

T. S. Eliot's Misogynistic Attitudes in « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land »

الآراء المعادية للمرأة لتي . اس. إليوت في "أغنية الحب لجيه ألفرد بروفروك" و "أرض الخراب"

Les attitudes misogynes de T. S. Eliot dans « La Chanson d'amour de J. Alfred Prufrock » et « La Terre vaine »

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Introduction

T. S. Eliot is one of the most remarkable and influential writers of the twentieth century. He does not only represent the epitome of the modern poet, but also he contributes to modern poetry. He utterly repudiates and transforms the conventional poetry to establish a new and modern poetry that shocks and paralyses his reader who cannot make head or tail of his poems. Eliot's poetry is highly revolutionary not only in terms of subject matter, but also in terms of poetic techniques. His poems raise endless discussions of either admiration or disdain. It is generally acknowledged that Eliot deconstructs from poetic traditions and conventions and he is a leading pioneer of the modernist movement in literature in the early twentieth century which supports radical departure from traditional conventions and practices. However, do his views and opinions differ from his ancestors, especially his views about women's position in society? Actually, in the nineteenth century, patriarchy was rooted in the traditional society which adhered male supremacy and female dependency, but in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, women had a voice in the British society and fought for their equality with men. Thus, this research sheds light on Eliot's treatment and portrayal of female characters in « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » (1915) and « The Waste Land » (1922). In fact, literature is a mirror that reflects society and Eliot, throughout his literary works, succeeds in depicting the plight of modern man, but does he succeed in portraying females' position in the modern British society? or he just shuts an eye on women's rising position and sticks to the traditional views of women's passivity and submissiveness although his poetry is modern and revolutionary. Therefore, from feminist and biographical perspectives, how does Eliot portray women? Is he a misogynist? If yes, what are the secrets behind his misogynistic views?

1. Theoretical Background

1.1. Previous Studies

Myriad critics and scholars focus on Eliot's modern poetry and view that his poems express the plight of man and decay of modern civilization. However, few researchers investigate gender and sexuality in Eliot's poetry. Early studies about this theme claim that Eliot's misogyny is relevant to his homosexuality. In 1952, a Canadian professor, John Peter, contents in his essay (1952) that « The Waste Land » is an elegy about the death of Eliot's friend Jean Verdenal. However, his essay was quickly censored by Eliot himself. Then, it was republished in 1969 to be used later as a milestone in James. E. Miller's book *T. S. Eliot's Personal Waste Land : Exorcism of the Demons* (1977) in which he asserts that Eliot's work imbeds homosexuality that is the reason behind his misogyny. In fact, Peter's and Miller's analyses are from biographical standpoints to prove that T. S. Eliot is a homosexual author.

However, this research aims at showing that Eliot's misogyny is a reflection of his patriarchal traditional cultural discourse about women despite the fact that his selected poems fall under modernism. In addition, his misogyny is an outcome of his personal problems relevant to his disastrous marriage although he claims for impersonal theory of poetry. In this case, his personal and social milieus push him to be a misogynist in his selected poems. In addition, the aim behind selecting two poems is to elicit as much textual evidence as possible to support the aforementioned claim.

In fact, many studies focus on Eliot's marriage as the main reason behind his misogyny. An outstanding biographer of Eliot is Lyndall Gordon who contends in her book *T. S. Eliot : An Imperfect Life* that Eliot's bad relationship with his wife Vivienne Haigh - Wood plays a central role in his writings. She says : « He's saying that Vivienne led him into hell ; but wasn't hell- genuine suffering » (Gordon 119). Yet, in addition to his personal matters, this study also sheds light on his social context that affects his ideas about women, especially with the spread of feminist voices in his society.

1.2. Women in Eliot's World

In reality, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, women's position witnessed a significant change. Their situation gradually improved and they gained many rights. Women, in this historical period, were no longer the Angel in the House and they were no longer the property of their fathers before marriage and their husbands' property after marriage. They, to a certain extent, gained an independent voice and had a say in their lives. Modern women did not

only violate and repudiate the traditional assumptions about gender roles, they tore away the barriers and denied the shackles of patriarchal society. Actually, instead of being weak, meek, passive and submissive, women became active and independent. They gained the right for higher education and invaded males' spheres and professions ; for instance, women were able to attend medical schools and the first policewoman was appointed in Britain in 1916. They advocated social, economic and political equalities of both genders which led to the appearance of the first wave of feminism that started around the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century in Great Britain. Women had an increasing voice in their personal lives and participated in the political issues by demanding their right to vote. Jenni Murray states :

By 1918 it was impossible to deny women's contribution to the war effort and The Electoral Reform Bill of that year granted voted rights to all women property owners of thirty or more. It was not until 1928 that the age limitation became the same as that for men – 21 [...] The first woman MP was elected in 1918 [...] Nancy Astor thus became the first woman to take her seat in the British parliament in 1919 as member for Plymouth South. (Murray)

In other words, women gained a political voice which ensures getting other social and economic rights.

In addition, men were no longer the dominant holders of power, press and pen in literary works because women also had an increasing voice in literature. They were free to express their own ideas. The most outstanding woman writer of the period was Virginia Woolf. Although women, in this period, did not achieve a complete equality with men, they were autonomous to some extent compared to their situation in previous eras. In addition, despite the fact that Eliot witnessed the gradual change in women's position in modern society and his poems were in parallel with the first and the second waves of feminism, his poems do not reflect such a dramatic change.

2. The Analytical Part

2.1. The Analysis of Eliot's « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock »

Albeit women's position in Eliot's world gradually increased, their status and portrayal in his works are not highly appreciated. The scrutinization of his early poems, especially « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land », displays embedded misogyny, negative attitudes towards women and male's inability to establish a healthy relationship with females. Many readers and critics label him « a misogynist ». Eriko Bollobas says :

Probably the most famous example of male modernist misogyny is T. S. Eliot. The women in his texts have become staple figures of modernity, whose alienation and ennui are only strengthened by the fact that they are affected by this alienation and ennui indirectly, through the men that define them. At best, Eliot's woman character is a lifeless, ghostlike figure. (105)

Thus, according to Bollobas, Eliot is a misogynist by portraying women negatively in his literary works.

Apart from critics' views about Eliot, the analysis of Eliot's early masterpiece, « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock », reveals myriad misogynistic undertones. Actually, the original title of the poem is « Prufrock among the Women » which is more informative about the content and the key point of the poem that is Prufrock's complex relation with women. From a feminist angle, the poem is about a middle aged man, Prufrock, who intends to express his love to a woman. However, he hesitates and postpones his proposal to choose the right moment to talk to her. John Halverson views that

[T]here is nearly uniform agreement that in the poem Prufrock wants to propose to a lady, or at least declare his passion, but is finally too timid to do so [...]. Alfred Prufrock is unable to make love to women of his own class and kind because of shyness, self-consciousness, and fear of rejection. (571)

Throughout the poem, he does not only express his fear, frustration and failure to meet women, he also displays his prejudices against them and his inability to communicate with them, « to squeeze the universe into a ball » (Eliot A : 92) and « [h]ave the strength to force the moment to its crisis ? » (80) to ask his overwhelming question. Due to his internal anxieties, low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence, Prufrock faces a great difficulty to communicate with women. He says : « There will be time, there will be time/ To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet » (26-27), « Do I dare/ Disturb the universe ? » (45-46) « And should I then presume ?/ And how should I begin ?/ And in short, I was afraid » (68-69-86). Therefore, through his speech, Prufrock shows shaky personality and masculinity inasmuch as he is afraid to communicate with women.

At the beginning of the poem, Prufrock invites the reader to join him to go to the party where they are going to find the woman to talk about his love. However, through his journey, he expresses many misogynistic views about women and finally the reader discovers that the journey might be within Prufrock's head and he did not move from his place. He might talk to his reflection on the mirror.

His most apparent negative attitude towards women is mentioned in the refrain. He says : « In the room the women come and go/ Talking of Michelangelo » (Eliot A : 13-14). Women gossip about Michelangelo that is not a serious subject for modern women and the refrain is repeated twice in the poem which shows Eliot's negative depiction of women as thoughtless beings as if they are unable to think and talk about serious things and matters that are related to modern life and recent issues. He shows that the only thing that women can do is gossiping about meaningless matters that are as unconnected to reality as Michelangelo's detachment to modern life. That is to say, Prufrock is superior to women who talk about trivial matters. Thus, Eliot belittles women's mental capacities inasmuch as « the prosaic, conversational register of women's voices is contrasted to the literary register of Prufrock's imagination » (Potter 224). In this case, Prufrock and women do not share common points between them. Rachel Potter says : « Bourgeois women are depicted as being outside a cultural language they use and abuse [...] Their words thereby remain external to their ostensible referent...creating a linguistic and emotional egotism » (222). They are alienated from Prufrock.

In addition, Prufrock has several prejudices against women. He imagines their reactions and how they are going to classify him in a degraded situation and mock his physical appearance. He imagines women's response to his physical appearance by stating :

« They will say : 'How his hair is growing thin ! [...] They will say : 'But how his arms and legs are thin !' » (Eliot A : 40-43). He has also imagined that he will be pinned and wriggled on the wall like an insect by the eyes of women. Rachel Potter views that :

Eliot configures alienation as a gendered issue : it is women who fix Prufrock in formulated phrases, whose sensual perfume makes him digress, whose smooth fingers induce a soporific inaction, who insist that he has misunderstood their meaning. Focusing on the relationship between the sexes, Eliot appears to identify the cause of alienation with the cultural and sexual power of bourgeois women. (221)

Thus, instead of focusing on Prufrock's psychological problems, Eliot attributes the cause of lack of communication to women as a way of misrepresenting them.

Furthermore, the word woman is mentioned only twice in the poem, and in the rest of it, there are merely fragments of women ; for example, eyes, hands, faces, skirts and heads. Eliot does not refer to a woman as a whole subject, but

as a fragmented object. As far as the arms are concerned, Prufrock does not only describe women's arms, he is also astonished and shocked to see hair in their arms :

Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
 (But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair !)
 Is it perfume from a dress
 That makes me digress ? (Eliot A : 63-66)

Even in a supposed to be a romantic encounter between Prufrock and women, he spotlights the negative aspect of them, the brown hair. It is clear that Prufrock's psychological problems of fear and frustration isolate and alienate him from women. Therefore, Prufrock does not possess a positive attitude towards women.

Apart from women, Prufrock also has prejudices against mermaids although they are hybrid creatures, half a woman with a tail of a fish. He says : « I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each/ I do not think that they will sing to me » (Eliot A : 124-125). He also imagines that mermaids isolate and neglect him as women do because there is a lack of communication between the two sides. He blames both women and mermaids for not talking to him. Consequently, Prufrock, throughout the whole poem, displays his negative attitudes towards women and consciously or unconsciously portrays his misogynistic views.

2.2. The Analysis of Eliot's « The Waste Land »

In addition to « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock », Eliot, in his early poems, shows his negative attitudes towards women and his most startling poem, « The Waste Land » is no exception. He depicts a range of hollow women in the waste land and the whole poem does not reflect a positive portrayal of women. In fact, he sticks to the traditional male view concerning female passivity and fragility and transmits patriarchal ideas to modern society. He does not only show the passivity and helplessness of ancient female character, but he also underestimates and diminishes the status of modern woman. The woman

Throughout The Waste Land, [...] is female hysteria personified, famous for her bad nerves ; or she is thirty-one year old yet 'antique' looking Lil, whose abortion pills made her lose her teeth but who now will disappoint 'poor Albert' for not being able to look good and give him 'a good time' ; or she is the bored typist making monotonous love with the repulsive 'young man carbuncular'. (Bollobas 105)

Eliot gives a negative image about modern women similar to patriarchal portrayal of women and female characters.

Although females dominate the first parts of the poem, they are depicted as weak and helpless objects. The first female Sibyl is mentioned in the epigraph. She is portrayed as a weak and meek female who is living and partly living. She is actually spiritually dead, but physically alive. She sets the mood of the whole poem. Then, in the first part of the poem « The Burial of the Dead », the speaker tackles Marie's happy memories from her childhood. He says :

And when we were children, staying at the archduke's,
My cousin's, he took me out on a sled,
And I was frightened. He said, Marie,
Marie, hold on tight. And down we went. (Eliot 2000 A : 13-16)

Marie is portrayed as a weak and frightened character that is saved by her cousin. Hence, her savior is a man because of her weakness and helplessness. Next, the speaker introduces Madame Sosostris. There is an underlying irony in her description because despite the fact that she is « famous clairvoyante [and] is known to be the wisest woman in Europe » (Eliot 2000 A : 43-45), she suffers from a bad cold that she cannot prevent and cannot foresee everything. In this case, Eliot connects women with superstition because they are supposed to be less reasonable than men. Tim Dean says : « 'Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante' in *The Waste Land*, represents not one of Eliot's demeaning portrayals of women..., but his ideal poetic type » (44). She represents his preferable type of women depiction.

As far as the second section is concerned, it is full of female characters. The reader, first, encounters the section's title « A Game of Chess » which refers to Middleton's play *Women Beware Women* which is about the seduction of Bianca by the Duke while the attention of her mother-in-law is drawn by a game of chess. So, the title and the reference convey an important theme of the second section of the poem which is rape and passionless sex. In this way, Bianca is another version of Philomel and both are considered as an object of sex unlike Cleopatra. Actually, the section refers to Shakespeare's play *Antony and Cleopatra* in which Eliot gives a description of a rich setting where the two lovers met. Their story represents love and passionate sex which is contrasted with Bianca's and Philomel's passionless sex. In other words, Eliot focuses on Philomel's story to show that modern sex is reduced to a violent physical act without any love and passion and woman is the victim of man.

In fact, Philomel is the most dominant female character in « *The Waste Land* » because she has many lines and the echoes of her violent rape recur in different parts of the poem. Her first lines are mentioned in « A Game of Chess » after her rape and transformation into a nightingale. The poetic voice

says : « The change of Philomel, by the barbarous king/ So rudely forced ; yet there the nightingale/ Filled all the desert with inviolable voice » (Eliot A : 99-101). Philomel is depicted as a weak, meek, helpless and voiceless woman and she is the victim of man who silenced her by cutting her tongue. She is presented as an object of sex ; she is not the self but the other. In addition, her other lines, as nightingale's songs, are echoed in « The Fire Sermon » and in « What the Thunder Said ». However, Eliot merely focuses on Philomel's weakness and he does not mention her revenge. According to Jewel Spears Brooker, « Eliot's version moves in the opposite direction, lingering on Philomel as victim-‘So rudely forc'd/ Tereu’- while entirely omitting the second half of the tale in which she takes disproportionate revenge » (142). Thus, the story of Philomel is biased by Eliot who quotes her weakness to emphasize patriarchal ideas in modern literature.

In addition to Philomel's negative image, « A Game of Chess » portrays another negative portrayal of women. The second section introduces a nervous and hysterical woman whose « nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad... » (Eliot A : 111) and they affect her language which is highly fragmented. The speaker says : « Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak/ What are you thinking of ? What thinking ? What ? » (Eliot A : 112-113). These verses show lack of communication and emotional dryness between the wife and her husband. For Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, « The wastings of The Waste Land are epitomized by the hysterical speech of women who can ‘connect nothing with nothing’ [...] The language of these women embodies ‘the horror, the horror’ that the poet spells from an important sibyl's leaves and leavings » (qtd. in Laity and Gish 178). The hysterical woman unravels a terrible image about modern woman. In addition, Wayne Koestenbaum views that « [t]he wife confesses bad nerves, but the husband is truly the hysteric, speechless as the man in the hyacinth garden so enraptured by the woman's hair that he could neither speak nor see » (133). Although both the wife and her husband are hysterical, Eliot focuses only on the woman because historically speaking hysteria is a female malady inasmuch as women are emotional unlike men who are more rational and not prone to hysteria.

Then, the scene shifts to a conversation between two women in a pub. They discuss Lil's deteriorated physical appearance and her relationship with her husband Albert. From their conversation, it can be deduced that there is a direct criticism to feminists who no longer believe in the traditional idea of Angel in the House by serving and obeying the husband and bearing children. The woman criticizes Lil because she does not beautify herself to her husband

and looks very « antique », although she is young. The woman also adds : « What you get married for if you don't want children ? » (Eliot A : 164). Thus, Eliot advocates a traditional stereotype of women where they need to beautify themselves to please their husbands and bear and take care of children. Finally, the section ends with Ophelia's words. Eliot refers to Ophelia who epitomizes the weak and meek female character in English literature. Therefore, « A Game of Chess » reflects the nature of modern sexual relationships in which women are presented as sexual objects that are either raped or possessed as objects. Lyndall Gordon says : « The Waste Land is filled with broken women betrayed by sex or marriage » (187). Consequently, the section mirrors sex problems and lack of communication between the two genders in modern society.

The third section of the poem « The Fire Sermon » is first about Buddha's preaching against lust and other unhealthy relationships. It presents additional negative images about women. The section reflects not only decay, destruction and anarchy in terms of physical land, but also in terms of human relationships, in general, and the two genders' relation, in particular. Eliot portrays a terrifying image about women. They are connected to the image of prostitution, like the typist who is the representative woman of the section. The sexual encounter between the typist and the young man carbuncular reflects a loveless and passionless sex. The woman with her sexual degradation is presented as an object of sex. The speaker says : « His vanity requires no response/ And makes a welcome of indifference » (Eliot A : 241-242) and the typist « Hardly aware of her departed lover » (250). The encounter exhibits the lack of communication between the two genders. In addition, the rape of Philomel is also echoed in this section to show another bad image about women. Then, the section ends with the failure of the relationship between Elizabeth and Leicester. However, the fourth part of the poem, « Death by Water » excludes females, but in the last section, « What the Thunder Said », there is another reference to Philomel's rape : « Quando fiam uti chelidon-O swallow swallow » (Eliot A : 529). In addition, there is another reference to a woman with black hair, but her situation is obscure and vague. Consequently, women are negatively portrayed as sexual rather than rational beings.

In this case, Eliot, consciously or unconsciously, portrays a terrifying image of hollow women in the waste land. They are passive and submissive and raped or entrapped in a loveless relationship and prostitution. The poem includes many rapes and refers to prostitution which suggests the humiliation of a female's body. Hence, the woman is considered as an object. Rachel Potter says :

The Waste Land [...] collects together the class-and gender-inflected voices of a fragmented contemporary moment [...] they also illustrate Eliot's pervasive association of contemporaneity with 'femininity'. Madame Sosostris dishes out a debased and secondhand form of spiritual knowledge ; the woman in 'A Game of Chess' mis-recognizes what the man is thinking ; the women in the pub are in states of extreme physical decay ; and the typist is unconscious of her own state of sexual degradation. Such secondhand knowledge, mis-recognition, physical decay, sexual degradation, and unconsciousness have broken apart the language and beliefs of a common culture. (226)

Therefore, Eliot provides patriarchal feminine images about women that deviate from the uprising feminist movement in modern society.

Eliot's misrepresentation of women leads to scrutinizing the secret behind his misogynistic views about women. The analysis reveals that there are many reasons behind his negative attitudes towards women. It is very tempting to decode the secret behind his views and one of the reasons, in his early poetry, is his bad relation with women in his personal life. Actually, referring to his biography is an illuminating area to understand his misogyny. From a biographical standpoint, his poetry mirrors his personal problems with his wife and « Eliot's poetry has been used to show that he had trouble with women as prospective sexual partners » (Jarman 146). In addition, one of the most remarkable writers that read Eliot's poems as autobiographical works is Lyndall Gordon who traces the relationship between the poet and women in his life. She says : « There is no denying that many of Eliot's early poems suggest sexual problems- not lack of desire, but inhibition, distrust of women, and a certain physical queasiness » (Gordon 124). Therefore, his marriage greatly affects his writings and attitudes towards women.

In reality, Eliot's wife Vivienne Haigh - Wood is the most influential woman in his life and poetry. They married in 1915, but their marriage « was unhappy, as everyone within miles of it was aware » (Matthews 45). It is unsuccessful and nightmarish because they :

Were an odd couple from the start. The quiet, studious, highly self-conscious philosopher-poet with impeccable manners found himself in the constant company of a chirpy, nervous woman suffering from both physical and psychological ailments [...] For a time Eliot tried to keep up with her, but it was a losing battle and he became increasingly conscious of his inadequacy [...] As a result, she sought solace in the company of others [...] Vivien entered into a sexual relationship with Russell. (Cooper 5)

Eliot's problems with his wife provide a significant material for his early poems and an explanation for his misogynistic views towards women. In this case, one might say that the hysterical woman in « The Game of Chess » in « The Waste Land » refers to his wife Vivienne. Moreover, Vivienne's affair with Bertrand Russell ruins Eliot's marriage. Lyndall Gordon states : « Vivienne's adultery and Russell's unscrupulous lust may have fuelled the bitter rhymes Eliot was writing between 1917 and 1919 » (127) and « [f]or a year and a half after Eliot's marriage he felt as if he had dried up » (157). Therefore, his negative portrayal of women in both poems « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land » is connected with his marital problems. Mark Jarman ascertains that « [h]ell begin [s] with his marriage to Vivienne [...] Hellish imagery certainly characterizes the poems of Prufrock and Other Observations [...] but the real descent is on display in *The Waste Land*, published seven years after his marriage to Vivienne » (147). Consequently, Eliot's hellish marital experience negatively affects his attitudes towards women.

Regardless of his personal life and problems, Eliot's negative portrayal of women in his early poetry is related to his wish to maintain the traditional view concerning women's passivity and submissiveness. He continues the patriarchal representation of women by his male ancestors. Lucy McDiarmid asserts that « Like the 'individual talent', the poet's consciousness surrenders to a larger collective entity » (105). That is to say, in his essay « Tradition and the Individual Talent », Eliot advocates « historical sense » and « pastness of past » by reviving traditional works and giving voice to dead writers. Thus, by referring to traditional works, he continues their patriarchal ideas about women though he belongs to modernism. Through his poems, he restores men's masculinity by denouncing women's position, especially with the increasing voice of feminists. In other words, he was against women's right to vote and their participation in the political life. Rachel Potter claims that

Eliot insists that British democracy has been destroyed by mass enfranchisement...Eliot is responding specifically to the gender imbalance created by the large number of votes recently added to the British electorate through [...] the act [that] extended the franchise from women over thirty to women over twenty-one [...] making women the majority of the electorate for the first time, comprising 52.7 percent of the potential voters. (229)

Eliot expresses his anxiety from the rising power of women in society and transmits his misogynistic views to his poetry. Rachel Potter affirms that

Eliot attacks a 'feminine' liberalism, claiming it has created dangerous forms of modern heresy. Despite the changing nature of the political landscape and the kinds of historical agency with which they are associated, women remain negative signifiers of contemporary modern democracy. (231)

Hence, Eliot repudiates women's increasing voice in his society and transmits his wish to maintain patriarchal views to his poetry albeit the latter is regarded as modern.

Despite the fact that Eliot advocates « the impersonal theory » in his poetry, there are pitfalls in applying it adequately. In other words, in his essay « Tradition and the Individual Talent », he defines impersonality as follows : « [T]he poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality [...] Impressions and experiences which are important for the man may take no place in the poetry » (Eliot B : 2211). Hence, a poet ought to be detached from his literary productions. For Eliot, poetry « is not a turning loose of emotions, but an escape from emotions ; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality » (Eliot B : 2212). A poet, in this case, is objective. However, Eliot's selected poems embed personal emotions about his marital situation and attitudes towards the increasing power of women in his society. For James E. Miller, Eliot's « language seems not shaped by the 'impersonal theory' but by a personal anguish (and the possible need for concealment) that lies behind the theory itself » (36). Eliot's poems exhibit his misogynistic views about women albeit he calls for objective writing of modern poetry. In this case, Tim Dean says : « Eliot's theory simply rationalizes his impulse to conceal personal problems : impersonality represents the poet's way of constructing for himself a carapace of privacy » (46). Hence, Eliot's personal matters float to the surface of his writings despite his concealment. Therefore, his poems are modern in terms of form and some of his themes, but they are traditional in relation to views about women's position in modern society. They do not cope with the rising of the woman question in the twentieth century.

Conclusion

The meticulous analysis of Eliot's masterpieces « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land » reveals his misogynistic views about women. His portrayal of women is not touched by the drastic change of women's position and their increasing power in his society. In the two poems, there is not any intimate relationship between the two genders. There is only fear, frustration, distance and lack of communication. Thus, Eliot misrepresents women in his poetry by clinging to traditional patriarchal ideas about women

despite the fact that his poetry is modern. However, there are many personal reasons, like his marital problems with his wife Vivienne, which push him to portray a terrifying image about women. In addition, his selected poems represent his anxiety towards the rising voice of feminists by empowering masculinity and disempowering femininity. Yet, in both cases, he deviates from his impersonal theory by embedding his personal and social milieus to be a misogynist poet in « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land ».

In a nutshell, Eliot's early masterpieces embody misogynistic attitudes about women, but that does not mean that he is a misogynist in all his poetry. He actually shows positive images of women in his late poetry, especially his plays. His misogyny is also open to future research, particularly with the appearance of queer theorists that continue the claim of John Peter and James Miller who regard Eliot as a homosexual author. Unlike Peter and Miller who read Eliot's works from a biographical point of view, critics, like Colleen Lamos and Wayne Koestenbaum apply the tenets of queer theory to argue that Eliot's misogyny is the result of his homosexuality. However, their readings are only one facet of a literary text. Consequently, despite all the criticism directed to Eliot's identity and personality, his works represent milestones of literary creations in poetry, drama and criticism.

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Abstract

This research seeks to diagnose misogynistic attitudes in T. S. Eliot's poems « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land ». It aims to vindicate that his misogynistic tones are the outcomes of his personal and social milieus. From feminist and biographical standpoints, the analysis of both poems unravels weak and hysterical women and dispassionate relationships between men and women. Therefore, despite the fact that Eliot is a leader of modernist literature, his ideas about women are traditional to maintain patriarchy, particularly with the spread of the feminist threat in the twentieth century. In addition, his misogynistic attitudes are the result of his personal problems in his marriage although he advocates the impersonal theory in writing modern poetry. Consequently, Eliot is a misogynist poet in « The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock » and « The Waste Land ».

Keywords

Feminism, impersonal theory, misogyny, modernism, T. S. Eliot.

مستخلص

يسعى هذا البحث إلى تشخيص الآراء المعادية للمرأة في قصائد تي. اس. إليوت "أغنية الحب لجيه ألفرد بروفروك" و "أرض الخراب". يهدف البحث إلى إثبات أن نبراته المعادية للمرأة هي

نتيجة محيطه الشخصي والاجتماعي. من وجهة نظر نسوية و السيرة الذاتية ، يكشف تحليل كلتا القصيدتين عن النساء الضعيفات والهستريات والعلاقات الفاترة بين الرجال والنساء. لذلك ، على الرغم من حقيقة أن إليوت هو زعيم الأدب الحديث ، إلا أن أفكاره حول المرأة تقليدية للحفاظ على النظام الأبوي ، خاصة مع انتشار التهديد النسوي في القرن العشرين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، مواقفه المعادية للمرأة هي نتيجة لمشاكله الشخصية في زواجه على الرغم من أنه يدافع عن نظرية اللاشخصية في كتابه الشعر الحديث. وبالتالي ، فإن الشاعر إليوت كاره للمرأة في "أغنية الحب لجيه ألفرد بروفروك" و "أرض الخراب"

كلمات مفتاحية

النسوية ، نظرية اللاشخصية ، كراهية النساء ، الحداثة ، تي. اس. إليوت

Résumé

Cette recherche cherche à diagnostiquer les attitudes misogynes dans les poèmes de T. S. Eliot « La Chanson d'amour de J. Alfred Prufrock » et « La Terre vaine ». Elle vise à prouver que ses tons misogynes sont le résultat de ses milieux personnels et sociaux. Du point de vue féministe et biographique, l'analyse des deux poèmes déchiffre des femmes faibles et hystériques et les relations dépassionnées entre hommes et femmes. Par conséquent, malgré le fait qu'Eliot soit un chef de la littérature moderniste, ses idées sur les femmes sont traditionnelles pour maintenir le patriarcat, en particulier avec la propagation de la menace féministe au xx^e siècle. De plus, ses attitudes misogynes sont le résultat de ses problèmes personnels dans son mariage bien qu'il prône la théorie impersonnelle dans l'écriture de la poésie moderne. Par conséquent, Eliot est un poète misogyne dans « La Chanson d'amour de J. Alfred Prufrock » et « La Terre vaine ».

Mots-clés

Féminisme, théorie impersonnelle, misogynie, modernisme, T. S. Eliot.