

LITURGICAL INFLUENCES OF
ANGLO-CATHOLICISM
ON
THE WASTE LAND
AND OTHER WORKS BY
T. S. ELIOT

BY

A. Lee Fjordbotten
B.A., St. Olaf College, 1974
M.Div., Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, 1978
M.A., Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1989

DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
AT FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK
MAY, 1999

Dedicated to
my beautiful, loving, and wise wife Beverly,
who cared for me and patiently put up with me through all my work;
my gracious parents, Dr. Alf and Helene Fjordbotten,
who supported me through all my schooling;
my family, especially
the Rev. Allan and Nancy Fjordbotten, Lt. Col. Joseph and Joy Walker,
G. John and Cathy Lee, Jennifer Lee, M.A., Christopher and Jenna Lee,
Andrew and Jen Walker, Greg and Sophie Walker,
Tim Walker, Dale Fjordbotten, and Karin Fjordbotten;
my great friends, especially
the Rev. Dr. Tom Taylor, the Rev. Ann Tiemeyer,
Dr. Gary Ahlskog, Dr. Sandra Rabben,
the Revs. Jerilyn and Peter Breitsch, S.T.M., M.A.,
Charlie and Donna Testa, and Jack and Linda Foster, M.A.,
who encouraged me through my graduate programs;
my first parish, St. Mark Lutheran Church,
who followed my lead in liturgical changes;
my liturgical parish, Holy Spirit Lutheran Church,
who generously gave me a sabbatical and supported my efforts;
my bishops, the Rev. Dr. E. Harold Jansen and the Rev. Herluf Jensen, M.A.,
who backed my academic pursuits and my parish sabbatical;
my clergy colleagues, especially
my high-church colleagues who taught me so much about liturgy;
my excellent teachers and professors at all my schools, especially
Dr. Bernard F. Dick, Dr. John Antush, and Dr. Gale Swiontkowski,
who worked so hard to teach, enlighten, and inspire;
the faculty and administration of Fordham University,
who granted me a Presidential Scholarship and Teaching Fellowship;
and especially my mentor, Professor Gale Swiontkowski,
who so diligently read, reread, and edited my work,
and who advised and guided me through the dissertation process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: The Oxford Movement: A Brief History of the Church of England and Discussion of the Oxford Movement, with a Glance at the American Jeremiad.....	15
Chapter 3: Eliot's Critical Essays and Critical Works on Eliot.....	50
Chapter 4: A Liturgical Reading of <i>The Waste Land</i>	122
Chapter 5: Liturgical Readings of the Later Poetry and <i>Murder in the Cathedral</i>	208
Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	310
Bibliography.....	322
Abstract	
Vita	

... classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and anglo-catholic in religion.
(T. S. Eliot, *For Lancelot Andrewes: Essays on Style and Order*, p. vii)

... the three most successful apologists for Christianity in England have all been lay members of the Church of England. They are: T. S. Eliot, the distinguished poet, dramatist, man of letters, and author of *The Idea of a Christian Society*; Dorothy L. Sayers, author of a superb study of the doctrine of Creation entitled *The Mind of the Maker* and of the strikingly successful cycle of radio plays, *The Man Born to be King*; and Professor C. S. Lewis, who held the Chair of Mediaeval and Renaissance Literature in Cambridge University.

(Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: The Ecumenical Century, 1900-1965*, vol. 5, p. 253)

ἀνάβατο δὲ καὶ κἀβάτω μία καὶ ὁδὸς.
"The road up and the road down is the same."

(T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, epigraph)

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.
What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Points to one end, which is always present.

(T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, "Burnt Norton," ll. 1-10)

In my beginning is my end. ...
In my beginning is my end. ...
In my end is my beginning.

(T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, "East Coker," ll. 1, 14, 209)

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

(T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, "Little Gidding," ll. 239-242)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

T. S. Eliot became, by his own admission, a converted and baptized Christian and a member of the Anglican Church. He later defined himself specifically as an Anglo-Catholic, which generally means a high-church Anglican or a liturgically oriented Christian. Eliot's conversion had obvious effects on his writing, both creative and critical, and his religious development can be traced through those writings. And indeed, some critics have done so. Most who have made reference to Eliot's Christianity or conversion have focused on his faith and the change his faith made in some of his writings. Other critics have more directly noted his joining the Anglican Church. However, very few have made their analyses specifically from a liturgical perspective. This dissertation will also look at Eliot's conversion and at his faith, especially as we find it reflected in his writings. I will consider the critics who have also noted Eliot's faith, as well as the biographers who have related the details of his conversion and baptism. Especially, I will look at works like Kristian Smidt's study of all of Eliot's writings from the perspective of Eliot's Christian belief. Most of these works talk of Eliot's conversion to Christianity from the perspective of Eliot's writings and the period in Eliot's life leading to his conversion, his general faith, and his subsequent biblical literacy and use of biblical allusions. Such analyses are fine and very helpful, and given Eliot's own admissions about his conversion, unavoidable. However, my approach intends to begin there and add a more specifically liturgical, Anglo-Catholic framework to Eliot's pre-conversion life and writings, to his conversion itself, and to his life and writings following his conversion.

Most of the critical works on this faith aspect of Eliot and his writings deal more with what I would call Eliot's piety and faith, as well as with his general biblical understanding. In my more liturgical approach, I mean to go beyond the usual issues of conversion, faith, personal piety, and biblical literacy. Liturgy obviously encompasses these areas of belief. But liturgy also has to do with one's relationship to the Church, especially as a worshipping community, as well as to God.

Liturgy, as a term, comes from the Greek, *λετουργία* or *leitourgia*, which literally means “the work of the people” and is a technical term for worship. It has to do with how one ritualizes and lives out one’s faith. This means that, more than just being a discussion of Eliot’s conversion to faith and his personal piety, my liturgical approach will focus on the process of conversion and on the Church’s way of preparing for, working out, and celebrating conversion in the worship practices and rituals of the Church. More than just faith and piety, liturgy has to do with how one exercises, maintains, and strengthens one’s faith in the context of a believing community in the Church’s worship and prayer life — that is, how one is sustained by the symbols, rituals, sacraments, and general worship life of the Church. And more than just biblical texts and themes, liturgy also has to do with how the Church *uses* those texts and themes in its worship throughout the year. From this liturgical perspective, then, I will discuss Eliot’s writings, both critical and creative, as they relate to his life and faith, and I will be looking especially for ways in which the more ritualistic and worship-oriented aspects of Eliot’s conversion are revealed and expressed in his writings.

In discussing Eliot’s life and writings, I will, then, look at the time leading up to his conversion — the process, the themes, and the liturgical culmination in baptism. That discussion will focus primarily on *The Waste Land* — on the earliest fragments of the poem, on the final poem itself, and on the poem’s themes and imagery. Since Eliot became a Christian not long after the poem’s publication, there is evidence in *The Waste Land* of religious questioning and questing, of deeper searching, and of a general long-term interest or pre-occupation with religious and mystic concerns. Further, I will also look at a few select later creative works written by a more mature, converted, Christian Eliot. In these later works, I will show a continuation of those same earlier concerns coming up again in these later works with a more direct and more obvious religious significance, and I expect to show a later and more mature Christian Eliot reflecting on his earlier life and movement toward conversion.

It will help to begin with a discussion of Eliot’s critical writings, in which he more straightforwardly than in his poetry presents his Christian understanding and discusses his concerns.

Then, moving to a discussion of Eliot's creative works should provide a stronger reference point for Eliot's religious identity from his own critical writings. Starting with *The Waste Land* in one chapter and ending with some of his later works in the next chapter, I will show how his religious concerns expressed in some of his critical works are expressed also in these creative works. Therefore, before turning to our consideration of Eliot's creative works — which will form chapters four and five — chapter three will present a consideration of Eliot's own critical writings, as well as critics writing about Eliot. Christian themes will pop up with greater frequency and more focus, until Eliot begins writing about a Christian society along the lines of other Christian writers, like his friend Dr. Paul Elmer More. Then finally, in chapter six, I will draw a few conclusions about Eliot's walk of faith from a worship and liturgical perspective.

Of course, before beginning to analyze Eliot's critical and creative writings from a religious and specifically liturgical perspective, it is necessary first to define further my liturgical approach. The next, or second, chapter, therefore, will be a brief history of the Anglican Church, its liturgy in general, and the Oxford Movement in particular. The Oxford Movement was a movement of the early nineteenth century within the Anglican Church. Its emphases were primarily on preaching and liturgical reform. Hence, the movement tended to exert a great influence on subsequent preaching and practices in the Anglican Church for many years to come. And in the early twentieth century, several histories of the movement were written, including one by Geoffrey Faber, of the publishing house for whom Eliot worked — Geoffrey Faber's grandfather and great uncle had been active in the Oxford Movement. Given the importance of the Oxford Movement in the Anglican Church, it is appropriate to include a brief history of the movement and its importance to the twentieth-century Anglican Church, especially since that is the Church that Eliot later joins. And given the division of the entire Church into low-church and high-church factions, divisions which are played out in the Anglican Church as well, it becomes all the more pertinent when Eliot calls himself specifically an "anglo-catholic in religion" in the preface of *For Lancelot Andrewes*.¹ By identifying himself as such, Eliot aligns

1. T. S. Eliot, *For Lancelot Andrewes: Essays on Style and Order* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1929) vii. Inciden-

himself with high-church Anglicanism — so he is not only defining his Anglican Church membership, but he is also establishing himself firmly within its liturgical camp.

One can certainly ask, then, what the significance of this high-church identification is for Eliot and why he aligns himself with so specific an element within the Church. Given Eliot's intellectual orientation, a simpler pietistic faith may not have appealed to him in the same way as this richer liturgical tradition — besides, he had already come from a less liturgical tradition in his Unitarian roots. Further, given Eliot's literary and historical interests, he might well be expected to align himself with an older tradition, such as the Oxford Movement attempted to revive and reestablish in the Anglican Church. After all, as I shall point out in the second chapter, the Oxford Movement grows out of the Church's longer history and tradition of liturgical practices, going back at least to the seventeenth century in England. Thus, I will look first at the Oxford Movement, discussing it in the context of the overall development of the Anglican Church. Then, from the understanding of the faith and of liturgical matters clarified in that discussion, I will turn in the next chapter to a consideration of Eliot's critical writings, as they more directly present Eliot's background and concerns of faith and the Church. Then, in the succeeding two chapters, the groundwork will be laid for a liturgical consideration of Eliot's creative works.

Before turning to our discussion of the Oxford Movement, I might here briefly discuss Eliot's earlier development towards faith. First, it must not be forgotten that Eliot's own religious self-definition culminates in the preface to his collection of essays *For Lancelot Andrewes*, first published in 1927, shortly after Eliot's conversion. Lancelot Andrewes was an Anglican divine of the early seventeenth century, during the time of another liturgical renewal movement under Archbishop Laud. Again, that renewal involved preaching and liturgy. And Eliot's writing about poets of that time — the Metaphysical poets Donne, Marvell, Crashaw, and others — in *For Lancelot Andrewes* and elsewhere, and more specifically his writing about Andrewes him-

tally, that book is also dedicated, "For My Mother" (p. v), who herself was interested in religious matters and wrote poems on religious themes.

self, especially in comparison to the preaching of John Donne, shows Eliot's awareness of the issues of that day. A little over two hundred years later, it is the Oxford Movement that tries to regain that earlier liturgical time and its influences and rekindle them in the contemporary Church of the nineteenth century. And indeed, the effort worked, culminating in the Anglo-Catholic movement of the twentieth century and the fuller flowering of liturgical practices in all denominations, continuing even today.

Renewal can come in the form of overt movements at certain times that spread their influence. Renewal can also progress underground in various ways. Some authors have noted certain elements of the seventeenth-century movement in the time of Archbishop Laud and Lancelot Andrewes that enlivened the Puritan movement, most notably in preaching. The Puritans, in their quest for religious freedom and renewal, brought elements of the seventeenth-century renewal movement with them when they came to America. Meanwhile, the same movement developed in England, as will be discussed, culminating in the Oxford Movement, which flourished more overtly in the Anglican Church, and resulting in the liturgical renewal in England. However, tracing those same renewal influences through the Puritans in America reveals an even earlier priming of the young Eliot, coming through his family and through America's religious underpinnings. So along the way, in the discussion of the Oxford Movement, I will clarify these influences and their development, both overt and underground, on both sides of the Atlantic, as they relate to the person and writings of T. S. Eliot.

Eliot's conversion comes at the end of a long process, beginning from his early interests and influences, and there is evidence of it in his earliest writings. While many earlier critics have either overlooked or denied the importance of Eliot's conversion and the long process leading up to it, some later critics have been more willing to consider this religious aspect of Eliot's life and writings, and some have even ventured to assert the importance of considering Eliot's writings from this religious perspective. Among the critics who have made reference to Eliot's religious heritage, very few have made direct reference to Eliot's specifically high-church leanings. Notable for her acknowledgement and grasp of this aspect of Eliot's faith is Lyndall Gordon in her

two-volume biography, *Eliot's Early Years* and *Eliot's New Life*. She concludes her first volume, *Eliot's Early Years*, with a chapter on Eliot's "Conversion," thereby anticipating her second volume on *Eliot's New [Christian] Life*. In the penultimate chapter of volume one, "The Waste Land Traversed," Gordon says, "The pattern of spiritual biography is to move from a dead world to a new life."² She also cites Eliot's "The Death of Saint Narcissus" as evidence of "sexual guilt [preceding] religious fervor," and she alludes here to "the refining fire, [as a] cure for lust, on the highest terrace of Dante's *Purgatorio*." She also alludes to Buddha's Fire Sermon, "Eliot's own asceticism," and "the spiritual biographies of Augustine and Dante,"³ as well as a passage from Eliot's mother: "Purge from thy heart all sensual desire, / Let low ambitions perish in the fire / Of higher aims."⁴ Throughout these two chapters, Gordon considers Eliot's conversion and the several influences surrounding and preparing for that conversion. In addition, Gordon notes that "During 1919 Eliot read the sermons of John Donne, Hugh Latimer, and Lancelot Andrewes, and became interested in the sermon as 'a form of literary art,' ... a form that merges readily with Eliot's confessional-instructive mode." While others were abandoning faith, "[rebell[ing]] against a Victorian version of faith, full of cant and hypocrisy, Eliot held on to an older faith — devouring, passionate, and mystical." At this same period, "the nameless pilgrim in *The Waste Land* is poised at the extremity of a dry season, waiting for rain, the traditional symbol of grace or fertility."⁵ Gordon clearly sees the early influences and the importance of Eliot's conversion. In chapter four, I will discuss those influences, which led up to *The Waste Land*, but I will go deeper than Gordon into the liturgical aspects of Eliot's developing spirituality.

Here, however, Gordon's summary of Eliot's conversion is concise:

The first serious impetus towards the Church of England seems to coincide with the crisis in 1923 [of Vivienne's illness and Eliot's despair over the chaos of his

2. Lyndall Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* (New York: Noonday-Farrar, 1977) 99.

3. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 98, 99.

4. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 99. Gordon includes a footnote here, identifying the poem as "The Present Hour," published in the *Christian Register*, Eliot Coll., Houghton Library.

5. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 103.

affairs]. It was then that Richard Cobden-Sanderson introduced Eliot to a fellow-American, William Force Stead, who had had himself ordained in the Church of England. Stead drew Eliot's attention to the writings of seventeenth-century Anglicans, in particular those of the Bishop of Winchester, Lancelot Andrewes. Eliot read the sermons on the Incarnation (a notion his Unitarian family would not have stressed). ... When Eliot first read sermons in 1919 he had been attracted by Donne's spellbinding personality. He now came to prefer the "pure," "medieval" temper of Andrewes, who did not stir the emotions so much as stress a settled and resolute will to holiness.

... [Eliot] said that the thought of the intelligent believer "proceeds by rejection and elimination" until he finds a satisfactory explanation both for the disordered world without and the moral world within. Eliot stressed rational progress rather than emotional states.

Eliot first visited an Anglican chapel at Merton College in 1914. (He kept a picture postcard of its interior.) He began to frequent Anglican Churches in the City of London, some time between 1917 and 1921, in search of a quiet spot to think during his lunch hours. At first, he enjoyed the high Anglo-Catholic St. Magnus the Martyr aesthetically, for its "splendour"; later he appreciated its "utility" when he came there as a sinner. He was struck, once, by the sight of a number of people on their knees, a posture he had never seen before. Eliot's family was not accustomed to kneel. ... But Eliot admired this gesture of abasement and worship. Some time during the early 1920s he began to think of the Church not simply as a place where he could find, now and then, some private consolation, but as a way to a new life.⁶

What Eliot sought was not available in his family's religious heritage. Gordon cites a 1923 or 1924 note of Eliot's on the back of an envelope saying, "There are only 2 things — Puritanism and Catholicism. You are one or the other. You either believe in the reality of *sin* [*sic*] or you don't — *that* [*sic*] is the important moral distinction — not whether you are good or bad. Puritanism does not believe in sin: it merely believes that certain things must not be done."⁷ So here, in the very beginnings of Eliot's conversion to faith, Eliot's movement is toward a more intellectually oriented, historical, liturgical, traditional, sacramental, confessional, and orderly faith. And in his quest, he is not engaging in pietistic, privatistic biblical pursuits, but rather he is visiting high-church parishes, seeking quiet for reflection, appreciating a more corporate confessional piety like kneeling, and enjoying the more elaborate interiors of those high-church parishes — interiors which would have been much simpler in a more Protestant tradition. In relating these details of Eliot's biography, Lyndall Gordon backs up my contention that the important thing in Eliot's faith is its high-church nature.

6. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 125-126. See also Lyndall Gordon, "Conversion," *T. S. Eliot*, ed. Harold Bloom, *Modern Critical Views* (New York: Chelsea, 1985) 81-82.

7. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 126. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 82.

Further distinguishing between high-church and Protestant traditions, and specifically in regards to the fact of Eliot's conversion, Lyndall Gordon states:

Of all the reformed churches the Church of England retained the closest connection, in formal creed and ritual, with the ancient Roman Church. Eliot, with his interest in a revival of the Catholic tradition, found it freshest in the prayers and sacraments of the Anglo-Catholic inheritors of the Oxford Movement which, a hundred years before, had attempted to revive within the Church of England the best aspects of the Roman Church. For Anglo-Catholics, the pulpit was less significant than the sacraments; faith centred on the altar and the confessional. ... The Anglo-Catholics were a strong and dominant party within the Church at that time and Eliot saw a place for himself there, among people who demanded of themselves a regulated personal life of high sanctity and service.⁸

Eliot sought personal and spiritual renewal at this point in his life. And the Anglo-Catholics provided the best option for his personal orientation towards order and formality and his need for sacramental and confessional emphases, as well as for his personal spiritual quest. Naturally, some would ask why Eliot did not take the next step and join the Roman Catholic Church, with its older historical and liturgical presence, especially since John Henry Cardinal Newman, one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement, made that very step. Many thereby expect someone like Eliot to take the same course of faith action. However, the issue was not one of historical religion and liturgics solely, but was part of the larger pursuit of his English roots. Eliot became an expatriate from America and married an English woman. Later, he converted to Anglicanism and became a British citizen in the same year. Naturally, a high-church Anglicanism could satisfy him much more than membership in the Roman Church for its English identification as well as for its liturgical and sacramental orientation. The Anglican Church offered the best of both worlds.

Of course, such an Anglo-Catholic perspective as Eliot's differs somewhat from that of the rest of society, a difference which also would have appealed to Eliot. Such an orientation brings with it overtones of the monastic life with its withdrawal from the world. This, too, fits nicely with Eliot's Anglo-Catholicism. Gordon cites a 1929 essay by Paul Elmer More that Eliot published in the *Criterion*, in which More contrasts a more corporate, orthodox, catholic faith per-

8. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 126-127. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 82-83.

spective with that of a more typical, personal, Protestant faith orientation.⁹ More, an American Anglican (Episcopalian), became a friend of Eliot's, and the two shared not only a religious orientation but also similar sociopolitical ideals. In his later critical writings, Eliot saw the world from a Christian perspective, similar to the way Paul Elmer More saw the world and wrote about it and unlike the way that most of the rest of society saw the world. In the light of what she has said about More, Gordon adds of Eliot, "In some way Eliot was quite alien to the secular mind of his century." One monk, reflecting on the monastic life, has stated: "A monk's exile is not the result of hatred or contempt. It is the longing for God that compels him to become a stranger. In his isolation he comes to know himself. Then he can begin the struggle for purification."¹⁰ Indeed, it is this separation from society and from family that allows Eliot to find the necessary distance to arrive at his new faith orientation and to be able to write a poem like *The Waste Land*. Further, the journey through the waste land itself becomes a part of the process, as will be discussed in chapter four.

Besides financial concerns, a large part of Eliot's personal waste land grew out of his unhappy marriage to Vivienne. In an attempt to make some necessary changes in his life, in 1925 he left Lloyd's Bank and began to work in Geoffrey Faber's publishing firm and moved to a more pleasant address. Then, on June 29, 1927 (the Commemoration of Sts. Peter and Paul), Eliot was baptized by the American and Anglican priest William Force Stead and joined the Anglican Church. Eliot was confirmed the next morning by the Bishop of Oxford, Thomas Banks Strong. During the previous year, he had already begun to attend regular liturgies, and from his reading of Lancelot Andrewes and St. John of the Cross, he began to move "towards more moderate goals of prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action." He made his first confession, nine months after his baptism, under Father Evelyn Underhill. His recognition of the

9. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 120. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 77.

10. *Where God Walked On Earth: The Monastery of Mt. Sinai* (prod., Revel Guest and Jane Gilmour, dir., John Bulmer, videocassette, Transatlantic and Carras, 1985). At the end of this quote, the monk adds, "Genuine humility is to place oneself lower than all creation — in effect, not to see a single person in the world as inferior." And asserting that there was no superficiality in Eliot's conversion, Lyndall Gordon adds a comment from Eliot's confessor in later life, Father Hillier, affirming also Eliot's true faith humility (Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 121. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 78).

reality of sin, as against an unfocused sense of guilt, proved a relief to him and contributed to his sense of a new life.¹¹

Eliot's faith answered his private needs in the context of the institution of the Anglican Church. Gordon says, "Eliot's dogmatic orthodoxy, his concern with damnation, his intolerance in his earlier years for ordinary sinners, his sense of civilization's decay and doom, his intuitions of a 'promised land beyond the waste' — all this suggests a lingering Puritan strain."¹² Indeed, there was a strong moralistic aspect to Eliot's conversion, some coming from his Puritan roots and some simply a part of his psyche. Lyndall Gordon cites Robert Lowell calling Eliot a "tireless Calvinist ... who harried his pagan English public with godliness and austerity."¹³ This, after *The Waste Land*, must have confused some of Eliot's audience, who saw the poem as capturing the mood of the modern age.¹⁴ But, as will be considered in the fourth chapter, the beginnings of Eliot's spiritual quest are visible in the poem and the poem's original fragments.

Naturally, a discussion of Eliot's motivation, as regards his faith, is interesting and enlightening. As indicated, however, this discussion will focus more specifically on the effect of a *liturgical* faith on Eliot's criticism and poetry. More than just personal piety, a liturgical faith orientation based on the tradition of the Oxford Movement has much to offer someone of Eliot's psychology. His personal needs and intellect led him to a more sacramental orientation with greater stress on confession, Eucharist, and church order. And naturally, someone of Eliot's psychology will have mixed motivations and needs. Several writers lately have written on these topics. Christopher Ricks has looked at Eliot's prejudices. Anthony Julius' recent book has delved deeply into Eliot's anti-Semitism. And David Spurr, in his article in *PMLA*, which is cited in the fourth chapter, has included reference to Ricks' book and to this aspect of Eliot's personality. In a footnote to his article, Spurr gives an excellent brief summary of these issues as they relate to Eliot's psychology and motivation:

11. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 130-131. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 85-86.

12. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 132-133. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 87.

13. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 133. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 88.

14. Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 139. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 93.

Ricks, in his discussion of Eliot's anti-Semitism, cites two theories related to the one I propose. Graham Martin remarks that "when [Eliot] was still struggling to attach himself to an acceptable version of English society (in the deepest sense), the uncultured Jew functioned as a whipping boy for his own suppressed self" (Ricks 28n). More ingeniously, William Empson finds an oedipal source of Eliot's anti-Semitism in feelings of resentment toward his Unitarian father: "Now if you are hating a purse-proud businessman who denies that Jesus is God, into what stereotype does he best fit?" (Ricks 47). In a letter to J. V. Healy, ... Eliot compares the Jewish religion, "shorn of its traditional practices," with "a mild and colourless form of Unitarianism" (Ricks 44).¹⁵

While this would prove a most interesting and fruitful discussion, especially in the context of Eliot's orthodox religious orientation, it falls somewhat outside of the parameters of this study. Suffice it to say that Eliot's religion was a mix of personal religious needs and psychological motivations and needs. And where those psychological needs impinge on the religious, there is an opportunity for some degree of clarification that serves primarily to undergird Eliot's specifically high-church orientation, with its emphasis on confession, liturgy, and order.

A more recent commentator has built on this information about Eliot in order to present a psychoanalytic understanding of Eliot and his religious conversion. Psychoanalyst Murray H. Sherman's article "T. S. Eliot: His Religion, His Poetry, His Roles" appeared in a recent issue of *The Psychoanalytic Review*. Commenting on Eliot's conversion, Sherman makes sense of it psychologically, from Eliot's family background:

Reaction to an overly zealous upbringing often takes the form of agnosticism. Eliot's rebellion went the other way. He came to a new faith out of his need for the dramatic inspiration that he felt was lacking in his early years. Eliot craved awe-inspiring ceremony and prescribed ritual, the color, symbolism, and mystery that were absent in his literal Unitarian upbringing. These religious rituals also served as a defense against painful feelings from childhood.¹⁶

Sherman not only cites Eliot's childhood and psychological needs, but also notes Eliot's choice of a liturgical church. He adds, "[Eliot] also said that he did not become a Christian until he entered the Anglican Church. ... Eliot was referring to the Christian doctrines of the Holy Trin-

15. David Spurr, "Myths of Anthropology: Eliot, Joyce, Lévy-Bruhl," *PMLA* 109 (March 1994): 279. Spurr's references are to Christopher Ricks, *T. S. Eliot and Prejudice* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988). And for further discussion of Eliot's anti-Semitism, the reader is referred to Anthony Julius, *T. S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism, and Literary Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995).

16. Murray H. Sherman, "T. S. Eliot: His Religion, His Poetry, His Roles," *The Psychoanalytic Review* 84.1 (February 1997): 74-75.

ity, Original Sin, and the Incarnation — dogmas that are absent in the Unitarian Church but which supplied a crucial challenge to his own intellect and vision.”¹⁷ In asking questions about Eliot’s religious dedication, his religion as a possible psychological defense, and his childhood, Sherman looks to Eliot’s life history and his writings for further clues. For my purposes, I am reversing that process, looking for clues from his personal and religious orientation that inform his writings.

Sherman discusses Eliot’s early interest in religion, dating back to his Harvard days and following through to his writing of *The Waste Land*. He notes the moral influence of Irving Babbitt in 1909, Eliot’s subsequent interest in Hinduism and Buddhism, and the philosophical and religious orthodox influence of T. E. Hulme. This movement toward religion led to his bad marriage.¹⁸ A critical part of Eliot’s marital woes was the part Bertrand Russell played in terms of his relation to Eliot’s wife. And this, Sherman asserts, drove Eliot even closer to his conversion, since Russell seemed to push agnosticism to its limits.¹⁹ This, his moral concerns, and his rejection of his family’s Unitarianism sent Eliot “searching for an ideal father figure,” while simultaneously, if part of a natural ambivalence, satirizing the Church in some of his poems.²⁰ Sherman also mentions in passing Eliot’s “unceasing anxiety and dread,” and “abulia, the inability to make or act upon decisions, ... Eliot’s lifelong affliction.” From this, Sherman notes that “*The Waste Land* was considered a highly allusive depiction of people’s disillusionment following World War I. More recent critical opinion has centered upon the poem’s expression of Eliot’s acute torment and grief in his marriage.”²¹ Sherman reads Tiresias in *The Waste Land* as “the key figure to an understanding of Eliot’s own self-identity,” referring to Tiresias’ bisexuality.²² While this, in turn, leads Sherman to reflect on Eliot’s “castration anxiety,” “unconscious bisexual impulses,” and “unconscious homosexuality,” citing Eliot’s reactions to such charges

17. Sherman 75.

18. Sherman 76-77.

19. Sherman 79.

20. Sherman 80.

21. Sherman 81.

22. Sherman 84-85.

and Bertrand Russell's relationship with Vivienne, more to the point he goes on to cite the "sado-masochistic quality" of *The Waste Land* in such fragments as *The Death of Saint Narcissus* and *The Love Song of St. Sebastian*.²³ Here, the two elements of religious development and sexual diversity come together. While Sherman notes the replacement of those earlier figures by St. Thomas à Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* and by Celia in *The Cocktail Party*, he also asserts the shift of Eliot's sadomasochism to "a need for discipline in his sacramental devotions."²⁴

In his final section, Sherman mentions Eliot's writing about Donne in 1921. He claims that "Eliot was drawn to the poet as an Anglo-Catholic priest, his own ideal self-image at the time. ... Eliot's critical judgments of poets often depended, in part, upon their religious convictions. When he later (1926) became disenchanted with Donne and turned to Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626), he compared the two."²⁵ I will discuss Eliot's essay in which he compares the two in my third chapter. For now, it is interesting to note Eliot's relatively early interest in priests, and even more in Anglo-Catholicism, and to note a movement in his interests from a more popular poet and priest — saying of Donne's sermons that they are "known precisely for the reasons because of which they are inferior to those of Andrewes" — toward a more orthodox and traditional priest — saying of Andrewes that he is "described as 'an ancient saint, semi-ascetic and unearthly in ... self denial ... typically Anglican.'"²⁶ Sherman also notes this change in Eliot's interest, from 1921 to 1926, in terms of increased spirituality leading up to his conversion. Of course, the Christian poet with the greatest effect on Eliot was Dante, by Eliot's own admission. Sherman sees Eliot's "identification with Dante ... [to be] a major channel through which Eliot came to Anglo-Catholicism and was able to convert his emotional/sexual conflicts into the religious themes of his poetry."²⁷ So here, again, Eliot's sexual identity and his religious development come together in the context of his poetry and his criticism. Sherman concludes: "[Eliot]

23. Sherman 85-86.

24. Sherman 87.

25. Sherman 98, 99. Of course, as noted earlier, this shift in interest and reading was in part due to the influence of William Force Stead — see Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years* 125-126. See also Gordon, "Conversion" 81-82.

26. Sherman 99 [*sic*].

27. Sherman 101.

chose an identity that suited him completely; one could almost say that the role chose him. Finally, joining a part of the Church of England cemented all the other aspects of his English identity. Eliot had completed the transformation from the son of an American, a Unitarian, and a man of business, to become a citizen of England, an Anglo-Catholic, and a poet."²⁸

28. Sherman 103-104.