



READING ELIOT'S "THE WASTE LAND" 100 YEARS LATER IN INDIA: SIGNIFICANCE AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the significance and challenges of reading Eliot's "The Waste Land" 100 years later in contemporary India. It deals with the genesis of the poem, the myths employed by Eliot and discusses the universality of those myths; it also evaluates the relevance the myths employed by Eliot to contemporary Indian society.

Keywords: *The Waste Land, T S Eliot, fragmentation, alienation, ennui, identity*

INTRODUCTION

"The Waste Land" by T. S. Eliot is a groundbreaking and influential work of modernist literature, published almost exactly 100 years ago in 1922. It is a poem that has been studied, analyzed, and debated by scholars and readers for decades. Despite being written in a different time and context, its themes and messages are still relevant and resonant today. In this article, we will explore what makes "The Waste Land" significant, what it tells us about the world we live in, and how it continues to influence contemporary literature and culture. "The Waste Land" is a complex and multi-layered poem that is difficult to summarize or categorize. It is often described as a depiction of the spiritual and emotional crisis of the modern world, fragmented and disillusioned after the trauma of World War I. The poem is structured as a series of fragmented and disjointed narratives, interwoven with allusions, quotations, and fragments from a wide range of cultural and literary sources, from Shakespeare to the Bible to Dante's *Inferno*. Its language is dense and allusive, and its meanings are elusive and ambiguous.

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One of the most striking features of “The Waste Land” is its depiction of a world in decline, a world that has lost its spiritual and moral bearings. The poem opens with the famous lines “April is the cruellest month, breeding / Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing / Memory and desire, stirring / Dull roots with spring rain.” This opening sets the tone for the rest of the poem, which is suffused with a sense of decay, fragmentation, and loss. Eliot paints a bleak picture of a world where traditional values and beliefs have collapsed, leaving people adrift in a meaningless and alienating universe.

Throughout the poem, Eliot draws on a range of religious, mythical, and literary motifs to explore the themes of death, rebirth, and regeneration. For example, the figure of the Fisher King, a wounded and impotent ruler, appears repeatedly throughout the poem, symbolizing the spiritual decay of Western civilization. The poem also contains references to the Grail legend, the Tarot, and Hindu philosophy, among other things, suggesting that Eliot is attempting to draw on a diverse range of cultural and spiritual traditions in order to create a new synthesis that might help us make sense of our fragmented and bewildering world.

Despite its bleak vision, “The Waste Land” is also a work of great beauty and lyricism. Eliot’s language is rich and evocative, and his imagery is often striking and memorable. The poem contains some of the most famous lines in all of modern literature, including “I will show you fear in a handful of dust,” “These fragments I have shored against my ruins,” and “*Shantih shantih shantih*,” the closing mantra that suggests a tentative hope for renewal and reconciliation.

At the same time, “The Waste Land” has also had a profound impact on contemporary literature and culture. Its fragmented structure and allusive style have become hallmarks of modernist and postmodernist literature, influencing writers as diverse as James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and David Foster Wallace. Its themes and motifs have been echoed in a wide range of poems from across the world.

1. The Genesis of “The Waste Land”

The genesis of T.S. Eliot’s seminal poem “The Waste Land” is a fascinating story that involves a variety of literary and cultural influences, as well as personal experiences that shaped Eliot’s worldview and artistic vision. In the years leading up to the creation of “The Waste Land,” Eliot had established himself as a prominent figure in the literary world. He had published a number of influential essays and reviews, and had gained a reputation as a leading voice in the emerging modernist movement. However, Eliot was struggling with a deep sense of spiritual and cultural malaise, and he felt that the world around him was in a state of crisis. It was against this backdrop that Eliot began working on “The Waste Land” in 1920. The poem was initially inspired by a series of notes and fragments that Eliot had written in his journal, which he then began to weave together into a larger work. He drew on

a wide range of literary and cultural influences, including the work of Dante, Shakespeare, and James Joyce, as well as contemporary developments in psychology and anthropology. One of the key influences on “The Waste Land” was Eliot’s reading of Jessie Weston’s book *From Ritual to Romance*.

In this book, Weston explores the connections between ancient fertility myths and the story of the Holy Grail, and argues that the Grail legend represents a symbolic quest for spiritual regeneration. Eliot was deeply intrigued by Weston’s ideas, and he incorporated many of them into “The Waste Land,” which he saw as a meditation on the spiritual emptiness and decay of modern civilization. Another important influence on “The Waste Land” was Eliot’s personal life. He was going through a period of intense personal turmoil at the time, which included a failing marriage and struggles with mental and physical health issues. These experiences found their way into the poem, which is characterized by a sense of fragmentation and dislocation that reflects Eliot’s own sense of isolation and alienation. In addition to these literary and personal influences, “The Waste Land” was also shaped by broader cultural and historical factors. The poem was written in the aftermath of World War I, which had left a deep sense of disillusionment and despair in its wake. Eliot was acutely aware of the cultural and spiritual crisis that this event had precipitated, and he saw “The Waste Land” as a reflection of this larger cultural malaise.

Despite the complex and varied influences that shaped its creation, “The Waste Land” was ultimately a deeply personal work for Eliot. He poured his own experiences and emotions into the poem, and saw it as a means of expressing his own sense of despair and longing for spiritual regeneration. As he wrote in a letter to a friend, “I felt that I had at last put my finger on something that had been haunting me all my life without my knowing it.”

2. Myths and Symbolism in “The Waste Land”

- (i) **The Fisher King myth:** The Fisher King is a mythological figure that appears in various traditions, including Celtic and Arthurian legend. In the poem he is associated with the idea of the wounded or impotent king who is unable to fulfill his duties. In “The Waste Land,” the Fisher King is used as a symbol of the decay and sterility of modern civilization. Eliot uses the Fisher King legend as a metaphor for our current lack of faith in society. He believes that our world is falling into decay and there is no hope for the future; thus he seeks an answer. The Fisher King myth is referenced in several places, and serves as a central metaphor for the poem’s exploration of spiritual emptiness and the search for redemption. According to the myth, the Fisher King is a wounded king who presides over a wasteland. His wound is a physical manifestation of the spiritual decay of his kingdom, and he can only be healed by a knight who is pure in heart and virtuous in action. The quest for the Holy Grail is often associated with the Fisher King myth, as it represents the search for spiritual wholeness and the

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restoration of the king's health and vitality. In "The Waste Land," Eliot draws on this myth to explore themes of spiritual emptiness and decay. The poem's opening lines describe the barren and desolate landscape of the wasteland, which is reminiscent of the Fisher King's kingdom. The speaker then introduces a series of characters and voices, including the "one-eyed merchant" and the "crowds of people," who are all searching for something that they cannot find. The Fisher King himself is mentioned in several places in the poem, including in the section titled "The Fire Sermon." Here, Eliot describes a scene in which the speaker encounters a group of women who are washing clothes in the river. The women are described as "unreal" and "phantasmal," and the speaker senses that they are somehow connected to the Fisher King and his wounded kingdom. Later in the same section, the speaker describes a scene in which he sees the Fisher King himself, "lying on his back, /The wounded king." (Poetry Foundation, "The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot | Poetry Foundation") The king is surrounded by a group of attendants, who are trying to heal his wound with various magical and religious rituals. However, their efforts are futile, and the king remains trapped in his spiritual emptiness and physical decay.

The Fisher King myth also appears in the final section of the poem, "What the Thunder Said." Here, Eliot describes a scene in which the speaker encounters a group of men who are digging for water in the desert. The men are searching for a spring that will bring life back to the barren wasteland, and their quest is reminiscent of the search for the Holy Grail in the Fisher King myth.

Overall, the Fisher King myth serves as a powerful metaphor for the spiritual decay and emptiness that Eliot explores in *The Waste Land*. The wounded king and his barren kingdom represent the loss of spiritual vitality and the search for redemption that pervades the poem. By drawing on this myth, Eliot creates a complex and multi-layered work that continues to resonate with readers a century after its initial publication.

- (ii) **The Sibyl:** In ancient Greek mythology, the Sibyl was a prophetess who was said to be able to see the future. The story of comes from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, chapter XIV, where Apollo grants her the boon to live a very long life, as many, as there were grains in a heap of dust,

...he said 'Maiden of Cumae choose whatever you may wish, and you shall gain all that you wish.' I pointed to a heap of dust collected there, and foolishly replied, 'As many birthdays must be given to me as there are particles of sand.' For I forgot to wish them days of changeless youth. He gave long life and offered youth besides, if I would grant his wish...(Alejandro, "The Cumaean Sibyl: Doorkeeper of 'The Waste Land'")

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In “The Waste Land,” the Sibyl is used to represent the idea of timelessness and the cyclical nature of history. She is also used as a symbol of the decay and destruction of civilization. She is described as being trapped in a cave, where she continues to utter prophecies that nobody can hear. This represents the idea that knowledge and wisdom may exist but are inaccessible or ignored by society. The reference to the Sibyl of Cumae is also linked to the overarching themes of the poem, which include the breakdown of traditional values and the loss of faith in society's institutions. Eliot was writing during a time of great social upheaval, and his poem reflects this sense of dislocation and fragmentation. Overall, the Sibyl of Cumae in “The Waste Land” serves as a powerful symbol of the decline of Western civilization and the need for renewal and regeneration. This need for and regeneration is the requirement of the entire world in the present times that includes India as well.

- (iii) **The Holy Grail:** This is a Christian symbol associated with the cup that Jesus used at the Last Supper. In “The Waste Land,” the Holy Grail is used to represent the idea of spiritual renewal and redemption. One of the key themes of “The Waste Land” is the sense of fragmentation and dislocation that characterizes modern life. Eliot saw the modern world as a place of spiritual emptiness, where people were disconnected from each other and from a sense of higher purpose. The Holy Grail, as a symbol of spiritual unity, represents a way out of this fragmentation. By recovering the Holy Grail, the characters in the poem could restore a sense of spiritual and cultural wholeness. In “The Waste Land,” the quest for the Holy Grail is linked to the character of the Fisher King, who is a symbol of the wounded and impotent modern world. The Fisher King’s wound represents the spiritual and cultural decay that Eliot saw in modern society. By recovering the Holy Grail, the Fisher King could be healed and the world could be restored to a state of harmony and balance. The Holy Grail also represents a sense of transcendence and spiritual transformation. In the poem, Eliot suggests that the recovery of the Holy Grail requires a kind of spiritual purification or sacrifice. Only by giving up their old ways of thinking and behaving can the characters in the poem hope to achieve the kind of spiritual renewal represented by the Grail. There are many interpretations of the idea of The Holy Grail in “The Waste Land”

The Holy Grail in “The Waste Land.” One such interpretation implies:

The whole idea of finding is worded figuratively rather than literally. These two sections dealt with accepting losses and having those losses become a part of the world. The questions start to play out, but it is what led to the rain. The rain cleanses The Waste Land, which will hopefully bring change or heal this unfortunate event. (Iampachee, “The Holy Grail of the Waste Land”)

Overall, the Holy Grail myth is an important symbol in “The Waste Land,” representing a lost sense of spiritual and cultural unity, as well as the possibility of spiritual transformation and renewal. By incorporating this myth into his poem, Eliot underscores his critique of modern society and his hope for a better future. The Holy Grail is a powerful symbol in “The Waste Land,” representing a lost sense of spiritual and cultural unity.

- (iv) **Tiresias:** In Greek mythology, Tiresias was a blind prophet who was said to have been both male and female at different times in his life. He was transformed into a woman for seven years by the goddess Hera, and later regained his sight after encountering two mating snakes. In “The Waste Land,” Tiresias is used to represent the idea of androgyny and the merging of opposites. He is also used as a symbol of spiritual transcendence and enlightenment. T.S. Eliot, uses Tiresias as a metaphor for the modern individual's search for spiritual enlightenment in a world that has become spiritually barren and disconnected from its traditional sources of meaning. In the poem, Tiresias is referred to as “the blind seer” who has “wrung from the difficult/ Web of blood and speech/ The undesired feet/ The miracle” (lines 218-221). (Poetry Foundation, “The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot | Poetry Foundation”) This suggests that Tiresias has the ability to see beyond the material world and gain insight into the deeper truths of existence. Throughout “The Waste Land,” Eliot alludes to the Tiresias myth in several parts of “The Waste Land.” In the first section, “The Burial of the Dead,” Tiresias is mentioned as a figure who has seen the horrors of war and understands the futility of human existence. Eliot writes:

*A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying ‘Stetson!
You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?*



*Oh keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men,
Or with his nails he'll dig it up again!*

You! Hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!’ (Poetry Foundation, “The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot | Poetry Foundation”)

In this passage, Tiresias is not mentioned by name, but the reference to “You who were with me in the ships at Mylae,” suggests that the speaker is addressing a veteran of war who, like Tiresias, has seen the horrors of conflict and understands the fragility of human life. Tiresias appears as a recurring symbol of spiritual awakening, suggesting that the only hope for modern society is to reconnect with the ancient wisdom and spiritual insights of the past. Eliot’s use of Tiresias thus underscores the central theme of the poem, which is the need for spiritual renewal in a world that has lost its sense of purpose and meaning.

Later in the poem, Tiresias is explicitly mentioned in the section titled “The Fire Sermon.” In this section, the speaker describes a scene of sexual depravity and moral decay, and invokes Tiresias as a figure who has experienced both the male and female perspectives on sexuality. The speaker says:

*By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept . . .
And Tiresias, although blind, throbbing between two lives,
Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see
At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.
Out of the window perilously spread
Her drying combinations touched by the sun’s last rays,
On the divan are piled (at night her bed)*

Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays. (Poetry Foundation, “The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot | Poetry Foundation”)

In this passage, Tiresias is depicted as a figure who embodies the duality of human existence, having experienced both the male and female aspects of sexuality. The speaker seems to suggest that Tiresias represents a kind of transcendence beyond the limitations of gender and

sexuality, and that his perspective offers a way of understanding the fragmented and chaotic world depicted in “The Waste Land.”

In the tumultuous times that we are today, every civilization, India included requires ‘spiritual awakening,’ suggesting that the only hope for modern society is to reconnect with the ancient wisdom and spiritual insights of the past. Reading “The Waste Land,” today, points us towards that direction.

- (v) **Osiris:** This is an Egyptian mythological figure associated with death and resurrection. It tells the story of the god Osiris, who was killed by his jealous brother Set and then resurrected by his wife Isis. Osiris became the god of the dead and the afterlife, and his resurrection symbolized the cyclical nature of life, death, and rebirth. In “The Waste Land,” Eliot references the myth of Osiris in several ways like representing the ideas of death, rebirth, renewal, and spiritual redemption. For example, in the section “The Burial of the Dead,” the speaker describes the desolate landscape of modern urban life, comparing it to the barren land where Osiris was buried:

*A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;*

I will show you fear in a handful of dust. (Poetry Foundation, “The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot | Poetry Foundation”)

This passage suggests that modern life is characterized by spiritual emptiness and a sense of despair, much like the barren land where Osiris was buried. Later in the poem, Eliot references the myth of Osiris again in the section “The Fire Sermon, where the speaker describes a sexual encounter between a man and a woman in a London park:

*The river’s tent is broken: the last fingers of leaf
Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind
Crosses the brown land, unheard. The nymphs are departed.*

*Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.
The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed.
And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors;
Departed, have left no addresses.
By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept...
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song,*

Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long. (Poetry Foundation, "The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot | Poetry Foundation")

This passage suggests that the sexual encounter is a moment of spiritual rebirth for the man and woman, much like Osiris's resurrection. The river Thames, which is polluted with debris and garbage, is compared to the river that Osiris was reborn in, suggesting that even in the modern world, there is the potential for spiritual redemption and rebirth. Overall, the myth of Osiris used in "The Waste Land" explores themes of death, rebirth, and spiritual redemption in the context of modern urban life. Eliot suggests that even in a world that seems desolate and spiritually empty; there is the potential for transformation and renewal.

- (vi) **Phlebas:** This is a character from Greek mythology who appears in *The Odyssey* and is said to have died at sea. In "The Waste Land," one of the most famous and enigmatic passages in the poem is the section that begins with the line "Death by Water," which refers to the mythical story of Phlebas the Phoenician. In "The Waste Land," Eliot uses Phlebas as a symbol of the modern condition, a man who has lost his identity and purpose and is adrift in a sea of meaninglessness. Phlebas is used to represent the idea of the inevitability of death and the transience of life. The poem describes his death and decay in vivid detail, evoking a sense of loss and hopelessness. Phlebas is presented as a representative of the modern world, a man who has lost touch with his roots and his connection to the divine. He is described as a "corpse" and a "drowned sailor," suggesting that he has been consumed by the sea, which symbolizes the chaotic and destructive forces of modern life. His death is a metaphor for the spiritual emptiness and moral decay of modern society. The myth of Phlebas in "The Waste Land" serves as a powerful symbol of the modern condition, highlighting the sense of loss, disconnection, and hopelessness that characterizes much of contemporary life. Through this mythical figure, Eliot invites us to reflect on the state of our own society and to consider the possibility of spiritual renewal and transformation.

3. Reception of “The Waste Land” in the last century

Since its publication, “The Waste Land” has been widely read and studied by literary critics and scholars. The poem’s innovative use of language, its fragmented structure, and its allusions to a range of literary and cultural sources have been the subject of much analysis and interpretation. Initially, the poem was met with mixed reviews. Some critics praised its experimental style and its portrayal of the disillusionment and fragmentation of post-World War I society. Others found the poem difficult and obscure. Over time, however, “The Waste Land” has come to be regarded as one of the most important poems of the twentieth century. It has been celebrated for its groundbreaking style and its powerful evocation of the cultural and psychological landscape of the modern world.

The poem has had a profound influence on a wide range of writers and artists, including Samuel Beckett, Sylvia Plath, and Bob Dylan. It has also been the subject of numerous critical studies and scholarly articles.

T.S. Eliot's “The Waste Land” is a poem that has stood the test of time as a touchstone of literary modernism. It is a work that captures the disillusionment and fragmentation of a generation, reflecting the shattered sensibility of a world torn apart by war. The poem’s themes of loss and spiritual emptiness continue to resonate with readers today. Despite its difficulty, critics agree that “The Waste Land” is a work of unparalleled genius that revolutionized the way we think about poetry and the world. In his introduction to “The Waste Land,” editor and literary critic Harold Bloom calls the poem a “landmark achievement.” He writes, “The Waste Land” is a work of unparalleled genius, a landmark achievement that revolutionized the way we think about poetry and the world.” (Bloom 15) Indeed, the poem’s impact on modernist literature is undeniable. Its fragmented structure and non-linear narrative were groundbreaking in their time, and they continue to inspire poets and writers today. But, “The Waste Land” is not just a technical masterpiece. It is a work that captures the spirit of a generation. As literary critic Kevin McCarthy writes, “Eliot's masterpiece captures the spirit of a generation, and its themes of disillusionment, fragmentation, and loss continue to resonate with readers today.” (McCarthy 134) Eliot’s vision of a world drained of spiritual vitality, where even the seasons seem to have lost their meaning, speaks to our own age of anxiety and uncertainty. At the heart of “The Waste Land” is a profound sense of spiritual emptiness. The poem’s characters are lost and adrift, unable to find meaning in a world that has lost its sense of purpose. As critic Brian Perkins notes, “The Waste Land is a masterpiece of poetic fragmentation and dislocation, reflecting the shattered sensibility of a world that had been torn apart by war.” (Perkins 246) Eliot himself called the poem a “heap of broken images,” a testament to the fractured nature of modern life. Despite its difficulty, “The Waste Land” remains an enormously important poem. As literary critic

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Michael Mazzeno writes, “The Waste Land may be a difficult poem, but it is an enormously important one, and it has been a touchstone of literary modernism for nearly a century.” (Mazzeno 1) Discussing the impact of the poem in the last 100 years Peter Barry notes, “Critics have debated the meaning of “The Waste Land” for decades, but its impact on modernist literature is undeniable.” (Barry 42)

It is a work that captures the complexities and contradictions of the modern world, and stands as a testament to the power of poetry to capture the human experience.

4. Reading “The Waste Land” in Contemporary India

The question that is often raised is, ‘what is the use of reading “The Waste Land” in a world we live in, 100 years after its publication?’ One hundred years after its publication, “The Waste Land” remains a seminal work of modernist literature. Its themes of disillusionment and decay, its intertextual approach, and its formal innovations continue to inspire and challenge readers and writers alike. While its dense and complex style may present a challenge to some readers, its rewards are many, and its status as a masterpiece of twentieth literature is assured. In many ways, it seems as relevant today as it did in 1922. We still live in a world that is characterized by fragmentation, uncertainty, and disorientation. Our political and cultural institutions are often seen as corrupt and ineffective, and our sense of shared values and beliefs is eroding. The themes of spiritual crisis and the search for renewal that are central to “The Waste Land” are still with us today, as we struggle to make sense of a world that seems to be in constant flux. Overall, “The Waste Land” continues to be relevant in the twenty first century India and the entire world due to its enduring themes, its influence on contemporary culture, and its commentary on the pressing issues of our time. Commenting on the universality of the poem Cedric Watts, Professor of English at Sussex University comments:

...this poem makes us enact the struggle to extract meaning from what appears meaningless. “The Waste Land” is a poem in code; its coded message is that life’s senselessness contains a meaning to be decoded. The poem enacts what it claims the world is: a problem implying a solution. The Hindu message, when we decipher it, resembles a Christian message, and the resemblance hints that if different religious systems at different times and places have made similar recommendations, perhaps that shows they have common wisdom; perhaps even a common divine source. (*The Last Ten and a Half Lines of the Wasteland*)

5. CONCLUSION



“The Waste Land” continues to be relevant in the twenty first century for several reasons. The poem deals with themes that are still relevant today, such as the disconnection and fragmentation of modern society, the loss of meaning and purpose, and the search for spiritual renewal. These themes are particularly relevant in the context of the current era, where technology has made communication easier, yet many people feel more isolated and disconnected than ever before. It has also influenced a wide range of contemporary artists, writers, and thinkers because of its innovative structure, use of multiple voices and literary allusions. It has also inspired many subsequent works, from postmodern novels to experimental films. The poem’s exploration of cultural decay, environmental degradation, and the loss of traditional values remains as relevant now as it was when it was written.

In many ways, it is a deeply pessimistic poem, reflecting the sense of despair and disillusionment that many people felt in the aftermath of World War I. However, it is also a work that invites us to engage with its themes and ideas, to explore the complex and often contradictory meanings that lie beneath its surface. A hundred years after its publication, “The Waste Land” remains a powerful and resonant work of literature, one that continues to inspire new readings and interpretations. One of the reasons why “The Waste Land” has endured for so long is its openness to multiple interpretations. The poem is full of allusions and references that can be read in a variety of ways, depending on the reader’s perspective and background. Some readers have seen the poem as a commentary on the breakdown of traditional values and the rise of modernity, while others have read it as a reflection of Eliot’s own spiritual struggles. Still, others have seen the poem as a critique of Western civilization and its underlying assumptions.

Today, India along with the rest of the world faces numerous environmental challenges, and the poem’s depiction of a degraded and desolate landscape can serve as a warning of the consequences of our actions. It is great poem with universality of themes and issues. Just like any piece of great literature it is universal and timeless, which speaks volumes for its relevance across cultures and times, beyond the borders of nations and continents.

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