

# Modern poetry and fiction: analysis of the selected poems assignment

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Eliot has depended for his source on two seminal contemporary works- Freezer's Golden Bough, and Jessie L. Weston From Ritual to Romance. While the first deals with the myth of the Fertility cults which formed an integral part of Eastern civilization; the second one describes the Legend of the Holy Grail. In both the stories there is a sequester who seeks to release the waste land from the curse it is suffering from. The first section titled ' Burial of the Dead', begins with the narrative voice of Thirties , voicing the condition and ethos of the inhabitants of the waste land.

They consider April to be the cruelest month , because they do not wish to be awakened from their death-like existence into a meaningful living. They like the winter because " nothing grows , and nobody lives". The character of Thirties is omniscient through out the poem, for he is the poet's mouthpiece as well as commentator of the deterioration the world is witnessing in terms of moral and ethical values. Another character introduced in the same sector is Madame Strokes, the clairvoyant , who predicts the future, using a pack of Tarot cards.

As she too is an inhabitant of the wasteland, she cannot see the " hanged Man", Just like she warns the Phoenician sailor to " fear death by water. But unlike the Fertility myths, that necessitated the death by drowning of the God who would then release the land from its curse of sterility, here nothing like this is promised. This section has reference to two more violent deaths: that of the Austrian Empress, Marie Avatars, who was killed for having loved Archduke Rudolph. Also mentioned in the same section is the death of Archduke Ludwig who due to mental illness, drowned himself in lake Strangeness near Munich.

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The second section titled. A Game of Chess elaborates on the Modern Selected Wolf AR By Annoyance XSL'. \_r , c: sees. Immorality and sexual indiscipline that had become the norm of life society. The section ironically describes an exotic bed chamber of a waiting for her client or lover, who makes no commitments what's Belladonna , the lady of situations. She is representative's the mode has no qualms in entering into brief sexual flings with strangers. T laxity is Juxtaposed with the story of Phloem of the Greek mythology have been raped by King Uterus and the outraged maiden then chi nightingale, so great was her sorrow.

She then chose to inhabit the sang into the desert air with her " inviolable voice". The second sec he reference to another couple of modern Europe: Ill and Albert. L friend to fix her bad teeth and hair as her husband wood be return army service. We are given to understand that her present condition repeated abortions she has gone through. Len the brief dialogue be are given a glimpse into their loveless marital relationship: both bal " You know nothing.. See nothing.. Remember nothing.. " The HTH ' The Fire Sermon', once again uses the first person narrative.

The vii Thirties. After the first section, he seems thief traveled the entire Europe as well as other parts of the world. He comments on the IM inhabiting the city of London. The characters -Mrs.. Porter and her introduced. Both are very much the women of twentieth century E dwells on the fire of lust consuming the human beings. Eliot mentis modern nymphs who come to spend the weekend with their boyfriend directors. The picnic on the boat sailing down Thames ironically race of Earl of Leister and his maiden as told

by Spencer in his poem 'Propitiation'. Unlike the Renaissance interlude, there is no mention between the men and women enjoying the outing on River Theme weekend is over all that remains is ... "The river tent .. Broken.. The nymphs.. Parted. " Alt is the same casualness with which the typist section 'puts a record on the gramophone" after her indulging in a with a stranger, who is her client. Just as is the pattern in the earlier poem, Eliot alludes to the past in order to emphasize the decadence modern existence. Therefore in this section too, there is reference of Song.

The reference is from the lives of the Rhine Daughters as toll opera. We are told about their sexual exploitation at the hands of RI men. This section ends with a supreme example of the one person change himself totally from a sinner to a saint-Saint Augustine. Thirties mentions the death of another character who had been me first section by Madame Strokes. She had warned him of dying in tragedy of Pebbles the Phoenician is told in a very matter -of-fact the end of all of us , even if we are " tall and handsome" as the Ph section is aptly titled ' Death by Water'.

His drowning is a parallel to drowned God of the fertility cult. But whereas in the cult, the ritual god is a symbol of man's sins being washed away , leaving him to r regenerate into a sinless life; no such regeneration is offered by the Pebbles. This is because, he is an inhabitant of the waste land and even to materialism, profit motive and lust. The last section titled ' What the Thunder Said' has the narrative voice of Thirties who has traveled both through time and distance to reach a conclusion. The solution offered is by God who is symbolized by thunder'.

Debugging of the section describes the passion, agony, and death of the Son of God. The Strengthens drama is briefly outlined in choice phrases such as “sweaty faces”, “stony silence”, “the reverberation”. From the Christian ideology, the poet moves to the Goddess Gang who is believed by Hindus to be on earth in the form of river Gang/ Ganges. The poet in this way makes a smooth switch from western aesthetics to Eastern aesthetics. The Banished tenets of charity, sympathy, and self control is taken as the golden law to achieve peace on earth.

It is the Shanties that has been similarly promised by Christ when he talks of the peace that passage human understanding. 2. Critical Appreciation of Yeats' poem 'The Second Coming' This is a modernist poem that was published in about the same time as Eliot's poem 'The Wasteland'. Therefore the idea of chaotic conditions in post war Europe is further poetrized by the Irish poet, Yeats, through unique symbols and images. This poem is more than a literary work: it transcends the boundaries of literature and becomes a apocalyptic vision of impending violence and destruction on the world.

The Second Coming mentioned in the Book of Revelations, of the New Testament Bible is a promise to the followers of Christ of his eventual return to the earth to establish a good and positive world. But Yeats deliberately subverts this concept in the wake of the World war as well as other wars in the world at that time such as the Russian Revolution, Japanese invasion of China. He states emphatically that the second coming of Christ would necessarily be preceded by the birth of the anti-Christ. The antithetical and

tactical was a natural order of things, both in the individual as well as the world.

Consequently the lord of Destruction would be born in Bethlehem, because that was the place that saw the birth of Christ, who stood for peace and love among all things living and non-living in the world. This is the theme of the poem. Yeats was a Symbolist poet who believed in the use of symbols to convey great truths and insights much more than ordinary lyrical or felicitous phrases. His poems are remarkable for the symbols he has employed to convey esoteric truths. A study of this poem therefore requires a knowledge of the philosophy of Yeats as put down in his prose work *A VISION*.

The poem begins with the gyred symbol and it is said to be turning continuously. This denotes the constant change that is always taking place in the individual as well as in the world. Yeats' mystical view of the history and the future of the world is contained in this symbol. Gyres are cone shaped spirals that intersect so that each gyres narrowest point is contained inside the widest part of the other. The gyres represent different elemental forces in the historical cycle, each beginning in a concentrating point and degenerating into chaos or vice versa. The two interpenetrating cones move in opposite direction to each other.

If one moves clockwise the other would be anti- clockwise with the same pace as the other. Yeats uses this symbol to explain the state of flux operating in the individual as well as the world. Nothing remains constant: neither the good nor the bad. These gyres are connected to the Moon and its phases. The image of the falcon flying away from the falconer, becomes

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symbolic of the chaos which follows when the controlling center recedes or disappears. This happens as the falcon is flying away, it is positioned at the wider end of the rotating gyre, while the falconer, is positioned at the apex.

Therefore, "the falcon cannot hear the falconer". Other images, of chaos and destruction is conveyed through more images, each more disturbing and yet true of the contemporary conditions. "Things fall apart", "blood-dimmed tide", "ceremony of innocence drowned", "mere anarchy" serve to describe with brevity the death and destruction that happened in the First World War. There is also a comment upon the change that has come over the individuals. If earlier the good prevailed over the bad, now that too has been reversed as the poet states: "the best lack all conviction, the worst are full of passionate intensity. Moving from the first stanza of eight lines, the poet chooses to write a longer second stanza. It begins with a dramatic statement about the biblical second coming. But immediately we are told about the vision he has been having of the beast. It is an image from the collective unconscious which Yeats terms Spiritus Mundi. The beast is Sphinx-like in appearance. It is said to be "slouching towards Bethlehem to be born", All the words used to describe the beast suggest an anti-typical of Christ. The eyes are said to be "pitiless", the appearance is "rough", and it has lust which is suggested by a reference to its "slow moving thighs. Moreover, we are told about the effect upon the desert birds: they are reeling in the air, agitated, for they can identify the god of Evil instinctively. The poem is different from other modernist poems in the apocalyptic vision it exemplifies as well as the symbols used to convey this prophecy of doom and destruction. Yeats believed that each gyre would take roughly 2000 years.

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to complete its clockwise and anti-clockwise rotation. Each civilization would exist for twelve such gyres, and the end would come in the thirteenth gyres rotation. That would be roughly 26000 years.

The first two wars in the twentieth century was therefore the beginning of the end of the present civilization as it had happened in the 20, 20th year. The revelation of the poet is what transcends its literary excellence. Both the content, philosophy and a suitable poetic devices employed in the form of symbols and images mark the uniqueness of this poem from all other modernist poetry. III Essay 3. Analyses the tragic vision in Riders to the Sea. This play is a modern tragedy which has been written by the Irish, writer and playwright, John Millington Synge.

It is termed a tragedy for its tragic story, characters, as well as tragic vision. This one-act play focuses on the lives of the small islanders—their tough existence which is dependent on the sea and their stoical attitude in the face of continuing tragedy. Synge chooses the life of the Irish peasantry living in Aran Islands to tell the world of these people who are examples of those surviving the blows of fate. The people in Aran Islands live from fishing and trading horses in the mainland. Thus they depend upon the sea for their livelihood. The men go out into the sea for fishing.

They also cross the sea to reach the mainland market where they trade on horse, and pigs. The women remain mostly on their farms. Their work is to spin yarn from wool to make clothes for the family, to prepare food from the potatoes grown on the farm and fish which the men bring from the sea.

These people live very simple lives, depending on their own farm for fuel,

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food and clothes. They buy tea and flour with the money obtained by selling a horse or a pig. They use turf or dried seaweed for fuel. Maurer's daughters Catherine and Nora is seen engaged in household chores when the play begins.

Marry is the old woman , and the protagonist in this play. She has already lost seven men in her family through accidents connected with the sea. The first to die was her husband and his father, After that she lost five of her sons one after the other. None the sixth son, Michael has been missing since nine days, and they are waiting for the sea to be calm to wash his body ashore. When the play opens, we find her daughters mentioning the clothes which the local priest has given them for identification. It has been obtained from a body washed ashore in Dingle.

The daughters have identified it as belonging to their brother Michael. But they do not wish to upset their mother yet, and they attempt to hide it when she appears. The old lady seems more worried as the youngest son is preparing to go to the mainland market for trading. She attempts to dissuade him , reminding him of the absence of men in the family should another tragedy occur. But Barley scolds her for her apprehensions , saying that the slanders cannot be cowards and stay inside their homes. The men have to go out into the sea, that was their occupation and their livelihood.

Finally Barley goes, but before that he gets the planks required to make the coffin for his brother Michael. The specter of death and destruction looms large in the play from the beginning. Marry is already sad about the disappearance of Michael and his body is yet to be found. It has been nine

days since that sad incident. Now Barley has informed her that he would definitely attend the Galway Fair in the mainland in order to sell his horses. The family needed the money. On hearing this she tries to dissuade him, but of no avail. He makes all the preparations for the Journey.

At his departure , she does not give him her blessings and in the haste he forgets to take the piece of cake which his sisters have made for him. Marry then decides to take a shorter route and reach the spring well which he had to pass on his way. Marry reaches the spring well ahead of Barley. Holding the cake and with a blessing on her lips , she awaits the arrival of her son. While waiting thus, looking into the distance which would soon show Barley on horseback, she has a terrifying vision. She sees Michael riding a grey horse beside Partake who was on a red mare.

As she looked she saw the grey horse tripping the red mare and Barley falling into the sea. The ' tragic vision' disappeared in a moment. So shocked was she that she missed Barley who rode by and Marry returned wailing home. She knew what was going to happen and she was already feeling the pain of total loss. Minutes later, the body of Michael is brought and the villagers also tell about a rumor which they had just received regarding the accidental death of Barley. The tragic vision which Marry gets while tanning at the Springfield is the locus of action in the play.

It Joins all the past tragedies, with the present one, of Michael, and the future one, of Barley. It is a scene compressed and concentrated with tragic intensity. The islanders sad plight in the hands of a cruel Destiny as well as their helpless dependency upon a vindictive sea which both provides and

destroys is conveyed instantly through this vision. Synge has deliberately chosen a one-act structure, focusing on the lives of a single family to represent the entire community, in order to portray the pathos and struggle of these people although living in the twentieth century.

There is no sub-plot and the characters are limited to five of them. Synge has employed compactness, compression, and condensation to write an effective tragic play. Brevity in plot construction and characterization as well as dialogues are the factors that contribute to the play's tragic effect. The structure and content of the play make it almost a par with the classical Greek tragedies. The dramatic unities are scrupulously observed. Synge has prepared the background by reporting the past tragic incident and avoiding the presentation of it on stage.

There are no digressions or comic relief in the play. That is the reason it is considered more classical in content than Elizabethan. The language is unique, in that it is a colloquial Gaelic dialect mixed with English which Synge has reproduced. It is the spoken language of the Island community. The atmosphere, tone, character, content, all contribute toward making it one of the best tragedies written in the twentieth century. IV Essay : 5. Concept of epiphany with reference to *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* The novel *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* begins with Stephen

Man. Dealer's first memories, when he was about three years old. The fragmented lines are from a childhood story and a nursery song, and are linked with family associations, sensory perceptions, and pieces of conversations. In this opening scene, Joyce is presenting to us the genesis of

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a future artist's perception as well as interpretation the world. Moving from Stephens infancy to his early days at Closeness Wood College, a Jesuit boarding school for boys, Joyce focuses on three key incidents which significantly affect Stephens personality. The first of these is the incident where

Stephen was pushed into an open cesspool by a classmate who was a bully. Afterwards , he had fever and had to be confined to the school infirmary. It is this incident which made him feel that he was an outsider," different" from others. Another incident occurred when he was six yr old at the time of his visit home, for Christmas vacations. On that day, he was invited to eat dinner with the family, at the dining table, for the first time. However, the happy occasion was marred by a heat political argument between Stephens old nurse, Dante Ordain, and a guest, Mr.. Casey.

It created confusions in the young boy, on religion and politics in the adult world. On returning to school after that incident, he broke his spectacles and was unable to complete his glasswork. He was punished for that, unjustly humiliated by the class Prefect. However, he was encouraged by a kind classmate, to go to the rector of the school with the matter , and he obtained Justice. After the summer vacation, Stephen learnt of his father's reversal in finance and he had to g up his education at the boarding school and enrolled in a less prestigious Jesuit Dad School, Belvedere College.

Here, he got a reputation as an award-winning essay writer and an actor. Despite these successes, Stephen felt alienated from his classmates due to his growing religious skepticism and deep interest in literature and writing.

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This feeling of isolation, further intensified, when he learnt about his father's weaknesses following a trip to Cork. Frustrated by his loss of faith in the Catholic Church, added to the family misfortunes, Stephen took to satisfying the desires of his heart. He wandered through the brothels of Dublin city and got solace in the company of a prostitute.

At the time he fourteen yr old. After a brief period of "sinful living" Stephen attended a three-day spiritual retreat. He was overwhelmed with the sense of guilt and remorse, he felt FRR. Randal, the spiritual counselor was speaking directly to him. He rededicated himself to a life devotion. He spent the following days in fervent prayers and continued - in religious activities. Noticing Stephens pious behavior, the direct school arranged a meeting to encourage Stephen to pursue a priestly v beginning, this flattered Stephen, and he was momentarily fascinated possibilities of a clerical life.

But soon he realized his limitations, as he gain, to carnal desires. He finally became aware of his "inherent sinful consequently gave up the idea of becoming a priest. Later, Stephen University, where he hoped to shape his destiny as an artist. It is at this has a visual experience of seeing a girl wading in the sea. It proves to b "epiphany". She becomes to him a symbol of the attraction, the promise abandon which he wishes to experience in life. At this moment that he that he could hope to gain this experience only through a life dedicate Shortly thereafter, Stephen began a new life as a young man in search values and creed.

In comparison with other college students, Stephen anti-social and more concerned with pursuing his own interests, than cause of others. Unlike his

peers he became more introspective : he did devil-may-care attitude of the common University student. Although he continued his faith in the Catholic church, he no longer allowed its tenets to shape his attitude to all things. Through conversations with friends and studies, Stephen eventually developed his own aesthetic theory of art , philosophies of Aristotle and Aquinas.

He realized that if ever he wishes artistic soul, then he must sever all ties of faith, family and country. He left Dublin and went abroad to "forge" his soul's "uncreated conscience." 6. *To the Lighthouse* as an example of a novel employing the stream of consciousness technique. This modernist novel is the story of the trip to the lighthouse which is going to be undertaken by Mrs. Ramsey with her children. The novel opens with Mrs. Ramsey assuring her son James the weather will be nice enough for the trip to the lighthouse the next day. She then asserts that the weather would not be fine for the trip.

This provokes James to want to impale and kill his father. Mrs. Ramsey sits knitting at the Lighthouse keeper's little boy. He has tuberculosis in the hips. Mr. Ramsay agrees with Mrs. Ramsey regarding the weather being favorable for the trip the next day. Mrs. Ramsey, ruminates on this conversation and realizes neither she nor her children find Mr. Ramsay agreeable; he was audio centered. The opening chapter introduces all the main characters. Apart from the Ramsays there is the artist Lily Briscoe who is from the village. She started painting a portrait of Mrs. Ramsey, and she has set up her garden. Mr.

William Banks, also from the village is a constant visitor. His frequent association has developed an alliance with Lily. Stream of consciousness technique was introduced into English fiction in the 19th century, by Gustave Flaubert, with his

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novel *Tristan Shanty*. The modernist novelists have p and Virginia Woolf is one of them. Usually this technique of writing is u capture the unspoken thoughts and feelings of a character without rest objective narration, or dialogue. Len the novel, action occurs not in the e but in the minds and feelings of the characters and which is expressed by them in the narration.

Although there is a narrative voice, a large part of the narration consists of the exposition of each character's consciousness. Some sections use entire pages without letting sin objective voice interrupt the flow of thoughts of a single character. As a literary device, this technique was perhaps the most fitting counterpart to contemporary theories of Freud about the human consciousness. Therefore writers of this period was influenced by the Freudian theories about the state of the human thoughts as well as the unconscious. They sought in various ways to depict the human consciousness in the writings especially in novels.

Although 'stream of consciousness' as the name implies, is the illumination f thoughts and feelings that characters consciously experience, Woolf reaches much further into the human mind than a conventional narrative. This novelist uses h this technique to provide an intimate view of a character's interiorly. She succeeds in expressing the flow of each character's thoughts, and weaves them together into a narrative, that flows seamlessly from one character's thought to another's, without any obvious break or disruption. Woolf has also employed the technique of free direct discourse whereby dialogues are written without quotation marks.

Even phrase and passages are given without quotation marks. This form of narration is done in the third person. At the same time, it conveys a sense of the character's internal thoughts from the character's own experience, thereby expressing the thoughts, somewhere between a first -person and a third- person mode of narrative. Woolf's use of stream of consciousness and free indirect discourse enhance the themes of the novel. To the Lighthouse forcefully conveys the subjective experience of reality, Woolf suggests that reality is more like the accumulation of the various perspectives and experiences of individuals.