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**The unquiet boundary, or the footnote
Auto-exegetic modes in (neo-)modernist poetry**

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“It is generally supposed that where there is no QUOTATION, there will be found most originality. Our writers usually furnish their pages rapidly with the productions of their own soil: they run up a quickset hedge, or plant a poplar, and get trees and hedges of this fashion much faster than the former landlords procured their timber. The greater part of our writers, in consequence, have become so original, that no one cares to imitate them; and those who never quote, in return are seldom quoted!”

Isaac Disraeli, *Curiosities of Literature*

“I have been accused of wanting to make people read all the classics; which is not so. I have been accused of wishing to provide a ‘portable substitute for the British Museum,’ which I would do, like a shot, were it possible. It isn’t.”

Ezra Pound, *How to Read*

Clearly unhappy with the course of the scholarly treatment of his notes to *The Waste Land*, T.S. Eliot revisits the exegetical site three decades after the modernist *annus mirabilis* in “The Frontiers of Criticism” (1956). Even though he acknowledges that he is not wholly “guiltless of having led critics into temptation” by his annotation, and even though he regrets “having sent so many enquirers off on a wild goose chase,”¹ the poet does not publicly condemn his previous method. Retracing and reinforcing the frontiers of a profitable critical enterprise, Eliot calls for a more immediate, and intuitive interaction between the poetic lines and their “paratext.”²

However, thus still defending the aesthetic value of his referential apparatus, Eliot seems to have lost faith in the continuity of such practice in the contemporary creative and critical climate. He expresses his skepticism in an ironic self-castigating statement: "I don't think that these notes did any harm to other poets: certainly I cannot think of any good contemporary poet who abused this same practice."³ Nevertheless, while the expatriate poet was delivering his speech at the University of Minnesota, the reading public in Britain found itself confronted with the densely annotated text of David Jones' *Anathémata* (1952) and, only several years later, with a similar referential expansion in Basil Bunting's *Briggflatts* (1966).

Even though the critical debate regarding the irreducible presence of Eliot's notes to *The Waste Land* has been raging since the early reviews of Edmund Wilson published at the end of 1922 in the *Dial* and the *Literary Review*,⁴ and until the latter days of Deconstruction,⁵ their importance has not been yet assessed in terms of modernism's aesthetic continuity and divergence in the second half of the century. Also, while the paratextual dimension of *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts* has been repeatedly acknowledged, the critical discourse has not yet recognized and contextualized its aesthetic and pragmatic potential.⁶

Jones' and Bunting's annotation of their poetic sequences reflects a self-proclaimed affinity with Eliot's complex historical and cultural reference, and directly challenges the self-contained introspection and immediate empirical frame dominating British post-war poetry. In reviving the paratextual apparatus, Jones and Bunting radically breach their culture's poetic decorum; the appending of notes to their lines can be interpreted (echoing Hugh Kenner's lament in *Sinking Island*) as "a honest, and desperate, rejection of much communality gone facile."⁷ Even though this is the time when Kingsley Amis declares his boycott of "any more poems about philosophers or paintings or novelists or art galleries or mythology or foreign cities or other poems,"⁸ Jones and Bunting revive the ethnological and anthropological temper of Eliot's poetry by creating their "imaginary museums,"⁹ and collecting the evidence.¹⁰

In 1921, Eliot formulates a brief manifesto of his challenging poetics in "The Metaphysical Poets": "[P]oets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be

difficult. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity [...] must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect."¹¹ The first issue of *The Criterion*, launched in October 1922 with Eliot's *Waste Land*, opened with "Dullness," a short essay by George Saintsbury. The author encourages readers' active participation in the writer's art of "suggestion and allusion."¹² As if anticipating the future charges raised against Eliot's poem with notes, he exhorts his readers: "Never simply pass – still less condemn – a reference or allusion that you cannot finish or play up to [...] without making sure that the fault is not your own."¹³

Thirty years later, David Jones formulates a similar apology for the cultural reference in his Preface to *The Anathémata*:

If one is making a table it is possible that one's relationship to the Battle of Hastings or to the Nicene Creed might have little bearing on [its] form; but if one is making a sonnet such kinds of relationships become factors of more evident importance. If one is making a painting of a daffodil what is *not* instantly involved? Will it make any difference whether or no we have heard of Persephone or Flora or Blodeuedd? I am of the opinion that it will make a difference [...].¹⁴

Even though Basil Bunting always tended to be more reserved in his theoretical pronouncements than David Jones, significant evidence can be found in the public and private "epitext" to his work.¹⁵ In 1953, the poet writes to Louis Zukofsky drawing a list of his ancestors from Lucretius and Horace through Ferdosi and Manucheri to Wordsworth. His letter ends in a curious inquiry: "Could one make a kind of 'Education of X' out of these reflections?"¹⁶ Only ten years later, the sum of his knowledge and inspiration found its most complex shape in *Briggflatts*.

Not only the inquisitive temperament and culture-concerned disposition did constantly extend Jones' and Bunting's scope of reference and inspired the annotation of *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts* but it was also the poets' awareness of dealing with previously unmapped geo-historical territory which intensified their interest in the paratextual support. This concern is clearly voiced in Jones' Preface. Justifying the presence of the notes on every page of his sequence, he reiterates Eliot's cultural anxiety: "There have been culture-phases when the maker and the society in which he lived shared an enclosed and common background, where the

terms of reference were common to all. It would be an affectation to pretend that such was our situation today.”¹⁷ In the same breath he acknowledges more specifically and urgently that he “glossed the text in order to open up ‘unshared backgrounds’”¹⁸ of his specific geo-historic scape.¹⁹ Even though, contrasting with Jones’ approach, Bunting did not articulate his rationale behind the annotation of *Briggflatts* and titled his notes simply as “Afterthoughts,” he still found it necessary for the success of his poetic enterprise to facilitate the reader’s semantic access to “the flora, the fauna, the topography, and the agricultural and domestic traditions” of the Northumbrian region.²⁰

However, while the unfamiliarity of the cultural and linguistic deposits of the respective regions in *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts* undoubtedly prompted the relative abundance of their notes, the marginality of the sung areas in the atlas of national aesthetics vindicated their presence in yet another sense. In his study of textual reference, *La Seconde Main, ou le Travail de la Citation* (1979), Antoine Compagnon claims: “Loin d’être un détail du livre, un trait périphérique de la lecture et de l’écriture, la citation représente un enjeu capital, un lieu stratégique et même politique dans toute pratique du langage.”²¹ The annotation of Jones and Bunting should be seen in this complex perspective; it should be assessed as a singularly important juncture of the geo-political and literary impulses of their work. The marginalized historical and linguistic discourse of their regions adopts and activates the textual margin in the name of their politico-cultural assertion.

The annotation strategy as practiced by T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* reflects and incorporates centuries of cultural acknowledgement. The presence of the textual reference implies awareness of literary heritage and precedence; a bibliographical note consecrates influence and claims continuity. The act of acknowledged intertextuality can be viewed, in Compagnon’s words, as “une canonization métonymique.”²² Not only though does this process elicit formative influence, but it also, in the same textual gesture, inscribes the cultural descendant in the present current of tradition.²³

Since the first ecclesiastic and literary commentaries of the Western culture, the presence of annotation has been regarded as a singular index of the text’s

canonicity.²⁴ The ancient rhetoric and early patristics cultivate the referential note as a touch of and tribute to the “auctoritas.”²⁵ The history of the British Isles is set in motion through the historiographic research and reference of the Venerable Bede, “Father of the footnote.”²⁶ The “delicate networks of annotation”²⁷ saved (at least temporarily) the prestigious edifice of early modern British history. Publishing his *Historia Anglica* in 1534, Polydore Vergil, an English historian of Italian extraction, voiced his radical protest against one of the major sources of the national pride – the claim that the British were direct descendants of Brutus, the legendary Trojan prince and founder of London, Trinovantum or New Troy.²⁸ This serious erosion of national foundations was finally checked by the weight of reference. Support and answer was found in the commentaries to the ancient historical text published by the Dominican Annius of Viterbo in 1498 as *Commentaria super opera diversor auctor de antiquitatibus loquentium*.²⁹ One of the staunchest supporters of the classic roots of the “Albionic” civilization, claiming Greek origin of “Britannia,”³⁰ was Sir Thomas Elyot, the sixteenth-century collateral ancestor of T.S. Eliot.³¹

Throughout *The Waste Land*, Eliot initiates a distinguished dialogue with his canonized predecessors. Even though his references might suggest multiple sources of extraction, it is the most illustrious textual instance which is committed to the (para)textual memory. The poem’s title might indeed evoke “The Wasteland” by Madison Cawein, published in the January 1913 issue of *Poetry*;³² however, the reference to the Grail legend and annotation of the scene of conflicting passion and asceticism in the last lines of “The Fire Sermon” identify works of Thomas Malory and St. Augustine as the authoritative sources. Even though, as Michael Whitworth argues in his recent article,³³ the apostrophe of the “Sweet Thames” in the opening stanza of third section might echo Eliot’s familiarity with the contemporary literary scene – Kipling’s short stories, D. H. Lawrence’s novels or poetry by Ernest Radford – the annotation favors the Elizabethan inspiration referring to Spenser’s “Prothalamion” (1590).

The regional poetics of David Jones and Basil Bunting cannot claim any similar textual support and literary continuity. The annotation of *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts* can be hardly seen as the poets’ canonizing self-inscription. Inspired by the

cultural memory of the north-western territory, preserved almost exclusively in the oral form through the centuries of politico-cultural oppression and linguistic decline, Jones' and Bunting's poetry will – in spite of the seeming formal conformity with Eliot's model – profess a different philosophy and strategy of annotation. In his study of literary paratext, Kevin Jackson notices that the material and structural nature of the (foot)note distinguish it from many other elements of the textual framework as the “most inescapably Gutenbergian.”³⁴ Drawing largely on a non-printerly regional history, Jones and Bunting cannot, without profanation of their indigenous love, aspire to the Eliotean refinement and ease of the annotating procedure.

Conversely, they decidedly reject their local precedents. While several notes inscribed in the margins of the eighth-century Lichfield Gospels have been identified as the earliest example of “written syntactical Welsh,”³⁵ this textual evidence appears only too symptomatic of the linguistic hierarchy in the region. While the northern past inspired the arguably longest footnote in the recorded history – when Rev. John Hodgson, an “industrious antiquary” and a native of Northumberland,³⁶ described the monumental presence of the Roman Wall in a note running from p.157 to p.322 of his *History of Northumberland* (1840) – the honorable mention of this historiographic feat only intensifies the feeling of exoticism and eccentricity regarding the country's boundary.³⁷

In spite of the initial dilemma and disadvantage, Jones' and Bunting's annotations were to become instruments of aesthetical empowerment, not further suppression and subjugation. As perceptive students of Eliot's poetics, both Jones and Bunting realized the singular importance of the textual margin in the literary politics. The example of *The Waste Land* revealed the poetic paratext to be a zone of an intense historical negotiation. For Jones and Bunting the notes become a dynamic site of scriptoral conversion and translation where the problematic notion of the regional textuality is constantly re-addressed. The unwritten local memory strives for verbal codification and graphic permanence in the margins of *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts*.

While the opening lines of Jones' sequence focusing on the rites of the early Christian liturgy have been traditionally interpreted as the dawn of the Western art

and sacrament, the priest's "groping syntax"³⁸ – struggling with the linguistic form yet already potent with the cultural meaning – can be seen as representative of the poet's own effort to capture the regional spirituality and physiognomy in suggestive and significant language forms. The opening paratextual mark in *Briggflatts* indicates a similar effort. Juxtaposing the excerpt of the medieval *Libro de Alexandre* inspired by the well-known late legend and a distinct element of Northumbrian dialect – "spuggies" ("little sparrows")³⁹ – Bunting documents the unsuspected vitality and expressive potential of the local idiom showing northern rather than Mediterranean influence.⁴⁰

The notes to the two sequences constantly remind the reader of the poets' textualizing effort. Annotating their poetry, Jones and Bunting record their search for lexical phonetic stability in the territories which practically lack written paradigm, marginalized by the standard literary discourse. Interweaving his poem with Welsh words and phrases, David Jones proves the expressive potential of the language which suffered such chronic neglect since the introduction of Tudor cultural sanctions in the sixteenth century.⁴¹ While the lines of *The Anathémata* testify abundantly to the musicality and precision of Welsh as it incessantly alternates with Latin and English, the appended footnotes emphasize its historicity and legibility. Not only Jones' glosses thus assert the intelligibility of the indigenous semantics ("Erwau, plural of *erw*, acre; érr-wye, accent on first syllable. Not in fact an acre or any fixed unit, but land equally divided among the members of a plough-team under the Celtic system of co-aration.⁴²), but they also activate the aural dimension supporting the verbal and cultural stability of the native idiom ("Latin mensae, altars, rhymes with Welsh eglwysau, churches; eg-loois-ei, ei as in height, accent on second syllable."⁴³) and, even more significantly, prove the exegetical potential of Welsh ("Mannanan mac Lir, in Welsh Manawydan mab Llyr, the sea god; moroedd, seas, mor-roithe. Monapia, the name of the Isle of Man in Pliny. Ynys Fôn, un-iss von, o as in vote, the Island of Mona, Anglesey"⁴⁴).

Though less abundant, Bunting's notes are equally suggestive of the poet's effort to provide his regional vision with a stable textual basis. The "Afterthoughts" to *Briggflatts* not only document the presence of a local lexical alternative

marginalized in the national linguistic consciousness (“We have burns in the east, BECKS in the west, but no brooks or creeks.”⁴⁵) and testify to the regional expressive vitality and self-awareness (“SKILLET: an American frying pan; and GIRDLE, an English griddle.”; “The male salmon after spawning is called a KELT.”⁴⁶), but they also highlight the phonetic dichotomy which, even though essential to the poem’s textuality, remains critically underemphasized.

Bunting’s admonition regarding “scone” – “rhyme it with ‘on’, not, for heaven’s sake, ‘own’”⁴⁷ – symptomatically reveals the aural particularities of the poem’s texture undiagnosed in the written presentation. Without obscuring the form of his lines in the dialectal transcription, Bunting thus emphasizes the specific resonance of his poem unaffected by the transitions in the southern pronunciation.⁴⁸ The notes alert us that the unsuspected vocal allegiance of Swinburne and Wordsworth becomes “the sound of [Bunting’s] sense.”⁴⁹

In the “Afterthoughts,” the poet pens a lasting epigraph to the region’s historical and cultural casualties. Even though Bunting’s final draft eliminates the suggestive and textually integrative sequence of subtitles (“*Son los pasariellos del mal pelo exidos / Bloodaxe / Longe processit e flammantia moenia mundi / Aneurin / Nox est una perpetua dormienda*”⁵⁰), the local characters still leave a permanent trace in the paratext. The appended notes revisit the obliterated textual site: “Northumbrians should know Eric BLOODAXE but seldom do. Because all the school histories are written by or for southrons.”⁵¹

The regional reference of Jones’ and Bunting’s poems distinctly affects the form, and function, of their annotations in yet another sense. Their indigenous sensibility opens up an aesthetic dialogue with the canonic / canonizing textual strategy in a way paradoxically more rigorous and regular than Eliot’s transatlantic pursuit of the Western culture.

After the assent of New Criticism and the later challenge of Deconstruction, Eliot’s notes seem to resist the scholarly exegesis as ever before. The indeterminacy of their textual participation has resulted in a cacophony of critical voices: while some considered their presence indispensable and illuminating, appreciated their referential detail (“[F]or ornithologists even the passage from Chapman would have

the advantage of exact description."⁵²), others came close to a complete dismissal of their aesthetic and informative value.

In 1923, F. L. Lucas, a Renaissance scholar at Cambridge attacked Eliot's notes as being "as muddled as they are incomplete,"⁵³ evidently disturbed by the tension between their standard formal appearance which invited serious textual collation and their frequent failure to guarantee an appropriate interpretative guidance. Even in his highly intuitive study of Eliot's aesthetic approach, Hugh Kenner concludes his brief interlude on the notes: "We have license [...] to ignore them."⁵⁴

The publication history of *The Waste Land* further aggravates the critical dissent regarding the integration of Eliot's note in his synthesizing cultural project. By 1956 the notes has become a stable (and staple) part of the poem in the popular consciousness so that Eliot could claim in his American lecture: "I have sometimes thought of getting rid of these notes; but now they can never be unstuck. [A]nyone who bought my book of poems, and found that the notes to *The Waste Land* were not in it, would demand his money back."⁵⁵ However, in spite of this impression of unity and necessity, the poem has not been always so distinctly framed by its paratext. When first published in Britain and United States in October 1922, *The Waste Land* was not accompanied by any notes in either the *Criterion* or the *Dial*.⁵⁶ Only when finally released in a book form by Boni and Liveright two months later, the poem was followed by several pages of Eliot's references.

In spite of the chronological evidence of the poet's aesthetic and publishing enterprise in the correspondence between himself, Ezra Pound and his American publishers, a satisfactory explanation of this addition seems still beyond critics' grasp. Eliot's own explanation of his motive ("When it came to print *The Waste Land* as a little book [...] it was discovered that the poem was inconveniently short, so I set to work to expand the notes, in order to provide a few more pages of printed matter."⁵⁷) has proved nearly as enigmatic as the late annotation itself. In contrast to Eliot's words, not even the later publishing instances were free of doubt: the poet himself "presumably approved" of the reprinting of *The Waste Land* without annotation in Michael Roberts's *Faber Book of Modern Verse* in 1936,⁵⁸ in the 1963 edition of his *Collected Poems*, the notes are indexed separately, prepositionally offset

as “Notes on The Waste Land.”⁵⁹ The formal uncertainty has only intensified the exegetical crisis of Eliot’s annotation.

The discussion of the notes in *The Waste Land* has been primarily concerned with the schism felt between the textual and paratextual levels, between the image or phrase and its referential anchoring. The comparative analysis of Eliot’s notes, and Jones’ and Bunting’s annotative method reveals the crucial importance of the third element in the (in)equation – the physical referent. For Jones’ and Bunting’s textualizing process documented above, the translation of the land’s memory and local idiom into the literary medium was imperative. The close correspondence of the physical and the textual site in *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts* could be ensured only by the transparency of the paratextual membrane. Eliot’s wondering over the written pages of the Western heritage had activated a multitude of intertextual echoes; the paratext revealed this instability. In contrast, notes to *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts* restore the stability of the land and the corresponding reference.

A high degree of formal integration characterizes Jones’ and Bunting’s annotation. Unlike the “later” or “delayed” notes⁶⁰ to *The Waste Land*, the referential apparatus in *The Anathémata* becomes an organic part of the poem’s graphic presentation. Enveloping the lines on every page,⁶¹ the notes become, through their visual presence, an integral element of the textual sphere. Occasionally, the notes extend over a whole page, thus revealing the participative authority of the paratext. Unlike Eliot, who withheld comments on the paratextual extension and integration, Jones encourages the simultaneity of reading and consideration: “The notes, because they so often concern the *sounds* of the words used in the text, and are thus immediately relevant to its *form*, are printed along with it, rather than at the back of the book.”⁶² Also, while the individual publications of *The Waste Land* usually modify the poem’s page count and layout, editions of *The Anathémata* have preserved the original disposition of the printed text out of respect for the stable unity of the text and its frame.

Even though when annotating *Briggflatts* Bunting adopted the format of the endnote and thus a more loosely integrated referential strategy, his “Afterthoughts,” similar to Jones’ “original notes,”⁶³ have been part of the composition since the first

publication. Apparently formally divorced from the text, the notes nevertheless present an organic, unambiguous extension of the poem. The meditative cadence of the last section overflows into the Coda forming a fluid connection between the absorbed immediacy of the poem's rhythms and the reflective, analyzing note of the annotation. Even though Bunting's referential format eliminates the precision of the numbered note of *The Anathémata*, his "Afterthoughts" are no less trustworthy. The lack of typical codification suggests intimacy in contrast with the formal acknowledgment.

Contentual directness characterizes annotation in both *The Anathémata* and *Briggflatts*. Striving for documentative clarity and disambiguation in his notes, David Jones develops a practice of abundant cross-referencing and excursive exploration. The note for "Sherthursdaye bright" in the opening section illustrates Jones' explicative care:

See *Le Morte d'Arthur*, xvii, 20, 'Everyman' edition; modernized spelling: 'the holy dish wherein I ate the lamb on Sher-Thursday'. The textual authority on Malory's work, Professor Vinaver, gives 'on Estir Day' for Caxton's 'on sherthursdaye' and notes the latter as a corrupt variant. A French source is given as *le jour de Pasques*. But as the words 'Thursday' and 'holy dish' are, by gospel, rite, calendar and cultus, indissolubly connected, I regard Caxton's variant as most fortunate. Hence the use of 'shersthursdaye' here and in the title of Section 8 of this book.⁶⁴

Eliot himself cannot escape Jones' clarifying effort. The vision of the "virid month of Avri-le" by the Lady of the Pool not only recalls "anon. thirteenth-fourteenth-century poem *Alisoun*" but "also T.S. Eliot, *Waste Land*, I, i."⁶⁵

Even though Bunting's approach conspicuously contrasts with Jones', and the explicative restraint of the former even inspires the claim that "no notes are needed,"⁶⁶ the referential value of the information is not compromised. Even though in several instances Bunting could be charged with underspecification ("HASTOR: a Cockney hero."; "WILSON was no less known than TELFER, but no less skilful."⁶⁷), biographical research easily identifies a particular connection.⁶⁸

Bunting's notes strive for a geo-morphological authentication and accessibility. They stabilize the signified when the form is opaque: "MAY, the flower, as haw is the

fruit, of the thorn";⁶⁹ they promote factual accuracy: "SIRIUS is too young to remember because the light we call by his name left its star only eight year ago; but the light from CAPELLA, now in the zenith, set out 45 years ago [...]." ⁷⁰ Bunting confirmed this tendency in an interview in 1977 insisting that one has to "take care to write about things one knows about, or to make damned sure they are correct."⁷¹ Even though the meditative silence of the early saints and the seventeenth-century Quakers presents a significant part of the Northumbrian heritage and the notes to *Briggflatts* are written by a native *appetitor silentii*,⁷² Bunting's annotative ellipsis completes and honors rather than obscures the portrait of his region.

Neither Jones' nor Bunting's annotations reflect the scope of Tiresias' prophecy or disseminates signs of the Tarot prophecy. Their regional compositions return the literary note to its distinct "local character"⁷³ without, however, diminishing the poetry's expressive and referential potential, or abandoning Eliot's imperative of difficulty.

NOTES

¹ T.S. Eliot, "The Frontiers of Criticism," *On Poetry and Poets* (New York: Farrar, 1957) 121-2.

² Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997). In the Introduction to his study, Genette characterizes *paratext* as "what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public. More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a *threshold*, or – a word used by Borges apropos of a preface – a "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. It is an 'undefined zone' between the inside and the outside [...] a zone not only of transition but also of transaction [...] at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies)" (1-2). In "The Critic as Host," *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Seabury, 1979), J. Hillis Miller analyses the semantic and pragmatic nature of the prefix: "'Para' is a double antithetical prefix signifying at once proximity and distance, similarity and difference, interiority and exteriority [...]. A thing in 'para' is not only simultaneously on both sides of the boundary line between inside and out. It is also the boundary itself, the screen which is a permeable membrane connecting inside and outside. It confuses them with one another, allowing the inside in, making the inside out, dividing them and joining them" (219). For an insightful commentary regarding the framing device in art see Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987). Derrida's threshold, *parergon*, is defined as "neither work ('ergon') nor outside the work ('hors d'oeuvre'), neither inside nor outside, neither above nor below" disconcerting any opposition but not remaining indeterminate and actually "giving rise" to the work. He

continues: "It is no longer merely around the work. That which it puts in place – the instances of the frame, the title, the signature, the legend, etc. – does not stop disturbing the internal order of discourse on painting, its works, its commerce, its evaluations, its surplus-values, its speculation, its law, its hierarchies" (9).

³ Eliot, "Frontiers" 121.

⁴ For the text of Edmund Wilson's review, "The Poetry of Drought," published in the *Dial* see *The Waste Land: Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism* edited by Michael North (140-45). For a brief retrospect regarding the critical response to Eliot's annotation see Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, "Disciplining *The Waste Land*, or How to Lead Critics into Temptation," *Twentieth Century Literature* 44.1 (1998): 82-4.

⁵ Kaiser 83.

⁶ For a more comprehensive account of the critical dialogue regarding the neomodernist paratext see the author's master thesis "*Out from gens Romulum into the Weal-kin*": *Re-locating Modernist Poetics in David Jones' Anathémata and Basil Bunting's Briggflatts* (UMI Dissertation Publishing, 2007).

⁷ Hugh Kenner, *A Sinking Island: The Modern English Writers* (New York: Knopf, 1988) 262.

⁸ Donald Davie, *The Poet in the Imaginary Museum: Essays on Two Decades*, ed. Barry Alpert (New York: Persea 1977) 48. Similarly, D.J. Enright voices his unease regarding the presence and preservation of the tradition "which apparently takes the form of tasteful quotations from the Greek with an odd nymph or two thrown in" (48).

⁹ Davie, *Poet* 45. The author acknowledges here his inspiration by André Malraux's concept of *musée imaginaire* regarding the modern art.

¹⁰ G. W. Bowersock ("The Art of the Footnote," *American Scholar* 53 [1983]: 54-62), and Betsy Hilbert

("Elegy for Excursus: The Descent of the Footnote," *College English* 51.4 [1989]: 400-4) remind their readers of the deprecatory remark made by Noel Coward regarding the footnote's essential inconvenience. The artist compared encountering a footnote in a text to "going downstairs to answer the doorbell while making love" (Bowersock 54). Considering the vigor of their annotation, Bunting and Jones must have managed to please several muses with attention and grace.

¹¹ T.S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, 1950) 248.

¹² George Saintsbury, "Dullness," *The Criterion* 1.1 (1922): 8.

¹³ Saintsbury 15.

¹⁴ David Jones, *The Anathémata* (New York: Viking 1965) 10.

¹⁵ Genette in *Paratexts* characterizes "epitext" as any text-related "element not materially appended to the text within the same volume but circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually limitless physical and social space" (344). What distinguishes the private epitext from the public epitext is "not exactly that in the former the author is not aiming at the public and therefore does not have publication in view [...]. For us, what will define this character is a presence of a first addressee interposed between the author and the possible public, an addressee (a correspondent, a confidant, the author himself) who is perceived not just an intermediary or functionally transparent relay, a media 'nonperson,' but indeed as a full-fledged addressee, one whom the author addresses for that person's own sake" (371).

¹⁶ Dale Reagan, "Basil Bunting Obiter Dicta," *Basil Bunting: Man and Poet*, ed. Carroll F. Terrell (Orono, ME: The National Poetry Foundation, 1981) 268.

¹⁷ Jones, *Anathémata* 14.

¹⁸ Jones, *Anathémata* 14. For a more personal account of this historico-aesthetic predicament see Jones' essay "On the Difficulty of One Writer of Welsh Affinity Whose Language is English" in *The Dying Gaul and Other Writings*, ed. Harman Grisewood (London: Faber, 1978) 30-4. The poet concludes his reflection: "I have mentioned only some of the excruciating

difficulties of the situation. I see it as a civilizational situation – of traditions wholly or partly lost – of linguistic changes that can't be overcome. And, after all, all 'artists' or 'poets' of whatever sort can best work within the civilizational or cultural setting in which they find themselves. They are not responsible for the particular circumstances into which they were born. So I suppose the most that any of us can do is to 'show forth' the things that seem real to us and which we have inherited by this accident or that. What does matter is that one feel oneself that it is *valid*" (34).

¹⁹ In his review of *Anathémata*, published as "A Contemporary Epic" in *Encounter* 2.2 (1954): 67-71, W. H. Auden regards Jones' annotation with understanding: "While the riddle element has always existed in poetry, the disappearance of a homogenous society with a common cult, a common myth, common terms of reference, has created difficulties in communication for the poet which are historically new and quite outside his control" (69). His advice to the reader is "read very slowly, consulting *every* note" in order to appreciate Jones' synthesizing cultural effort (68). In *Making, Knowing and Judging* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956), Auden returns to the problem of density and desirability of cultural referencing. He designs four questions to ask literary critics to test their discernment: 'Do you like, and by like I really mean like, not approve of on principle: 1. Long lists of proper names such as the Old Testament genealogies or the Catalogue of ships in *The Iliad*? 2. Riddles and all other ways of not calling spade a spade? 3. Complicated verse forms of great technical difficulty, such as Englyns, Drott-Kvaetts, Sestinas, even if their content is trivial? 4. Conscious theatrical exaggeration, piece of baroque flattery like Dryden's welcome to the Duchess of Ormond? If a critic could truthfully answer 'yes' to all four, then I should trust his judgment implicitly on all literary matters" (19).

²⁰ Burton Hatlen, "Regionalism and Internationalism in Basil Bunting's *Briggflatts*," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 13.1 (2000): 52. Constantly emphasizing the truly international inspiration and sensibility of Bunting's sequence, Hatlen comes to a crucial recognition of the poet's aspiration: "Except for the scattering of words here noted, however, the language of *Briggflatts* is reasonably standard English. For Bunting was not a dialect poet, in the usual sense of that term. Dialect poetry tends toward a self-conscious quaintness, and Bunting had a very different beast in view. The theme of *Briggflatts* is, in a word, memory" (52).

²¹ Antoine Compagnon, *La Seconde Main, ou le Travail de la Citation* (Paris: Seuil, 1979) 12: "Far from being a mere detail in the book, a peripheral presence in the reading and writing process, a citation represents a major stake, a strategic and even political locus in any use of language."

²² Compagnon 29.

²³ This canonic pledge and allegiance inherent in the annotating practice evidently caused much unease to Hart Crane, Eliot's fellow poet and countryman. Celebrating the New World, its specific aesthetic and mythic potential, and democratic aspirations in *The Bridge* (1930), he eliminates the paratextual traces in the final draft. At an advanced stage of composition, the poet writes to his friend, critic and novelist Waldo Frank: "Don't know whether I'll use the enclosed 'Notes' or not. A reaction to Eliot's *Waste Land* notes put them in my head" (271).

²⁴ For a brief historical overview of the quotation and commentary practice see John B. Henderson Scripture, *Canon, and Commentary: A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis* (Princeton: Princeton UP: 1991) 3-9. Henderson reminds us that "until the seventeenth century in Europe, and even later in China, India, and the Near East, thought, especially within high intellectual traditions, was primarily exegetical in character and expression" (3). Also, bearing in mind Eliot's own paratextual approach, Henderson makes another important observation: "[C]ommentators in various traditions harbored a great variety of attitudes toward their respective canons, ranging from worshipful reverence to playfulness"

(5). Henderson's study shows early literary tradition developing analogous exegetical practice: "The inclusion in this study of the commentarial traditions that developed from Homer and, to a lesser extent, Vergil may also require some explanation or justification. Although moderns tend to regard the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and *Aeneid* primarily as literary works, this was not so true of the ancients for many of whom Homer, in particular, was scripture. The epic poems attributed to him were the subjects of extensive commentary, literary imitations, and even school exercises throughout most of classical antiquity" (8). Discussing the later "transfiguration" of the commentary tradition, the author sees the strategies of contemporary literary criticism as "adapted traditional modes of commentarial discourse" (200-1).

²⁵ Compagnon 11.

²⁶ J.D.A. Ogilvy, *The Place of Wermouth and Jarrow in Western Cultural History* (Jarrow: Saxby, 1970) 9. In their study of early medieval cultural colonization, "'Nation' and the Gaze of the Other in Eight-Century Northumbria" (*Comparative Literature* 53.1 [2001]: 1-26), Uppinder Mehan and David Townsend discuss the standardizing aspiration of Bede's notes in *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Accompanying numerous vernacular anthroponyms and toponyms by their Latin translations, he eliminates the located authenticity of his narrative and "reduc[es] the English specificity to the object of metropolitan scrutiny" (12).

²⁷ Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999) 165.

²⁸ For a more detailed account of this classical genealogy, espoused by Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, see T.D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (New York: Barnes, 1970) 7-8.

²⁹ For further detail regarding the historic controversy see Grafton 130; and J.D. Alsop, "William Fleetwood and Elizabethan Historical Scholarship," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 25.1 (1994): 157.

³⁰ Kendrick 71 n.2; 91.

³¹ For a more comprehensive account of the canonizing weight of the notes in modern literary history see Boukalova, "*Out from gens Romulum into the Weal-kin.*"

³² For further commentary on this unsuspected source see Kevin Jackson, *Invisible Forms: A Guide to Literary Curiosities* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999) 3; and especially, for a thematic comparison of Eliot's and Cawein's poem, Richard F. Patteson, "An Additional Source for *The Waste Land*," *Notes and Queries* 23 (1976): 300-01. In the light of the arguments presented in this thesis, the title of one of the most informative studies published on Cawein by Madeline Covi will bear a special poignancy - "A Landscape Poet," *Kentucky Review* 3.3 (1982): 3-19. The author informs us that William Dean Howells, reviewing the poet's second collection, placed him, along with several other Southern writers, in what "might almost be called a landscape school of poetry" (3).

³³ Michael Whitworth, "'Sweet Thames' and *The Waste Land*'s Allusions," *Essays in Criticism* 48.1 (1998): 35-58. In the introduction to his extensive study of the contemporary source Eliot might have been drawing on composing *The Waste Land*, Whitworth writes: "In doing the essential work of glossing particular references, many critics have taken for granted the concept of allusion, not questioning whether the classical concept, which adequately explained earlier works, could be applied to texts produced in the changed cultural circumstances of the early twentieth century" (35).

³⁴ Jackson 145.

³⁵ For further historico-textual detail see Llinos Beverley Smith, "The Welsh Language Before 1536," *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution*, ed. Geraith H. Jenkins (Cardiff: U of Wales P, 1997) 15.

³⁶ W.F. Dendy, rev. of *A History of Northumberland*, by John Crawford Hodgson, *The English Historical Review* 19.76 (1904): 806.

³⁷ Francis Haverfield, *The Roman Occupation of Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1924) 83; Arnaldo Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography* (New York: Harper, 1966) 43, 55. In a scholarly retrospect, Haverfield writes: "The antiquarian zeal of the early Victorian age touched all classes. Aristocracy and archaeology have never shaken hands so warmly as they did in those days. Archaeology was not a little helped by the social prestige of this alliance. It was not a little hindered by the gulf which too often sunders rank and serious learning; the nobleman who takes up archaeology as an interest and a hobby is seldom willing to spend weary days in research [..]. Exceptions, however, existed. John Hodgson, from his country parish in Northumberland, described the Roman Wall in a volume which, however amorphous, - much of it is the longest footnote in literature - is a work of scientific research and immense learning" (83). Commenting on Hodgson's greatest work, Mandell Creighton remarks in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* that it "[b]ecause of the thoroughness of its research [it] has effectively prevented publication of a comprehensive modern history of the county" (495).

³⁸ Jones, *Anathémata* 49.

³⁹ Basil Bunting, *Briggflatts* (London: Fulcrum, 1966) 9, 43.

⁴⁰ Joseph Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1923) 697. The dictionary attests to a relatively restricted usage of the word. "Spug" or "spuggy," as a designation of the house-sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), seems limited to Scotland, Durham and Northumberland.

⁴¹ For further legislative and cultural context Peter R. Roberts, "Tudor Legislation and the Political Status of 'the British Tongue'," *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution*, ed. Geraith H. Jenkins (Cardiff: U of Wales P, 1997) 62. The study documents the stringency of the English rule: "The seminally important clause' included in the Act of Union of 1536 declared that no Welsh speaker could hold public office unless he was able to 'use and exercise the English Speech or Language" (62).

⁴² Jones, *Anathémata* 111, n.2.

⁴³ Jones, *Anathémata* 101, n.1.

⁴⁴ Jones, *Anathémata* 70, n.2.

⁴⁵ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 43. For a detailed mapping of the "oxter" lexical isotope in the North of Britain see Peter Trudgill, *The Dialects of England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999) 17.

⁴⁶ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 44.

⁴⁷ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 45.

⁴⁸ For a detailed comparative study of the regional variants of the British English in terms of pronunciation patterns see Trudgill 33-9. Importantly, Trudgill deduces that the once boundary between the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria still in many respects represents the major dividing line between the "South" and "North" dialects in contemporary Britain (33-5).

⁴⁹ High Kenner, "The Sound of Sense," *Basil Bunting: Man and Poet*, ed. Carroll F. Terrell (Orono, ME: The National Poetry Foundation, 1981) 63-4.

⁵⁰ Victoria Forde, *The Poetry of Basil Bunting* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe, 1991) 210.

⁵¹ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 43-4.

⁵² Francis Otto Matthiessen, *The Achievement of T.S. Eliot: An Essay on the Nature of Poetry*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford UP, 1958) 52.

⁵³ Kaiser 90. In his review of *The Waste Land* published in *New Statesman* in November 1923, Lucas clamors: "What is the use of explaining 'laquearia' by quoting two lines of Latin containing the word, which will convey nothing to those who do not know that language, and noting new to those who do? What is the use of giving a quotation from Ovid which begins in the middle of a sentence, without reference?" (90). With a similar unease, Conrad Aiken asks in his review, "An Anatomy of Melancholy" (*New Republic*, February 1923)

whether “these difficulties [resulting from the compact allusions], in which perhaps Mr. Eliot takes a little pride, are so much the result of complexity, a fine elaborateness, as of confusion” (Hoffpauir 25). It seems to have escaped many a critical eye that the unsettling imprecision of Eliot’s notes is ‘established’ by the very epigraph of the poem. Trimalchio’s remark regarding the passion of the Cumaean Sibyl comes, as H.D. Cameron points out in “The Sibyl in *The Satyricon*” (*The Classical Journal* 65.8 [1970]: 337-9), “quite out of blue with no apparent connection with the surrounding discourse” (337). As a parvenu, Trimalchio has “literary pretensions,” respecting learning “as a necessary ornament for the gentleman and salt[ing] his conversation with literary allusions” (338). However, he usually “gets them wrong, and betrays himself by producing a mishmash of mythological confluents” (338).⁵⁴ Kenner, *Poet* 151. Contrasting with the two extreme positions regarding the merit and trustworthiness of Eliot’s notes is the exegetical caution and acceptance of Louis Menand. In *Discovering Modernism*, he argues that *The Waste Land* is “a poem that includes an interpretation – and one ‘probably not in accordance with the facts of its origin’ – as part of the poem, and it is therefore a poem that makes a problem of its meaning precisely by virtue of its apparent (and apparently inadequate) effort to explain itself. We cannot understand the poem without knowing what it meant to its author, but we must also assume that what the poem meant to its author will not be its meaning. The notes to *The Waste Land* are, by the logic of Eliot’s philosophical critique of interpretation, simply another riddle – and not a separate one – to be solved. They are, we might say, the poem’s way of treating itself as a reflex, a ‘something not intended as a sign,’ a gesture whose full significance it is impossible, by virtue of the nature of gestures, for the gesturer to explain” (89).

⁵⁵ Eliot, “Frontiers” 121.

⁵⁶ Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1998) 78.

⁵⁷ Eliot, “Frontiers” 121. On February 29, 1922, Eliot sends a letter to Maurice Firuski, Cambridge, Mass., bookseller and publisher: “My poem is of 435 lines; with certain spacings essential to the sense, 475 book lines; furthermore, it consists of five poems, which would increase the space necessary; and with title page, some notes that I intend to add, etc., I guess that it would run to from 28 to 32 pages. I have had a good offer for the publication of it in a periodical. But it is, I think, much the best poem I have ever written, and I think it would make a much more distinct impression and attract much more attention if published as a book” (Rainey 103).

⁵⁸ Whitworth 46.

⁵⁹ T.S. Eliot, *Collected Poems, 1909-1962* (New York: Harcourt, 1963) 3.

⁶⁰ For functional and relational variety of the literary notes see Genette 328; 330.

⁶¹ In “David Jones’ Glosses on *The Anathémata*,” *Studies in Bibliography* 33 (1980): 240-54, Thomas Dilworth introduces another paratextual element to the already extensive notes accompanying Jones’ sequence – interpretive glosses the poet inscribed over the years in his own copies of *The Anathémata*, including his comments on the two-hour radio dramatization of sections of the poem by BBC. Dilworth’s article brings to light Jones’ comments on Dylan Thomas’ rendering of his lines (241), as well glosses extending or replacing the printed notes – thus rather than glosses “correction[s] not yet incorporated in the text” (246).

⁶² Jones, *Anathémata* 43.

⁶³ Genette, *Paratexts*: “The original note to a discursive text is the note par excellence, the basic type from which all the others derive to a greater or lesser degree; this is also the type with which we all are most familiar, as consumers or producers of notes” (325).

⁶⁴ Jones, *Anathémata* 51, n.2.

⁶⁵ Jones, *Anathémata* 157, n.3.

⁶⁶ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 43.

⁶⁷ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 44-5.

⁶⁸ In a letter to Peter Makin, Bunting reflects upon the third part of *Briggflatts*: “[T]he inhabitants of the world Alexander and his men pass through are not just people who want to excel, they include various who choose baseness, particularly ‘the Press’” (*Bunting: The Shaping of His Verse* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1992] 147). ‘Hastor’ can thus be seen as the poet’s private revenge on Hugh Astor of the *Times* (147, n.26). Caddel and Flowers document Bunting’s 1928 stay in the north, at Coldside Farm near Rothbury where the poet witnessed the sheepdog training (35-6).

⁶⁹ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 43, 44.

⁷⁰ Bunting, *Briggflatts* 45.

⁷¹ Reagan 270.

⁷² Makin 206. The term is used in relation to the spiritual practice and private ecstasy of the Celtic saints and Northumbrian Quakers.

⁷³ Genette 319. In his introductory lines to “Notes,” Genette writes: “A note is a statement of variable length (one word is enough) connected to a more or less definite segment of text and either placed opposite or keyed to this segment. The always partial character of the text being referred to, and therefore the always local character of the statement conveyed in a note, seems to me the most distinctive formal feature of this paratextual element” (319).

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