

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

Assistant Professor\*, Head\*\*

Dept. of English &amp; Foreign Languages

SRM University, NCR Campus

Modinagar, Ghaziabad

**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 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 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)



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.

#### **REFERENCES**

1. Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, T. S. Eliot
2. Merriam - Webster Dictionary, Since – 1828
3. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" T. S. Eliot (online on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 )
4. "Hamlet and His Problems" T. S. Eliot (online on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2017)
5. <https://en.wikipedia.org> (online on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2017)
6. <http://www.bartleby.com> (online on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)
7. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org> (online on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2017)