

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS: THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK**Dr. Yameen Khan*, Dr. Kumkum Bhardwaj****

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ABSTRACT:

Thomas Stearns Eliot (26 September 1888 – 4 January 1965) was one of the twentieth century's major poets, British essayist, playwright, publisher, literary and social critic. He was native of United States but moved to England in 1914 only at the age of 25, working, settling and marrying there. He eventually became a British subject in 1927 at the age of 39, surrender his American citizenship. T. S. Eliot fascinated well-known attention for his world-fame poem 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' published in 1915, which was seen as a masterwork of the Modernist movement. J. Alfred Prufrock, a presumably middle-aged, thinker, hesitant man, invites the bookworm along with him through the up to date city. He portrays the street panorama and notes a societal gathering of women converse Renaissance artist Michelangelo. "Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni, 6 March 1475 – 18 February 1564, was an Italian sculptor, painter, architect, and poet of the High Renaissance, who exerted an unparalleled influence on the development of Western art." (<https://en.wikipedia.org>) Yellow smoke and mist outside the house of the gathering are described, and keeps insisting that there will be time to do many things in the social globe. Thomas Stearns Eliot gives the very first clue through the title of the poem that this is not a conventional love poem. "J. Alfred Prufrock" is a farcical name, and Eliot wanted the hidden association of a 'prude' in a 'frock'. "Prude; a person who is easily shocked or offended by things that do not shock or offend other people". (Merriam - Webster Dictionary, Since - 1828) The original title was "Prufrock among the Women." The real name has special meaning for writer. The poem was written in 1909. And at the time he signed his name as T. Stearns Eliot. He modified it continue the next few years and finally published in 1915 and in book form in 1917.

Key Words: Michelangelo, Prude, Frock, Bookworm, yore, obnoxious, Guido da Montefeltro, enjambment, durée

T. S. Eliot was using J. Alfred Prufrock as an alter ego to explore his own emotions, while it would become visible, this is not the case. Eliot was a young man in 1909, while Prufrock is hairless and almost certainly middle-aged – the poetry disdained by Eliot that paying attention on the poet himself. He inscribed in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that the "progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality." (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org>) He crystallized his thoughts about how to attain this disappearance of personality in another essay, "Hamlet and His Problems": "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, and a chain of events, which shall be the formula of that particular emotion." (<http://www.bartleby.com>)

Extermination of his personality is achieved by him through the setting of 'Prufrock' in the poetic form of dramatic monologue. Through this form, the spokesman addresses another person and the reader plays the part of the silent listener; habitually the dramatic monologue is freighted with mockery, as the speaker is partially unconscious of what he discloses. Robert Browning a well-known name, the undoubted master of the dramatic monologue, subjugated this possibility in his most famous dramatic monologue, "My Last Duchess"; the booklover learns much about the Duke that he has not wished-for to expose.

The dramatic monologue was out of trend in 20th-century Modernism. But Eliot was a supporter of the historical importance of art. "Tradition and the Individual Talent," he argued that "the poet must develop or procure the consciousness of the past," especially the literary past. (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org>) It is very important to memo that Eliot's brand of Modernist poetry sought to revitalize the literary past, as he argued for in "Tradition and the Individual Talent." His poems including Prufrock are dotted with references to the Greeks, Shakespeare, the Metaphysical, and more. He does not overlook the current scenario at all, however; it is often direct and indirect, usually with inauspicious contrast to the times of yore.

The obnoxious present globe is where "Prufrock" begins. Prufrock like to Guido da Montefeltro "Guido da Montefeltro (1223 – September 29, 1298) was an Italian military strategist and lord of Urbino. He became a monk late in life, and was condemned by Dante Alighieri in his 'Divine Comedy' for giving false or fraudulent counsel" (<https://en.wikipedia.org>) in The Inferno. "Inferno pronounced Italian for 'Hell' is the first part of Dante Alighieri's 14th-century epic poem Divine Comedy. It is followed by Purgatorio and Paradiso. The Inferno tells the journey of Dante through Hell, guided by the ancient Roman poet Virgil. In the poem, Hell is depicted as nine concentric circles of suffering located within the Earth." (<https://en.wikipedia.org>) Prufrock, however, is on earth, in a lonely, alienating city. The images of the city are barren and deathly; the night sky looks

Like a patient etherized upon a table (line - 3)
While down below barren "half-deserted streets (line - 4)
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels (line - 6)
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells (line - 7)

Utilize of enjambment, the management over of lines, further communicates the complicated spatiality of the town. But he does not investigate the infertility of the modern earth deeply here as he does in other poems. The descriptions are indisputably bleak and empty. Often unnoticed in the opening barrage is that Prufrock imagery progresses from the common to the precise and expressively from the high to the low. We go from a common glance at the skyline to the streets to a hotel room to sawdust-covered floors in restaurants. This humiliation continues during the poem, both literally in the images and symbolically in their emotional associations for J. Alfred Prufrock.

In fact, exciting associations are entered since the writer installs the intention correlative technique all over the poem rather than reside conceptually on the feelings of Prufrock. The exceeding all images speak to something about Prufrock's individuality. The etherized patient, for instance, reflects his paralysis like his inability to act, while the descriptions of the city portray an assured lost loneliness. There is objective correlative switches in the second stanza. "Yellow fog that rubs its back upon the windowpanes" (line - 14) Although Eliot said the vapor was evocative of the factory smoke from his hometown St. Louis, the relations with a cat are noticeable. He was the lover of cats. He wrote a number of poems on them and the musical 'Cats' is based on Eliot's work. "Cats is a musical composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, based on Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats by T. S. Eliot, and produced by Cameron Mackintosh." (<https://en.wikipedia.org>)

The mist in the form of cat seems to be looking to trendy females amass in hotel room and chatting about Michelangelo. Powerless to come in, it remains sadly on the exterior of the abode. We can imagine about the interior of Prufrock that he avoiding the situation and yet desiring physically get in touch with in the same way. We can estimate the condition easily if having emotions in heart like human beings. Writer for a second time uses a picture of physical humiliation to investigate the overemotional situation of Prufrock in next two lines of the poem. Cat goes down from the high windowpanes to the corners of the whole thing, and to the pools that situate in the drain.

Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening, (17)
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains, (18)

Anyway, what one obtains from these images, the mystifying patchwork points to another methods due to fragmentation of Eliot and the Modernists pioneered? The Modernists felt their script should represent their splintered and chaotic world. Separation seems to involve in a chaotic lack of sense and meaning, but the Modernists opposed this nature and recommended that meaning could be excavated from the shell. Immediately as we can compose sense of the seemingly disordered combination of a 14th-century Dante allusion and a 20th-century dramatic monologue, we can draw meaning from the paints like Prufrock. Descriptions and references are not the only fragmented features of Prufrock. The rhythm of the lines is purposely uneven. By times in unrhymed free stanza, writer sporadically rhymes for long stretches in line 4 to 12.

Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
 The muttering retreats
 Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
 And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
 Streets that follow like a tedious argument
 Of insidious intent
 To lead you to an overwhelming question
 Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
 Let us go and make our visit.
 In the room the women come and go
 Talking of Michelangelo

This is not an end; the rhyme scheme itself seems like the confusing in line number 8 as "Streets that follow like a tedious argument". He also twofold uses the refrain of "In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo" line number 13 to 14 and 35 to 36.

In the room the women come and go (13)
 Talking of Michelangelo (14)
 In the room the women come and go (35)
 Talking of Michelangelo (36)

Another point is that often lines of the poem begin with the word "And" in line number 7, 21, 29, 32 and 33. As the word initiate in these lines involve the word "time" in line number 21, 29 and 32. These repetitions again and again have relationship of time with J. Alfred Prufrock without a doubt.

And seeing that it was a soft October night, (7)
 And time yet for a hundred indecisions, (21)
 And for a hundred visions and revisions, (29)
 And time for all the works and days of hands (32)
 And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells: (33)

Prufrock uncertainly cycles approximately even the smallest of concerns, he said that "And time yet for a hundred indecisions and for a hundred visions and revisions, before the taking of a toast and tea" in line number 32, 33 and 34. He looks like entrenched in the present tense and, according to writer and Modernists, this is a harmful approach to moment in time. The image of the evening "spread out" in line number 2 against the blue is a reference to a metaphor often used in turn-of-the-century French philosopher Henri Bergson's work *Time and Free Will* (1889). Eliot was deeply influenced by Bergson and afterward attended the philosopher's lectures in Paris in 1910 was more influenced by his theories on consciousness. In *Time and Free Will*, he argues that time is a single, continuous, and flowing "durée" or duration, rather than a

sequence of separate steps with different tenses. New thinking and theory of that time has hijacked this idea that one should feel rather than imagine is an attractive concept. Prufrock is evidently a thinker, not a feeler. His uncertain thoughts add directly to his paralysis. He can't make a choice and proceed on it. Instead of imprisoned in the present. His nervousness is embedded in the societal world. Not only is he terrified to meet the woman talking of Michelangelo but also he seems worried by the social arrogance he must keep in.

There will be time; there will be time (26)
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet; (27)
There will be time to murder and create, (28)
And time for all the works and days of hands (29)
That lifts and drops a question on your plate; (30)

Prufrock seems to dislike the difference between the scorched hands of hard-working farmers and the silky ones of public players, as he dislikes the masks wear by populace in the societal arena. His social anxiety assumes throughout the poem.

The label of the poem sets the reader into a passionate environment. But, Eliot bends this nature into a very different way. Prufrock sends the reader on a journey of love. This abnormal and unappealing side of love compliments of indecisiveness, self-consciousness, and insecurity. Eliot displays the few of these emotional faults throughout the poem in shape of Prufrock. Still, the incapability to expose his emotions to his devotee brings the question; was Prufrock truly in love? Throughout the poem, there are various descriptors of emotional and physical state of the central figure. These not only expose poignant feelings of unimportance, but also his powerlessness to improvement in society. This also describes his failure to development on his association with his lover. Generally, he is illustrated as a weak, trivial, selfish crab that is unable to construct progress in entire life.

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