

## **The Impersonality of the artist (J. Joyce e T.S. Eliot)**

### **from the extract Tradition and Individual Talent**

What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality.

There remains to define this process of depersonalization and its relation to the sense of tradition. It is in this depersonalization that art may be said to approach the condition of science. I shall, therefore, invite you to consider, as a suggestive analogy, the action which takes place when a bit of finely foliated platinum is introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide.

in T.S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. 1 922.

### **Impersonality of art**

Eliot showed with Joyce the view that the poet should be detached; indie his central purpose can be described as a search for "impersonality" as he himself called it in his essay *Tradition and Individual Talent* (1919).

Detachment is the counterpoise to his deep sense of unreality, or equivocal reality, in personal emotions. In the essay he maintains the idea that an order constituted by all past works of art, the tradition, creates the total meaning of a modern work of art. The new work of art, however, modifies the tradition from which it derives its meaning.