

POST-WAR SOCIETY IN T.S.ELIOT'S POETRY.

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ABSTRACT: Eliot's poetry is not philosophy, rather it is the reality, the reality of a society that was collapsing in every aspects. The members of the society though they were superficially modern but they are like Beckett's Vladimir and Estragon. They are purposelessly modern. They are in emotional as well as spiritual crisis. Political unrest, loss of faith in ethics, purposeless relationships, mass anxiety, and hollow sexual desires are deeply rooted in Eliot's Wasteland. Eliot's is more propagandist than a poet like Arnold and both of them serve the same purpose. His poems are the genuine picture of Post- War trauma. T.S. Eliot is no doubt the typical representative poet of Modern literature but he is one of the finest psychologist. His Wasteland is a land of psychological clash- the clash is between self and self.

KEYWORDS- Emotional imbalance, Future upset, Trauma, Spiritual crisis, hollowness etc.

INTRODUCTION: Eliot's poetry was always concern with the modern mindset of Postwar European society. He Was like Arnold totally dissatisfied by the values of his own age and there for turn towards old classical masters e.g. Greeks. We observed a straight boredom in his poetry against the hollow men in modern world. The meaninglessness of human relationships , emotionless sexuality and discrepancy in human morality in modern wasteland hurts him the most. Like G.B. Shaw Eliot also an iconoclast because he found the originality of ideas in his age and therefore wanted to established his according to his own ideas followed by the Greeks. Prufrock - the mouthpiece of Eliot represent the shallowness and fake fragmentation of modern so called man, far from reality and busy with fake fertility. The contemporary society are also in same kind of problems , hollow men are far away from harsh reality and self centeredness makes the society robotic and feeling less. Justice, Law and orders are in melting pot . Reaction is needed .

In the year 2023, our core and mighty Indian civilization and culture are in state of dismay. The so called Americanization creating a wasteland in India. The celebrity culture, the restaurant culture, artistic taste , sense of ethics and elimination of religion among young strata serving a pessimistic impression. 5000 years old civilization are going to face a great future upset.

DISCUSSIONS ON ELIOT'S MAJOR POEMS:

T.S. Eliot's '**The Waste Land**' is basically a poem about Europe. While commenting on the post work European society, Eliot is very much concerned and interested in the people around him. 'The Waste Land' is fundamentally a poem about the mindset of post-war European society the real crises of Europe during the modern era was the deterioration of its mindset. Eliot tried to established a communication between the mind of the poet and the mind of the society.

Eliot declares that “**London-the unreal city**”, London after the war “under the brown fog of a winter dawn/ a crowd following over London bridge”. The image of London after world war is very much gloomy and full of guilt. For example: “**Burial of the Dead**” the speakers observe London after the great war as broken, dry and barren place full of dead bodies. London, a city marked by progress advancement has become nothing more than unreal city. It has lost its cultural and social vitality. As Eliot argues that, modern waste-land is surrounded by obscurity, chaos disillusionment and alienation. In a world void of meaning and fulfillment, the modern men is in despair at the futility of life and relationship. ‘The Waste Land’ is greatest metaphor of mind set and disabled condition of modern Europe.

Eliot’s Hollow Men is the most swaying personality, Create his belief about future of the men of his dead land, wasteland. T.S. Eliot, the mouthpiece of modern age, strident personal life. “**The Hollow Men**” written in five parts focusing on madness, guilt, remorse and breakdown of humanity. This poetry is about the decaying value system of post-war generation. It is all for general disbelief in the course of human creation. We like to alive but don’t welcome death because we fear to be answerable, for our deeds on this universe. We create our selves against our creator and become-----

“Shape without form, shade without color.

Paralyzed force, gesture without motion.” (The Hollow Men)

Eliot’s characters are so impressive and their gross selfish, like Prufrock, Sweeney, Gerontion, they are representative of corrupt, rotten and money grabbing materialistic civilization. No doubt Eliot has an universal appeal in his poetry, by expressing the dominant anxieties and feelings of his age .

We all know that plight of Gerontion, who reflects the corruption of his surroundings. The most important cause of his miserable plight is the loss of faith. People who are influenced by science have adopted a rational outlook towards Christianity. Nobody wants to develop their spiritual potentiality , they need a peaceful mind , before they can understand the message of Christ and its relevance today. As A.G. George remarks “ **when intellectual scrutiny brings, the terror itself vanishes, and the debasement of faith is complete**”. Gerontion feel sorry for the loss of faith in Christianity. But he feels that the doctrines have been adulterated and can not therefore provide consolation and relief .Gerontion is an embodiment of the popular discontent caused by the first world war and wave of disillusionment which swept Europe. Modern civilization has reached a breaking point , the process of disintegration and dissolution set in . It is therefore impossible to prevent the collapse of civilization. All plan to savage it are like the spider’s web which will snap at ant moment. Eliot’s strong belief is that civilization can be saved if it revives the Christian faith and follows the moral values of church.

Sweeney represent an anti-attitude of T.S.Eliot 19th century – man is pessimistic rather than optimistic , cynical rather than idealistic.

Sweeney has an abnormally high animal spirit . He is a strong in sex like ape. His life has been devoted to all fun of sexual function for variety and pleasure. He is an example of modern sexually degraded and uprooted urban person. He represents the emotionless and hollow relationship symbol of post war society, who is spiritually barren and dehumanized vagabond of modern society.

The pessimism and despair produced by the great world war made thinkers look for a set of values which could point the way for improvement and reform. Nationalism and imperialism received a great jolt. The new philosophy which became popular, was that of socialism and internationalism. It was realized that relation between nation should be based upon qualities, dignity and mutual respect and co-operation, instead of commercial and trading interest.

Man was no longer seen as a rational being as far as his behavior is concerned. Family relationship underwent a change. The assessment of relative role of man and woman changed. The younger generation and older generation feels a great gap between their values and system, resulting in a change between the relations of parents and children. The result is ruthlessness in modern Waste Land.

The first World War proved that the individual was not good enough. There were still enough irrational forces in the world which are always against rational forces. It brought a wave of cynicism and uncertainty in the society specially in the young generation.

The hopes for a brave new world so firmly dissipated in 1918 (because of the war) gave rise to disillusionment and despair which found expression in **The Hollow Men**. A new awareness of sociological factors enabled the writers of this period to perceive a disintegrating culture with no positive values to replace. There was need for a new world, for a new outlook on life. It was an age of falsity and of experiment. But the necessity of new values, new patterns and stability was felt by Eliot.

After the World War, individuals are not perfect therefore human emotions also not perfect. Prufrock was the mouthpiece of Eliot who represents the imperfect emotions of Post-War society and carried out an awkward mindset of so-called modern people. **The Love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock** is not a subjective but objective. The poet only described the mind of the protagonist. Similarly Eliot writes about the thoughts and feelings of Gerontion and Sweeney. **The Love Song** is a symbolic poem which gives the mood of modern city-dwellers. It expresses the barrenness, the mental tension, the frustration and the irresolution of the modern men.

THE DECAYING MINDSET OF MODERN EUROPE- T.S. Eliot's poetry were the finest depiction of the spiritual bareness of hollow modern men. The Great War had affected the philosophy of life, art of living and moral conscience. Europe and the whole world experienced the great shock. They could realize that human beings are the production of imperfections. They were trying to escape in an artificial world. The rise of industrialization, science and technology, clubbing, dance bars, fashions, turned them towards a society where they could pretend to get solace. There was no divinity in love. Sex was only a biological. There was hopelessness in relationships. Europe and rest world rejected Wordsworth's philosophy of nature – rather they thought nature was barren, there was no sign of hope, there was no messenger, emotions, individuality had no price at all. This was the universal crisis. Eliot's poetry are the manuscripts of decaying Post-war society. Only the way of true Christianity could give them ultimate peace. The society was in the decline, the decline that each individual inhaled by himself, the cure was almost impossible. Eliot never advocated the religious dogmas or bigotry. He tried to establish a society with the pure ideas of Christianity. He wanted a civilized society with a sense of morality and high cultural sense. He knew that the cure of this decline lies in the change of former mindset of the whole society. He advocated Greek culture, art and literature. He wanted to establish the very concept of Hellenism through literature. He was moralist with realistic tone.

ELIOT'S OBJECTIVE CORRELATIVE IS A 'TWIG OF EMOTIONAL IMBALANCE' OF MODERN EUROPE:

Though Eliot suggested that 'Hamlet' is an 'Artistic Failure', I think, Prufrock, Sweeney and Gerontion these characters were also the showcase of emotional imbalance. They were mad like Hamlet, rather their madness was sophisticated. In the world of complete disarray they were trying to find comfort in foppish and dandified culture. Somehow they did it, but their conscience did not allow them to accept it. Eliot created them to represent the class of hollow men. They were always in a psychological turmoil about their attire, taste of music, club culture. But their readers could realize that they were in a wasteland, a wasteland that never produced spiritual peace. Eliot's characters themselves suggested that they were in emotional crisis, but they were unaware of it. Hamlet performed his madness in a systematic way. But Eliot's characters are a kind of mad which they even could not realize.

CONCLUSION: Eliot like Walt Whitman considered that technological advancement and mechanization in everyday life is the root of degradation of human dignity. His 'The Wasteland' was a sheer criticism of industrialization and urbanization. The society lived in the wasteland was in a chaotic state of mind that was finding meaning in so-called modernization. My opinion says, the Romantics could be their guide to lead a purposeful life. Though Eliot rejected individuality but the ideas of Romantics were the ideas of life. Eliot was the follower of old Classical masters. Perhaps he had his own slogan that 'think like moderns, act like classics. Classics were the champions of ideas and morality, if we juxtapose classics and moderns then that would be the real cure. Complex literature, Wars, machinery and Political heresy were the prime cause of decaying mindset of Post-war society.

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