities of language and achieve a poetic expression adequate to his changing needs
- B. Communion and union attained through a burning commitment to each moment of this life in the realization that each action, each stage of the journey, is not only an end but also a beginning

- A. Dilemma of the relationship of past, present, and future
- B. Time as a succession of present moments; the moment of experience exists only in the present. Man's commitment must be to momentary action, from which his future will result and from which meaning is derived
- Coda. Exhortation to action

- a Invocation to the Virgin, the patron saint of mariners, for the protection of all voyagers, and, implicitly, for all mankind

- A. Musings on man's futile attempts to see into the past and future; the mystic alone is capable of an apprehension of ultimate reality
- B. Through the Incarnation man may attain his fullest realization of the reconciliation of movement and stillness, of the spheres of existence. Through continual striving in significant action he may attain to the still point

- A. The use of memory: liberation from both future and past through detachment, as opposed to attachment or indifference. The past, reclaimed by memory, is transfigured in freedom
- B. All the dead of history reconciled in death; they become for us a symbol of action in the present moment, a model of perfection
- Coda. Our redemption derives from our action, as the motive and action of the dead are purified in the eternal

- a Mankind has choice of two kinds of fire--those of purgatory and hell--which will determine his hope or despair; Divine Love, manifested in two kinds of fire, and the origin of our purgatorial agony, is the universal motivating force and man's true hope for salvation

- A. Every phrase and sentence of poetry in its meaningful patterns both an end and a beginning, every poem an epitaph; with every action we die with the dying, are born with the dead. History, a pattern of timeless moments, redeems a people from time; it is here and now
- B. God as ultimate source, as beginning and end, comprehended; true nature of Divine Love, revealed in the Incarnation, known. Time and temporal existence finally redeemed through knowledge of Trinity--eternal in temporal--and unity of suffering and Love

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

CONTRAPUNTAL VOICING:

The Hollow Men, V

1st Voice	<u>Here we go round the prickly pear</u> <u>Prickly pear prickly pear</u> <u>Here we go round the prickly pear</u> <u>At five o'clock in the morning.</u>
2nd Voice	Between the idea And the reality Between the motion And the act Falls the Shadow
3rd Voice	<u>For Thine is the Kingdom</u>
2nd Voice	Between the conception And the creation Between the emotion And the response Falls the Shadow
3rd Voice	<u>Life is very long</u>
2nd Voice	Between the desire And the spasm Between the potency And the existence Between the essence And the descent Falls the Shadow
3rd Voice	<u>For Thine is the Kingdom</u>
2nd & 3rd Voices combined	For Thine is Life is For Thine is the
1st Voice	<u>This is the way the world ends</u> <u>This is the way the world ends</u> <u>This is the way the world ends</u> <u>Not with a bang but a whimper.</u>

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

THE RHYTHMIC STRUCTURE OF FOUR QUARTETS

	I - 1. SPECULATION 2. CONTEMPLATION	II - 1. LYRIC 2. INTROSPECTION	III - 1. MEDITATION 2. ILLUMINATION	IV - INVOCATION	V - 1. DISCOURSE/ REFLECTION 2. COMMUNION
"Burnt Norton"	A. Exposition) B. Development) A. Recapitulation) Four-stress, syllabically irregular lines	A. Irregularly-rhyming, four-stress, octosyllabic tetrameter B. 1. Six-stressed loose hexameters and pentameters 2. Loose blank verse, four-stress line Coda. Four-stress, irregular line A. Irregularly-rhyming, four-stress octosyllabic tetrameter B. Four-stress, syllabically irregular line C (A/B). Four-stress with three-stress intermixed Coda. Three- and four-stress, shifted metre	A. Four-stress, syllabically irregular lines B. Four-stress and three-stress, syllabically irregular lines	Rhyming, four-stress, syllabically irregular lines One stanza; ten lines, nominally, with some metrical shift	A. Four-stress, with some five-stress, syllabically irregular lines B. Three-stress, with some two-stress, trimeter lines
"East Coker"	A. Three-, four-, and five-stress, syllabically irregular lines B. Four-stress lines C (A/B). Four-stress with three-stress intermixed Coda. Three- and four-stress, shifted metre	A. Irregularly-rhyming, four-stress octosyllabic tetrameter B. Four-stress, syllabically irregular line	A. Hexameters and pentameters, six-stress and five-stress, syllabically irregular B. Five-stress and four-stress, syllabically irregular lines	Regular, rhyming stanzas, four-stress lines; lines are all iambic: three lines tetrameter, one line pentameter, one line hexameter Five five-line stanzas	A. Loose hexameters and pentameters, with varying four-, five-, and six-stress B. Three-stress, with some four-stress intermixed, syllabically irregular lines
"The Dry Salvages"	A. Five-stress line with four-stress intermixed; loose pentameters and tetrameters B. Four-stress, syllabically irregular lines C (A/B). Four-stress, syllabically irregular lines	A. Modified septima. Four-stress, loose tetrameter and pentameter lines B. Loose tetrameter, and some irregular lines; four-stress with some five- and six-stress intermixed	A. Loose hexameters and pentameters; variable stresses, predominantly four-stress B. Syllabically varying lines, predominantly loose hexameters and pentameters; primarily four-stress	Unrhymed, four-stress, five-line stanzas, including two-stress cadence lines Three stanzas	A. Loose pentameters and hexameters; four-stress lines B. 1. Five-stress, loose pentameter lines 2. Three-stress trimeter lines
"Little Gidding"	A. Variable-stress (predominantly four- and five-stress), syllabically irregular B. Predominantly four-stress, syllabically irregular lines C (A/B). Four-stress, syllabically irregular lines	A. Regularly-rhyming, three- and four-stress trimeter and tetrameter B. Modified terza rima; predominantly four-stress, unrhymed pentameter lines (blank verse). Adapted from metre of Divine Comedy	A. Loose blank verse; variable stresses, predominantly four- and five-stress B. Predominantly loose trimeter, three-stress, with two- and four-stress intermixed	Regularly-rhyming, four-stress tetrameter and trimeter lines Two seven-lines stanzas	A. Irregular blank verse; four-stress lines B. Three-stress, loose trimeter lines



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