


The Waste Land: Eliot's Neo-Empire

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Abstract

Thomas Stearns Eliot's *The Waste Land* is a mysterious enigmatic text in both its form and content which still invites many critics and reviewers to an infinite range of interpretations finding in it a striking departure from nineteenth century poetry and raising the flag of modernism and postmodernism. Its appearance in 1922 started a critical debate among critics who found it hard to place both because of the poet's complex artistic strategies and because of the poem's kaleidoscopic orchestrated structure. From this perspective, the present paper is mainly concerned with the poem's kaleidoscopic structure highlighting the text's intertextuality, heterogeneity and multiculturalism. It seeks to re-read and investigate the poem from the perspective of Edward Said's Postcolonial theory proving that the poem's encyclopedic structure achieves for the poet a form of Neo-Colonialism where the poet's intellectual domination replaces the territorial one. The study concludes by showing that *The Waste Land* is an early example of postmodernism where the text becomes the poet's Neo-empire.

Keywords: Encyclopedic structure, heterogeneity, intertextuality, multiculturalism, neo-colonialism.

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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Stearns Eliot's *The Waste Land* is his masterpiece that marks the turning point in modern poetry operating on flat contradiction to those categories most commonly applied by conventional literary histories. This mysterious enigmatic text, in both its form and content, invited many critics and reviewers to an infinite range of interpretations finding in it a striking departure from nineteenth century poetry and raising the flag of modernism. Its appearance in 1922 started a critical debate among critics who found it hard to place both because of the poet's complex artistic strategies and because of the poem's kaleidoscopic orchestrated structure. As "a series of sharp, discrete, slightly related perceptions and feelings, dramatically and lyrically presented, and violently juxtaposed" (Aiken, 1968, p. 176), the text gives room to the application of a wide variety of metatextual principles. The focus of this paper therefore will be on the intertextuality of the poem in relation to Eliot's anticipation of the same quality in his famous critical essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" showing how far his literary doctrine has influenced the analysis of many major literary critics of *The Waste Land*.

Moreover, the detailed analysis and investigation of the kaleidoscopic structure of *The Waste Land* will eventually be read as a form of Neo-Colonialism proposed by Edward Said's Postcolonial theory. Said's definition of "culture" involves "all those practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms that often exist in aesthetic forms" (1993, p. xii). The study also adopts his proclamation that "interpreting" depends on "who does" it, "when it is done, and no less important, from where it is done" (1993, p. 93).

The Intertextuality and heterogeneity of the text examine the kaleidoscopic structure and polysemic nature of *The Waste Land* confirming the poem's open-endedness feature. Delving into political and cultural dimensions will take shape through the supportive comments of Said's view on the school of the New Critics where he states that:

Linguistic and literary analysis is features of the modern school, not the marketplace. Purifying the language of the tribe . . . as a hope kept alive by embattled New Criticisms surrounded by mass culture -

always moved further from the really big existing tribes. ((2001, p. 441)

Said adds that we have to break out of this discipline that separates literature from the large community of readers. The text, therefore, is no longer a self-contained entity; it is opened up and invites the reader/critic to co-produce the poem/text. Thus, the present paper aims at highlighting the polyphony of Eliot's language in the light of Barthesian intertextuality and eventually, re-evaluating the pre-established ideas. Postmodern critics referred to in this study reject the ontology of form and the assumptions embedded in early criticism. They open the text to intertextual reading that delves into different branches of learning so as to find out how the text fits in or relates.

Thus, with its anomalous nature and kaleidoscopic quality, *The Waste Land* becomes one of the most rewarding areas for investigation in the light of modern or postmodern critical theories. Earlier studies, however, did not tackle the text from the same perspective of the present one. The present paper seeks to re-read and investigate the poem from the perspective of Edward Said's Postcolonial theory proving that the poem's encyclopedic structure achieves for the poet a form of Neo-Colonialism where the poet's intellectual domination replaces the territorial one. Foucault's theory of "discourse" and Barthes "intertextuality" will be referred to in an attempt to support this postmodern reading of the text. The study will conclude by showing that *The Waste Land* becomes the poet's neo-empire. Such significant areas, to my knowledge, have not been handled together in any thorough study of the text.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In an essay entitled "A Note on Modernism", Said states that the Occident, after losing its power in dominating the world geographically, resorted to make a world literature, a literature that replaces the world empire. In order to do so, "a new encyclopedic form became necessary" which has three distinctive features. These are a "circularity of structure" which leave the text "inclusive" and at the same time open-ended. The second is a "novelty based almost entirely on the reformulation of old, even outdated fragments drawn self-consciously from disparate locations, sources, cultures" (1993, p. 189). The third is related to the irony of the form which all if combined together is major elements of *The Waste Land*.

Referring to Eliot's ideas about the complexity of the relationship between past and present, Said finds them suggestive of the debate over the meaning of imperialism. He calls for the grouping of political, economic and cultural questions in relation to the modern imperial experience. He adds that the European imperialism still casts a considerable shadow over the time. Accordingly, in Eliot's time and to him as an

outsider in England, he could easily feel the power and control.

However, employing Said's theory of intellectual occupation or "imperialism" shows that Eliot's multilingual voices and intertextual network are extensions to the power of imperialism. The text, therefore, becomes an art that substitutes the world empire: "When you can no longer assume that Britannia will rule the waves forever, you have to reconceive reality as something that can be held together by you the artist, in history rather than geography" (1993, pp. 189-190). Ironically, the domination of the Occident will be literary rather than politically.

Eliot lived part of his early life in a time when Britain was at the top of the hierarchy. During the nineteenth century, Great Britain, as it was then called, became the chief imperialist power that covered most of the land's surface. But, by the early twentieth century, England's political and ideological power of dominating the world began to dissolve, a fact that the Western could not accept. This fact led to the birth of new approach which provided an alternative ideology to reconsider the concepts of power and control. This control has extended to involve not only the direct political domination of geographical territories but rather dominating the "Others" minds intellectually. According to the Oxford dictionary, the word "colonialism" is defined as a "policy of acquiring or maintaining colonies . . . economic exploitation of weak or backward people by a larger power" (Allen, 1990, pp. 222- 223). So, the word "colonialism" involves the control or authority over other countries' properties and lands. Intellectual writers, therefore, discovered that language has become the new means of neo-imperialism, a weapon in the battle of cultural politics. This new policy will be investigated in detail in the analysis of the poetic discourse. According to Foucault, discourse is "the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized" (2001, p. 211). He affirms the existence of a trans-epistemic author who possesses contradictory features of preserving the episteme and departs from it. Like Foucault, Said is against the objective outlook viewing that literary works are culturally and discursively structured: "texts are worldly . . . they are nevertheless a part of the social world, human life, and of course the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted" (1983, p. 4). Thus, literary texts are not, as usually assumed, too subjective or too individual, nor too general or universal but apparently "complex articulation between a single individual, social context and the play of language" (Loomba, 2005, p. 63).

Ironically, *The Waste Land* was highly admired by Indian and Arab readers who according to Paul, regarded Eliot "as a hero attacking the rottenness of Western civilization" in a time when a feeling of antipathy towards the West was running in the Arab

world (1997, p. 13). Eliot recognized the divisions in philosophical views at the time and thus adopting the Indian philosophy was part of his main strategy to deconstruct Western intellectual power and make them realize the limitation of their knowledge. His shrewd strategy was not yet discovered and his extended racism was not revealed. The present exploration, therefore, delves into the cultural-poetical depicting common features of modernism stated by Said. In support of this point of view, one should refer to what Eliot himself states that "any radical change in poetic form is likely to be the symptom of some very much deeper change in society and in the individual" (1933, p. 45). Apparently, this change is due to political and historical causes as Eliot himself observes: "poetry differs from every other art in having a value for the people of the poet's race and language" and that "no art is more stubbornly national than poetry" (1957, pp. 18-19). This indicates Eliot's belief in poetic discourse as having an efficient function for the benefit of the poet's race. The following divisions will investigate the patterns encoded in the text as a ramification of power.

Allusion and Intertextuality

Through galaxies of quotations or mosaic of allusions, *The Waste Land* becomes a paradigmatic example of intertextuality in which threads can be traced in preceding texts. The question raised in this argument is related to the aim of the poet's ideology and strategic plan- Did he fulfill his aim in gaining power?

Allusion is the main constituent or backbone of *The Waste Land* which can be taken as a sign of erudition. It should be mentioned that allusion has developed into the postmodern feature "intertextuality" which in its traditional sense means the play of allusion between texts. Intertextuality is a notion introduced by Julia Kristeva in 1966 "to designate the various relationships that a given text may have with other texts. These intertextual relationships include anagram, allusion, adaptation, translation, parody, pastiche, imitation, and other kinds of transformation" (Baldick, 1990, p. 112).

However, Eliot's use of quotations may leave the reader in chaos and outer darkness. When the poem was first published in *The Criterion*, it was taken as a complaint of the decline of the European culture. Allusion functions, as many critics argued, as a metaphoric device which links texts together revealing both similarities and differences. But according to Davidson's, allusion is "also a dispersive figure, multiplying contexts for both the present work and the text alluded to and suggesting a cultural, historical dimension of difference" (1994, p. 128). According to Richards, it is "a technical device for compression. *The Waste Land* is the equivalent in content to an epic. Without this device twelve books would have been needed" (1948, pp. 290-291).

Barthes's views on texts as symbolic, open-ended and interrelated correspond to Eliot's poem in this distinctive characteristic. A text, Barthes states, "is made up of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not . . . the author" (2001, p. 189). Literature for Barthes is intertextual in which texts are woven out of other works past and present. Barthes goes on to say that the author "can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the other, in such a way as never to rest on any one of them" (2001, p. 188). His statement that the only power of a writer is "to mix writing" and to "imitate" is contradictory for this mixing and amalgamation are by all means shaped by the author's historical, political, social, and cultural milieu. Hence, his language is authentically an authorial token for it is the author who organizes and orchestrates the text. The argument proposed here is clarified by Burke who proves that there is no "design" without "designer" and that "where there is the appearance of meaning there must be intention" (1998, p. 23). However, Barthes's concept of intertextuality agrees with Said's claim mentioned above: "Novelty based almost entirely on the reformulation of old, even outdated fragments drawn self-consciously from disparate locations and sources" (1993, p. 189). Yet, Said confirms the self-conscious selection and composition which admit the existence of the producer/author of the text.

However, the intertextuality of *The Waste Land* lies in this cut and paste structure involving references to Greek myths, Oriental and Occidental religions, and music through polyphonic languages such as English, Latin, Greek, German, French and Sanskrit. In addition, it includes many allusions to literary texts from Classical writers: Virgil, Ovid, Dante; Sixteenth century writers: Spenser, Shakespeare, John Webster, Thomas Middleton; Seventeenth century writers: Andrew Marvell, Milton; eighteenth century writer: Oliver Goldsmith; and nineteenth century French writers: Baudelaire, Verlaine. These eclectic flashes are drawn from both past and present. Multi-styles in the course of the poem are interwoven together including the vernacular slang, colloquial dialogue, archaic phrases, lyrical moments as well as comic passages beside many others. In such orchestration, the distance between the author and episteme has to be bridged. The final discourse shaped by Eliot remains to have its influence and to be reassessed and explored. Hence, intertextuality is a direct proof of the existence of the author. Burke explains that "the effect of the impersonal other (in any of its poststructuralist forms), it still remains as subjectivity, as something to be located and specified" (1998, p. 174). However, what is noticed is that most of the works alluded to are their writer's best known ones or masterpieces. This implies Eliot's desire to be in a similar rank or even a higher one. What really

matters, says Miller, is "whether the reader knows a borrowed quotation in the context of its source-as *The Waste Land* takes on meaning from the unseen as well as the seen" (1977, p. 153). By recycling of past literature and by using the techniques of other genres, this monumental poem introduces new poetic form reinforcing Eliot's idea of the American "individual talent".

Abandoning the traditional closed ending and continuous narrative, lacking specific generic conventions for it is not narrative, lyric, dramatic, meditative or descriptive; *The Waste Land* can be regarded as an early postmodern experimentation. A five-part poem, introduced by Roman numerals, and containing 434 lines, this poem has some elements of the lyric, dramatic monologue, narrative, and the epic. Such a glaring mixture of genres in the texture of *The Waste Land* is a key feature of postmodernism. According to Selby, it was Ruth Nevo's essay "The Waste Land: Ur-Text of Deconstruction" which is regarded as the first to suggest that the poem can be read as "a postmodernist poem of 1982: as a Deconstructionist Ur-text" (1999, p. 117). Nevo demonstrates that "the fundamental categories of literary discourse are dismantled or simply abandoned". The poem has "no single time or place; there is no unifying central character . . . no one point of view, no single style, idiom". Besides, the text, she proceeds to say, "consists of a plethora of signifiers in complete discomplementarity with any set or sequence of recognizably related signifiers in a represented world" (1999, pp. 117- 118). This loss of identity or decentering is a postmodern characteristic foreshadowed by Eliot in 1922. Reeves prove that the poem "refuses the possibility of resolution. It is open-ended; but it is not indecisive. On the contrary, it is decided in its uncertainty. It patiently endures the prospect of inconclusion" (1994, p. 20). Unlike his contemporaries, the Georgians, whose poetry was based on the Romantic tradition, to which Eliot is evidently in sharp revolt, he favours esotericism and novelty. Abandoning his American tradition, Eliot turns to European tradition because the American one "offered to him no authority which he could attach his creative belief" (Maxwell, 1966, p. 24). Besides, he finds the American writers: Unsatisfactory not because America has failed to produce any great writers, but because the great writers that it did produce, form no ordered pattern, did not grow one from the other so as to form a continuous, inevitable line of descent. The literary tradition of America lacks coherence (1966, p. 24).

As a writer, Eliot aligns himself with the European rather than the American tradition. This identification with the Europeans is seen in lines 329-330 when saying "We who were living are now dying / with a little patience" (1996). Not only this but even in 1919 in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" he describes his mind as "the mind of Europe" (1972, p.

73). Despite this fact, however, it is clear that he never sloughed off his American skin.

The amount of allusions and quotations woven in the poem, which are deliberately incorporated, are considered from different perspectives. First, the perspective adopted by early critics moving in Eliot's wake as Leavis who pointed out that Eliot's purposeful use of "othered" languages serves in the creation of an aura of "impersonality and transcendence of the individual self" which results in a world view that has lost its axiom (Graham, 1990, p. 167). Leavis's view suggests the attempts made by Eliot to unify philosophy through the intertextuality and the mixing of Western and Eastern religious mythology. What about the paper's perspective? The present study presents a different perspective from the earlier ones. Eliot's pronouncement towards the very end of the poem with "these fragments I have shored against my ruins" elucidates the poet's strategy in assembling his disparate fragments to compose his poem. Fragments, therefore, combine to make new literary reality, and this is what he needed. The power of appropriating and applying the knowledge of others is a mark of the originality of the work and a sign of erudition.

Effectively, the multiple languages used in the text reveals the poet's strategy of estranging the English reader in his own language in which he problematizes his knowledge of "self". However, the text's intertextuality and abundant allusions impose the reader's involvement which is a form of intellectual domination. At the end of part one, the reader is addressed: "You! Hypocrite lecteur!-mon semblable!-mon frere!" (1996, L. 76), a line from Baudelaire's poem "To the Reader" translated as "Hypocrite reader!-my likeness-my brother!". Likewise, the use of the second person pronoun that pervades the poem is a direct address to the reader: "Fear death by water", "O you who turn the wheel and look to windward, / consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you" (1996, L. 320-321), "Who is the third who walks always beside you"(L, 360). The force of *The Waste Land* thus lies in its intertextual fragments which perplexes and enigmatizes the reader and hence engages his deep involvement. Thus, this encyclopedic structure is the new form of imperialism as observed by Said occupying not the "land" but the intellect.

Heterogeneity and Multiculturalism

Said proclaims that "in our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism . . . lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere" (1993, p. 9). English intellectuals including Eliot "translated the end of the British Empire into a resurgent concept of national culture" (Esty, 2003, p. 39). In Eliot's case, he thought of an establishment of a Christian society. The intellectuals imported "the ground assumptions of colonial anthropology back from periphery in order to reestablish the integrity and

authenticity of their own national culture" (Esty, 2003, p. 42). In Eliot's defense of a Christian society that is undivided, there is a compensation to the lost values and pleasures of the modern metropolitan. The apparent concept of culture in Eliot's writings is, as Esty explains, "racialized or nationalized" (2003, p. 60). However, the representation of place and "placelessness" and of time and timelessness in the text keep the reader in doubt about Eliot's commitment to Englishness.

Eliot uses his historical sense to return to the past not only to explore and borrow, but also to affect and "alter". Being aware of the "pastness of the past" and of its "presence" is quite clear in his reproduction. He understood that the experience translated in the work of art is never a monolithic one. As Said states that "all cultures are involved in one another, none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (1993, p. xxv). The struggle is endless for he is in a tremendous battle; literary and historical.

Eliot's writing demonstrates his knowledge of Eastern history, the history of the British colonialism. He knew all the West Indian colonies and the tortures of rebellious states, racism and material vampirism. Symbolically, all these conflictual relations are represented in his text. European imperialism and races subjected to their might even American slaves in the United States must have influenced him to criticize the British society. The poet's "I" is realized in a discourse that is dependent on the "we" in a concrete social language accented as an individual utterance. The Postcolonial reading of the text takes the route, typical of its own protocol, of history and the locale. It imports how the complex grounding in the political and social context of the European imperialist state reveals the author's political concerns.

Eliot's American origin shaped his youth till the age of twenty. In his letter to his mother, he justifies his life in London in terms of gaining power and influence: "I want to know all sorts of people- political and social as well as literary and philosophical" (Valerie Eliot, 1988, p. 122). Politically, socially and religiously, the young poet is separated. His family was Unitarian and he applied their serious tones in his works. Another fact is that the Unitarians gave America many of the cultural values, rationalism, progress, social tolerance, reform and optimism. In Eliot's early poems as in *The Waste Land* we notice, as Sigg shows, his tendency to link "culture with what is foreign: Hamlet, Michelangelo" and others (1994, p. 19). Ethnic violence between Greeks and Poles is registered in a "Portrait of a Lady", one of his earliest poems. Sigg reveals the fact that the first draft of *The Waste Land* opened with a pack of young men in Boston. The question remains why did he remove these figures? One of the American popular cultural songs is "Fragment of

an Agon". He used it through his rhythms echoing black American speech which he learned in St. Louis. The song mixes American culture with Gothic effect (Sigg, 1994, pp. 19- 22).

All these influences be they social, political, religious and intellectual shape Eliot in writing his poem. Such heterogeneous experience enriches his mind in creating his poem. After its publication, *The Waste Land* achieved rapid and overwhelming popularity that the sales were increasing in a way that no other poetic text had established during its time. Yet, it required super-sophisticated readers and since higher education was rare at the time, it was uncommon to find those aware of the Greek myths of Virgil and Ovid, the Latin work of Dante, English writers such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Goldsmith, German composers such as Wagner, and the French Baudelaire and Verlaine beside other philosophies or even geographical topographies. Eliot was exposed to a variety of foreign languages at an early age; by the time he was fifteen, he had courses in English, French, German, Greek and Latin. Besides, while studying at Harvard, he took courses in Oriental philosophies and religion as well as languages such as Sanskrit, the religious and classical language of India which enabled him to read the books of Hinduism's sacred writings. It seems that he was intentionally addressing the intelligentsia who though forming a minority, yet, had a profound importance, influence as well as an authority on the entire nation. He really knew that his esotericism and unfamiliarity would have little appeal but this in the meantime is an access to a larger part of society. Eliot was clearly keen about being accepted in the British elite circles whom he cleverly knew are the bridge to be crossed to reach the top of the ladder. In his letter to his mother in 1920, Eliot describes meeting the American Jew writer Maxwell Bodenheim which implies his will of being accepted in the British elite society:

I told him my history here, and left him to consider whether an American Jew, of only a common school education and no university degree, with no money, no connections, and no social polish or experience, could make a living in London. Of course I did not say all this; but I made him see that getting recognized in English letters is like breaking open a safe- for an American, and that only about three had ever done it. (Valerie Eliot, 1988, p. 392)

Thus Eliot's mission was not easy for he must find a path through the alps, a space between the sleeping giants of his precursors in order to shape the original form of his work. His chemical combination through the mind's platinum helps him quote, rearrange, subtly modify and join in a final mosaic structure. *The Waste Land's* fragmented structure reflects the chaotic state of modern life where many suggested that it was only a portrayal of the disillusionment of the First World War. But, the thorough investigation of the poem's kaleidoscopic structure unravels further aims.

Basically, part of the poet's tactics of writing *The Waste Land* in a revolutionary form is to shock readers and shuffle the conventional ways of writing poetry. In so doing, he achieves part of his ends of gaining an intense fame and popularity that replaced the territorial colonization. Eliot "came to understand that, in order to promote his cultural politics, he must veil his deepest beliefs and even present himself as consciously nonpolitical" (Paul, 1997, p. 2). Lentricchia comments on the cultural force of the poem that exceeds what Eliot terms its "plan":

The Waste Land made Eliot at once the towering poet of modernism and its public face, the figure of whom those who cared (and those who did not care) for modernism would need to be pay attention, an awesome image, idolized and detested. . . . The scandalous success of the poem, the realms of commentary it has spawned, its centrality for the teaching of modern literature, all have had the double effect of making Eliot a major force in world literature while obscuring the specific narrative of his life and poetry. More than any other figure of literary modernism, we have tended to know Eliot- and consequently, to like him or dislike him- as a reputation. (1994, p. 248)

It is this "force" that invites the present scrutiny of the text and it is this power of the poem that makes it an institutional manifesto.

Eliot's text represents the end of the British Empire. Jameson states in his essay "Modernism and Imperialism" that:

The traces of imperialism can therefore be detected in Western modernism, and are indeed constitutive of it; but we must not look for them in the obvious places, in content or in representation. . . . They will be detected spatially, as formal symptoms, within the structure of First World modernist texts themselves. (1990, p. 46)

In Jameson view, the traces of imperialism remains in the "structure" or "form" of modernist texts, a view similar to that of Said who confirms that those aesthetic communicative arts shape "culture" and history. The text produces a touch of the time that would reciprocally deepen and complicate history.

The references to the Indian philosophy and Arabic countries secured for Eliot international reputation and fame especially in the third world that no one in the twentieth century has ever had and consequently his dream is no longer deferred but rather fulfilled. The poem's greatness is well presented by Macrae who states that : "The poem's enduring popularity and its enormous influence on poets in many languages provide evidence that, for many readers throughout the world, it touches a nerve, it promotes a recognition"(2001, p. 55).

CONCLUSION

The Waste Land is thus considered a landmark in the development of modern poetry that marks a departure from the nineteenth century poetry and a point of arrival to modernism and postmodernism. Through its unique montage of quotations and allusions, the poem renders the poet's multiculturalism of Occidental and Oriental cultures, past and present, literary and non-literary. However, many of the works quoted or referred to are masterpieces implying Eliot's desire to be ranked with such giants or even be in higher position.

Through the perception of the present paper, the American poet succeeds in asserting himself creating a world poem that addresses the "other" exposing their lack of knowledge and understanding. Consequently, his country becomes the emergent power or the Neo-Empire. Imperialism in this postmodern era is no longer confined to territorial occupation but rather occupying the minds intellectually, a form of Neo-Colonialism propounded by Said's theory of Post colonialism. This tool of control, however, proves to be a means of resistance and power.

The poem's inclusion of Sanskrit words and Hindu concepts was the passport for the poet's passage to India. The Anglo-American man then did not identify his own interests with a tendency to obliterate racial distinctions. He did not think of England as a region but as the controlling power. Esty claims that Eliot's commitment was to protect England from the European war that tried to isolate it. "As real political forces conspire to isolate England", he states, Eliot "sees his chance to reattach English sympathies to a properly bounded national culture and to expose imperial cosmopolitanism as an insidious, culture-killing ideology" (2003, p. 43). Yet, this understanding is questioned here, for it is clear that Eliot had a different ideology and strategy. His influence upon the work of Indian writers has been considerable. Gupta states that Eliot's work is "more widely read in India than that of any modern poet. Not only is this true of Eliot's own work; there has also been a revival of the study of the authors whom Eliot popularized"(1965, p. 170). He succeeds in his ideology of expansion; intellectual domination as an extension to the Western empire as Said states. The poem concludes with the Indian word "Damyatta" meaning "control" which shows his success in the matter of controlling the minds intellectually for even the poem' "has never been off the curriculum" till the present time (Selby, 1999, p. 33). This control achieves for him "Shantih" meaning "peace", a phrase repeated three times and concludes the text. This "peace" can be read on many levels; it might be peace of mind out of this fragmentation as well as peace of being recognized as an American poet writing in England. Through his "individual talent", Eliot secures for himself a prominent place among the literary world and subsequently reaches universality. Through this

obfuscatory poem, the poet declares the death of the European Empire and the rise of the American/Eliottian one. Hopefully, the study will contribute to scholarly research on both modernism and postmodernism. The diversity of critical approaches and theories employed in the study will reveal what a rich area of enquiry an examination of *The Waste Land* provokes.

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Competing Interests

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