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This thesis is dedicated

to my beloved wife Monique

without whose encouragement and help

this thesis would never have been completed.

PREFACE

The bulk of critical research on The Waste Land has focused on the poem as a key document of modernism and upon its western aesthetic and social origins. Early critics such as Bonamy Dobree, Edmund Wilson and F.R. Leavis established the achievements of Eliot and the importance of his poetry in its time. Cleanth Brooks Jr., conducted a systematic analysis of The Waste Land revealing many inter-linking thematic and stylistic elements, suggesting an organic unity to the poem. Along with Cleanth Brooks, Kristian Smidt and A.W. Litz examined the use of myth as an organizing structure rather than as a vehicle of belief. Maud Bodkin and Elizabeth Drew studied the use of symbols and archetypes. Studies edited by B. Rajan and Leonard Unger, and March and Tambimuttu in the forties show the importance of Eliot's works and their influence on modern poetry. F.O. Matthiessen and Grover Smith Jr., conducted a close study of Eliot's poetry, plays and criticism in relation to various western sources and their influence on the poet. In 1959, Hugh Kenner made a detailed study of Bradleyan metaphysics and its appearance in The Waste Land.

In the sixties and seventies, critics such as A.J. Wilks, Ann Bolgan, B.N. Chaturvedi, Stephen Spender and Bernard Bergonzi began to examine both biographical data and eastern metaphysical concepts. During the seventies, A.N. Dwivedi, Damayanti Ghosh and G. Nageswara Rao systematically examined various Indian sources for The Waste Land, Eliot's own

background in oriental studies and the significance of his attraction to eastern mysticism at the time that he wrote the poem. With the publication of Eliot's doctoral thesis and of the original transcript of The Waste Land in 1971, as well as with the increased availability of biographical data, Lyndall Gordon, James E. Miller Jr., A.D. Moody and Elizabeth Schneider, have focused on The Waste Land as a personal document and as an expression of a consciousness which is not only modernist. The previous lack of biographical data had cut the poem off from the personal roots which can and do lead to a universal vision. The original manuscript especially provides insights into karmic concepts in The Waste Land, concepts which, along with more personal material, were, if not discouraged, spectacularly toned down by the modernist Pound's 'blue pencilling' of approximately half the original material.

The subject and purpose of this paper require an examination of the direct use of Indian literary and philosophic texts. The bulk of Eliot criticism has naturally originated in the West. A great deal of scholarly research has been directed at the Christian concepts, symbols and allusions in The Waste Land, focusing on the references to Emmaus, the garden of Gethsemane etc. However, Christ is not the central deity of the poem which rather climaxes with the voice of Prajapati. Similarly St. Augustine's plea to an outside deity dissolves into the words of Buddha. Even when Eliot deals with such western figures as: St. Augustine, Christ, Dante, Tiresias and Shakespeare, he chooses symbols and themes which are very eastern.

Christ is presented in The Waste Land as another fertility god and his life as a pattern of sacrifice which reflects an earlier and more universal path of metaphysics for the individual who must pluck himself out of the fires of desire and existence.

Critics including Drew, Leavis and Matthiessen have carefully analyzed the crucial links between The Waste Land, Grail quests and fertility rites in Weston's From Ritual to Romance and in Frazer's Golden Bough. Consequently, I have avoided an unnecessarily repetitious review of these well explicated quests and rites, in favour or concentrating on the more illusive eastern aesthetic and metaphysical sources.

EASTERN INFLUENCES ON THE WASTE LAND

T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land reveals the direct and fundamental influence of Indian thought. Damayanti Ghosh has traced early oriental influences on Eliot. Eliot, as a boy, read Edwin Arnold's Light of Asia, Kipling's Kim and Fitzgerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, an oriental romantic poem.[1] Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82) may be considered as an indirect source of eastern influences on Eliot. This influence is evident through Emerson's attraction to Indian literature and philosophy, his spiritual vision of the "oversoul" or âtman and the fact that he became chief spokesman for American Transcendentalism. The Transcendental Club was organized by Reverend George Ripley in 1836. The philosophical and literary movement of American Transcendentalism, centered in New England, helped create and sustain a general interest in eastern literature and metaphysics which would capture Eliot's interest at Harvard where Emerson had taught.

A.N. Dwivedi has traced the Indian influence upon Eliot at Harvard, a "famous center for Oriental studies".[2] Eliot studied there, with breaks, from 1906-14. In 1909 Eliot took courses with George Herbert Palmer, who, Lyndall Gordon tells us, "taught pre-Socratic philosophy and introduced him

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[1] Damayanti Ghosh, Indian Thought in T.S. Eliot (Calcutta: Modern Printers, 1978), pp. 1-16.

[2] A.N. Dwivedi, Indian Thought and Tradition in T.S. Eliot's Poetry (India: Prak Ash Book Depot, 1977), p. 1.

to Heraclitus"[1] and the doctrine of receptivity to "the divine". Professor Irving Babbitt, who taught Eliot a course on French literature, was "one of the great western exponents of Indian philosophy",[2] and "introduced him to the study of Buddhist thought and philosophy".[3] Eliot's "formal education was as much in philosophy as in literature"[4] and "His philosophical attitude is evinced in his continuous search for a unifying principle of the universe, and the means of transcending the flux of time, and also in his distinctly religious disposition".[5]

After his Master's degree in 1910, Eliot went to Paris where he was further influenced by the orientalism which had informed literary, fine and applied art for the past two decades. Back in Harvard in 1911, he entered Professor Charles Lanman's course in Sanskrit philology. Lanman's Sanskrit Reader (1883) was enormously popular and effective in bringing eastern concepts to western students. In 1912 Eliot studied Indian metaphysics under James Woods:

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[1] Lyndall Gordon, Eliot's Early Years (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 22.

[2] Ghosh, p. 1.

[3] G. Nageswara Rao, The Peace Which Passeth Understanding: A Study of The Waste Land (Tirupati, India: Sri Venkateswara University Press, 1976), p. 18.

[4] Ghosh, p.5.

[5] Ibid., p. 5.

> Two years spent in the study of Sanskrit under Charles Lanman, a year in the mazes of Patanjali's metaphysics under the guidance of James Woods, left me in a state of enlightened mystification. A good half of the effort of understanding what the Indian philosophers were after lay in trying to erase from my mind all the categories and kinds of distinction common to European philosophy from the time of the Greeks. My previous and concomitant study of European philosophy was hardly better than an obstacle. And I came to the conclusion - seeing also that the 'influence' of Brahmin and Buddhist thought upon Europe ... had largely been through romantic misunderstanding - that my hope of really penetrating to the heart of that mystery would lie in forgetting how to think and feel as an American or a European, which, for practical as well as sentimental reasons, I did not wish to do.[1]

The intensity of Eliot's devotion to his study of eastern metaphysics is obvious. Eliot would later write: "Long ago, I studied ancient Indian language, and while I was chiefly interested at that time in philosophy, I read a little poetry too; and I know that my own poetry shows the influence of Indian thought and sensibility".[2] Rao, a modern Indian critic, believes that Eliot "was profoundly impressed by the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-gītā".[3] According to Kristian Smidt, Eliot found in eastern metaphysics, "the answer to a religious need".[4]

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[1] T.S. Eliot, After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy (New York: Harcourt and Brace Company, 1934), pp. 40-1.

[2] T.S. Eliot, "The Unity of European Culture," Notes Towards the Definition of Culture (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), p. 113.

[3] Rao, p. 18.

[4] Kristian Smidt, Poetry and Belief in the Work of T.S. Eliot (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 86.

Bernard Bergonzi finds that "In The Waste Land belief is directed toward Indian religion, the influence of which persisted from Eliot's Sanskrit studies at Harvard",[1] studies which gave Eliot "a reservoir of ideas on which he has drawn for fifty years".[2] Similarly, "but for Indian thought and sensibility he would have written altogether different kind of poetry".[3]

The four Indian texts which Eliot chooses as direct and cited sources are the great central texts of Indian literature and philosophy: the Vedas, Upanishads (var. Upanisads), Buddha's Fire Sermon and Bhagavad-gītā. Vedas are the "bible" of Indian metaphysics, composed approximately 2500 B.C. The word 'Vedas' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'vid', to know. The sacred scriptures of the Vedas contain knowledge "revealed by God"[4] and espouse the "denial of a material world".[5] They contain prayers, hymns, spiritual precepts and mantras. The Upanishads are a continuation and completion of the Vedas in much the same way in which the New and Old Testaments are related

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[1]Bernard Bergonzi, T.S. Eliot, Masters of World Literature Series, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1972), p. 96.

[2]Dwivedi, p. 7.

[3]C.D. Narasimhaiah, "Notes Towards an Indian Response to T.S. Eliot's Poetry," Indian Responses to American Literature (New Delhi: Usefi, 1967), p. 5.

[4]Oxford International Dictionary, vol XII: (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), p. 71.

[5]Ibid.

not only in message, but in manner. The Old Testament too has prayers, hymns, set precepts and mantra (Yahweh). The Upanishads meaning "spiritual sessions", date back to 1000 B.C. and, like the New Testament, employ the illuminating metaphor and the spiritual quest taking man from materialism to truth. Buddha's "Fire Sermon" originated approximately 500 B.C. It contains concepts and symbols from the vedas and the Upanishads. The Bhagavad-gītā or Song of God is part of the Mahabharata, a great epic poem of ancient India eventually compiled approximately 350 A.D. with parts as late as 600 A.D.

Specifically, Eliot presents major quotations from eastern mysticism which, although brief, are of central importance. The first occurs in Part Three of The Waste Land, where Eliot quotes from Buddha's "Fire Sermon", which also gives title to this section. Here the poem's theme of karmic struggle with desire reaches its climax, symbolized, in the word of Buddha, as burning. The second major quotation occurs in Part Five of The Waste Land. Eliot turned to the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad for the climactic tantric advice in the poem, the words of Prajapati, the god of wisdom: "Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata" ("Give, sympathize, control"). The awareness of this spiritual guide constitutes a turning point in the quest of the protagonist. These two strategically placed quotes reveal the concern of the poet to be that of the spiritual cycle of birth, death and rebirth in the individual. For Buddha and the Upanishads which Eliot echoes,

renunciation and the sacrifice of the ego overcome the death-in-life of karma, and are the beginning of rebirth.

Buddha and the Upanishads are the sources not only of these key quotations, but of other literary allusions, symbols and spiritual and artistic concepts. Rao points out that approximately "forty lines (of The Waste Land) are direct echoes from the Upanishads and Buddhist scriptures acknowledged by the poet in the notes".[1] According to Dwivedi, "western critics have not realized the full significance of the poet's use of the Upanishad".[2]

The Upanishads are a clear and fundamental source for aesthetic and metaphysical concepts and symbols in The Waste Land. In the Svetasvatara Upanishad the "Wheel of Brahman"[3] symbolizes the universe. The river is a key symbol: "we meditate on the River whose five currents are the five organs of perception".[4] The quest in eastern metaphysics is invariably an internal one. "Māyā, as the phenomenal universe, is also described as a river"[5] which helps to explain the drowning of Phlebas and the drowning senses as well as the link to Buddha who reels souls out of a river of illusions.

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[1]Rao, p. 21.

[2]Dwivedi, pp. 34-5.

[3]The Upanishads, abr. ed. Trans. and ed. Swami Nikhilananda (New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, 1963), p. 126, FN.5.

[4]Ibid., p. 127.

[5]Ibid.

Sanskrit is used in The Waste Land "more often than any other foreign language",[1] revealing the return to our roots in language, literature and religion, in short, in racial experience. The Sanskrit word for philosophy is "darsana", "vision", and a philosopher is a "seer". The word "kavi" is used to describe as one the poet, sage, philosopher, prophet and visionary.

In the Upanishads, says Rao, the "sages ... destroyed the deadwood of ritual and superstition and revived the true sense of metaphysical awareness and enquiry".[2] The poet as quester in The Waste Land can be seen as attempting to do the same thing. "Every Upanisad is the expository discourse of a drasta".[3] The drasta in the Upanisads, as the "seer-narrator", "discusses heterogenous aspects of life, freely alludes to several systems of thought and echoes key lines from the hymns of the Vedas",[4] as does the central consciousness of The Waste Land.

The word "Brihadaranyaka" in the "Brihadaranyaka Upanishad" signifies "the great message from the forest (var. waste land)".

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[1] Rao, p. 21.

[2] Ibid., p. 22.

[3] Ibid., p. 24.

[4] Ibid., p. 79.

> The expression 'the waste land' came to signify metaphorically in the Vedas and Upanisads a state of existence devoid of a sustaining faith and guiding values, the same sense in which Eliot used it.[1]

Apart from the title of The Waste Land, the origins of four out of five of its section headings, that is, all except Section Two, can be traced to Indian scriptures. Although Eliot cites his debt to Jessie Weston for title, plan and symbols of the poem, Jessie Weston, herself, as Rao points out, presents the Vedas and the Upanishads as

> the earliest repositories of vegetation ceremonies and fertility cults representing the earliest recorded evidence of man's spiritual quest. Vedic hymns and Upanisadic passages explain man's need for water, the source of life.[2]

The third major eastern text to influence Eliot was the Gītā. Dwivedi claims that Eliot used not only its "Hindu philosophy and Buddhistic ethics but also the Indian rituals, myths, symbols and concepts".[3] The Gītā contains "the path of transcendental illumination"[4] and is linked to metaphysical concepts in The Waste Land since "the transitoriness of time and place"[5] is crucial to both: "In the Gītā the doctrine of

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[1] Rao, p. 22.

[2] Ibid., p. 21.

[3] Dwivedi, p. 32.

[4] Ibid., p. 214.

[5] Ibid., p. 216.

karma (action) has been enunciated at some length".[1] Eliot called the Gītā, the "second greatest philosophical poem"[2] after Dante's Divine Comedy.

The Bhagavad-gītā consists of an eighteen-part discussion between Krishna and Arjuna concerning the nature and meaning of life. The dialogue in the Gītā takes place on a battlefield. Arjuna, dejected, refuses to fight his kinsmen. Krishna reveals methods of spiritual liberation: work, knowledge and devotion. "The entire Gītā is a treatise on selfless action"[3] which "rightly performed brings freedom".[4] The tantric quest to overcome karma is revealed. Action rather than detachment alone is required.

> When a man lacks lust and hatred,
> His renunciation does not waver.
> He neither longs for one thing
> Nor loathes its opposite:
> The chains of his delusion
> Are soon cast off.[5]

Arjuna is another quester related to the Grail heroes. His name in Sanskrit signifies "sinless". Although there is no direct reference to the Gītā in The Waste Land, its underlying themes, images and pattern are suggested. There may be an oblique reference to Arjuna in the phrase "a broken

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[1]Dwivedi, p. 217.

[2]T.S. Eliot, "Dante," (1950) in Selected Essays, 3rd edition (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 113.

[3]Ghosh, p. 149.

[4]The Gītā, quoted by Ghosh, p. 119.

[5]Bhagavad-gītā, As It Is, A.C.B. Prabhupada, ed. (London: Collier MacMillan Pub., 1962), pp. 56-7. All subsequent references to this text will be internalized.

Coriolanus" (417) who faced a similar problem of fighting his own people. Arjuna is directly referred to by Eliot in "Dry Salvages".

In the Gītā, which was sung by Krishna to Arjuna, metamorphosis is a common technique. Arjuna disguises himself as a woman and is frequently portrayed in Indian literature as a hermaphrodite. Krishna helps him gain self-control by warning against lust which "burns the fire" (Gītā, p. 206). Krishna says "one should control the lower self by the higher self and thus -- by spiritual strength -- conquer the insatiable enemy known as lust"(Gītā, p. 206). The initiate among the transcendentalists is required to "reside in sacred places" (Gītā, p. 320) and near "sacred rivers" (Gītā, p. 320). Also, "He should live alone in a secluded place" (Gītā, p. 319). Arjuna learns that spiritual progress entails renunciation and self-consciousness. The secret message to Arjuna concerns karma and reincarnation; Arjuna needs guidance, as he is "unable to recall what had happened in his various past births" (Gītā, p. 221). Arjuna faces his fear of acting, in this case, fighting against relatives. He is counselled concerning devotion and correct action. We are told in the Gita that "Buddha is the incarnation of Krishna" (Gītā, p. 225) who "appeared when materialism was rampant" (Gītā, p. 225). The Gītā also stresses the need for the initiate to use meditation, to go beyond ritual, and to sacrifice the ego. The eastern quest is to go beyond multiciplicity and to find unity, knowledge of the whole, which may be ironically located in

The Waste Land in the sacred place, the "decayed hole" in the jungle.

In the Ramayana, a great seven-volume epic poem of ancient India dating to approximately 500 B.C., Rama, an incarnation (avatar) of the deity Vishnu, later reincarnated as Buddha, wins his bride Sita back from Ravana, the demon-king of Ceylon. Sita must prove herself still pure and so voluntarily undergoes an ordeal by fire.

> The flames rose to the height of a tree; still Rama made no comment. He watched. Sita approached the fire, prostrated herself before it, and said 'O Agni, great god of fire, be my witness.' She jumped into the fire.
> From the heart of the flame rose the god of fire, bearing Sita, and presented her to Rama with words of blessing. Rama, now satisfied that he had established his wife's integrity in the presence of the world, welcomed Sita back to his arms.[1]

The "heart of the flame" resembles the "heart of light" in The Waste Land. Fire is often equated with purification in eastern rites as well as in the Ramayana.

The great god Siva is half-male and half-female in art: "the right breast is much smaller than the left one and belongs to a male figure".[2] The concept of sexual transformation is especially important in the Bhakti tradition,

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[1] R.K. Narayan, The Ramayana (Penguin Books: U.S.A., 1977), p. 162.

[2] Jitendra Nath Banerjea, The Development of Hindu Iconography (India: Calcutta University Press, 1956), p. 182.

"selfless devotion as a means of reaching Brahman".[1] This religious movement involves personal worship of gods, especially Vishnu and Shiva (var. Siva). Males assume a female psychology:

> when the devotee enters into the love relationship with the Divine Beloved, he takes the stance of a woman-in-love, he identifies totally with the heroine who is described in the akam poetry. To know the heart of a woman is considered the avenue to a deep experience of bhakti.[2]

The akam poets "knew, described and classified the many moods of a woman-in-love".[3] Sri Ramakrishna (1836-86), a bhakti ascetic devotee, was so entranced by the goddess Kali that he was transformed and "began to regard himself as a woman".[4] Also, "During this time he worshipped the Divine Mother as Her companion or housemaid".[5] Ramakrishna was an ascetic tantric hero: "A man forgets God if he is entangled in the world of māyā through woman".[6] Describing māyā, Ramakrishna

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[1] Random House Dictionary of the English Language, ed., J. Stein (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 144.

[2] Katherine Young, "Beloved Places (ukantarulinanilankal): The Correlation of Topography and Theology in the Srivaisnava Tradition of South India" (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1978), p. 57.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Swami Nikhilananda, ed., and trans., The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna (India: Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, 1942), p. 24.

[5] Ibid., p. 25.

[6] Ibid., p. 965.

wrote: "The world is unreal".[1] After a vision of Christ he wrote that "Christ was an incarnation of God. But Christ was not the only Incarnation; there were others -- Buddha, for instance, and Krishna".[2] Ramakrishna's expression of his experiences are echoed in The Waste Land.

The allusive nature of the symbol has always been a major eastern technique used to connect the subjective with the universal. The symbol is synonymous with creed. Symbols, in both literary and philosophical Indian works were employed to shock the reader or initiate into a heightened sense of self-awareness or consciousness. In The Waste Land one finds fire, darkness, water and the wheel, key Indian symbols signifying lust, ignorance, spiritual thirst and rebirth.

Eastern poetics are invariably obscure as well as didactic, as in The Waste Land:

> A poem according to Indian poetics becomes complete only when it is ... recomposed again in the experience of the ideal reader ... unless the reader penetrates beneath the exterior, he does not reach the poetic ultimate.[3]

This poetic concept both precedes and supports the symbolist poetics as outlined by Arthur Symons. The act of reading and the role of the reader are crucially interconnected. Symons wrote that "symbolism is primarily the perception of a reality

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[1]Ibid., p. 963.

[2]Ibid., p. 34.

[3]Rao, p. 81.

which is opposite to the world of appearance"[1] and that "symbolism is the perception of the world of appearance with a visionary intensity".[2] Symbols are meaningless until "apprehended by the consciousness".[3] J. Issacs quotes Mallarmé: "Poetry must always remain a riddle".[4] Eliot had discovered the use of ambivalent symbols in eastern religious works before he discovered them in Symon's book on French Symbolists. Eliot's genius lay in his ability to fuse eastern and western aesthetics and metaphysics.

The volume India's Love Lyrics was published in 1906. This book was either a source for many of the symbols Eliot chose in The Waste Land or, at the very least, provides an analogue to the poem. In India's Love Lyrics, there is a poem entitled "The Teak Forest" where we find references to burning passion:

> Unknown longings that have no names
> But burn us all in their hidden flames.[5]

Reference is made to the erotic: "caress the hair" (ILL, p. 15) and to cycles of karma: "Have we souls of beasts in

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[1]Arthur Symons, The Symbolist Movement in Literature (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1958), p. xiii.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., p. 1.

[4]J. Issacs, The Background of Modern Poetry (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1955), p. 25.

[5]Lawrence Hope, ed., India's Love Lyrics (New York: John Lane Co., London: William Heineman, 1906), p. 12. All subsequent references to this text will be internalized as ILL.

the forms of men?" (ILL, p. 13) Several symbols and images are common to both The Waste Land and "The Teak Forest" where we find the following lines:

> Not I whose life is a broken boat
> On a sea of passions, adrift, afloat....
> Between two Nights (ILL, pp. 14-5).

The boat is an image employed by Buddha to symbolize all knowledge. Other images common to both poems are evident in these lines:

> In every tone of the peacock's cry
> ...every gust of the Jungle night. (ILL, p. 14)

The peacock surfaces in The Waste Land as Philomela, the "damp gust" (394) brings rain in Part Five of The Waste Land and the jungle is "crouched, humped in silence" (399).

In India's Love Lyrics, the nature of love is examined, as well as that of time, often symbolized by the Ganges river. Music, dreams, flowers, hair and perfume are used by poets in this volume to symbolize transcendent love. These symbols are to be found in The Waste Land, often as ironic counterpoints to spiritual degeneration.

Another "eastern" influence was the subjective concepts of F.H. Bradley on whom Eliot wrote his doctoral disseration, Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley. Bradley's philosophical views are easternized and linked by Eliot in The Waste Land to the karma-entangled ego obscuring and imprisoning the true self (ātman). Bradley's view of the soul as being self-substantiating is a karmic concept, manifested in Eliot's works as the quester hero or self-in-

becoming. This parallels "Bradley's denial that the self is ultimately real".[1] The soul "is always becoming,"[2] hovering "between two lives," ("Little Gidding")[3] "Between two waves of the sea" ("Little Gidding," CPP, p. 145), "Between un-being and being " ("Burnt Norton," CPP, p. 122).

> At the end, the prison of Coriolanus in 'What the Thunder Said' is still the prison of the self, the unbreakable solitude, as Eliot's note to those lines, quoting F.H. Bradley, makes explicit.[4]

Time, in The Waste Land is, "in a Bradleyan sense, 'unreal '",[5] paralleling the eternal wheel of karmic time, which itself is "māyā" or "unreal". In Eliot's chapter "On the Distinction of Real and Ideal" he writes: "In order to be fact at all, each presentation must exhibit ideality".[6]

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[1]Mowbray Allen, T.S. Eliot's Impersonal Theory of Poetry, (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1974), p. 37.

[2]Ann Bolgan, Mr. Eliot's Philosophical Writings or What the Thunder Really Said: A Retrospective Essay of the Making of 'The Waste Land' (Montreal and London: McGill - Queen's University Press, 1973), p. 91.

[3]T.S. Eliot, The Complete Poems and Plays (1909-1950) (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1971), p. 142. Hereafter all references to the poems and plays of Eliot will be from this edition and will be referred to as CPP and will be internalized.

[4]Elizabeth Schneider, T.S. Eliot: The Pattern in the Carpet (Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1975), p. 89.

[5]Bergonzi, p. 96.

[6]T.S. Eliot, Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley (New York: Farrar Strauss and Company, 1964), p. 33.

Eliot distinguishes "between sensation and thought ... between an external reality from which we receive material, and the formative activity of consciousness".[1]

When Eliot edited the Criterion from 1922 to 1939, a heavy preponderance of articles on India was published, indicating Eliot's continuing, if lessened, interest in eastern metaphysics in spite of his conversion to Anglicanism in 1927. Indeed, it is because of their profound importance to him and the value Eliot placed upon their asceticism and discipline that he rejected the charlatan aspects of Indian mysticism and esoterica, implicitly warning against the misuse of them in the character of Madame Sosostris, who is the parody of the priestess speaking incoherent fragments to her audience.

Eliot's interest in eastern metaphysics is conspicuously absent as concept or image in the poetry he wrote prior to The Waste Land with the exception of the last stanza of "Dans le Restaurant" (1920) which resurfaces intact in the Phlebas lines and its attendant allusions to transformation and rebirth: "Le repassant aux étapes de sa vie antérieure" (CPP p. 32). "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917) deals with the social and psychological alienation of the individual rather than with metaphysical themes: "human voices

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[1] Ibid., p. 33-4.

wake us and we drown" (CPP p. 7). "Portrait of a Lady" (1917) and "Mr. Apollinax" (1917) deal with social relationships between people. In "Gerontion" (1920) the focus is on "Christ the tiger" (CPP p. 21) and the meaning of western history. "Sweeney Erect" (1920) and "Sweeney Among the Nightingales" (1919), show the basic nature of physical, degenerate man. In the latter, references to Christian images such as "Theconvent of the Sacred Heart" (CPP p. 36) and to Christ's "shroud" imply decay of Christian institutions and traditions.

Eliot's interest in eastern metaphysics, according to Ghosh, continued after The Waste Land: "Four Quartets and The Cocktail Party contain direct borrowings from Indian texts, and passages occur in many others of his poems and plays which are distinctly reminiscent of Indian thought".[1]

However, it is The Waste Land which is most influenced by Indian thought in values, structure, imagery and poetic theory. Why this is so will be indicated when we consider further the personal waste land of Eliot's life immediately after World War One and that of the society around him. The Waste Land supports returning to eastern sources which are

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[1]Ghosh, p. 1.

neither merely "exotic" nor deterministic. Eastern metaphysical concepts underlie such Christian concepts as original sin, purgatorial refinement, sacrifice and spiritual rebirth. In the words of Stephen Spender, "Buddhism remained a lifelong influence in his [Eliot's] work and at the time when he was writing The Waste Land, he almost became a Buddhist -- or so I once heard him tell the Chilean poet Gabriele Mistral who was herself a Buddhist".[1]

Many critics who have failed to find signs of positive spiritual progress in The Waste Land itself have neglected to consider that the poem reflects the unreal world, and that any "progress" as with eastern metaphysical works which are the source for the poem, occurs in the reader/initiate, through the use of symbol, incantation, identification with a "seer" (drasta) and past wisdom. Like the circular unfolding pattern in the reading of the tarot cards, The Waste Land reveals man's metaphysical quest for spiritual liberation, and "does clearly suggest possible hope".[2] The complexity of the poem, the aesthetic use of fragmentation, the repetition of themes and symbols, necessitates some critical overlapping in the treatment of its metaphysical vision and the techniques which embody it.

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[1]Stephen Spender, Eliot (Glasgow: William Collins and Sons, 1975), p. 26.

[2]Schneider, p. 60.

CHAPTER ONE: KARMIC WASTE LANDS

Karma: An Introduction to its Function in The Waste Land

"[The word] karma is derived from the Sanscrit word kri -- to do or make, which explains the soul of the doctrine. Action creates karma; deeds, good or bad, evoke karmic laws".[1] Since the law of karma is basically one of ethical causality, it is highly dependent on man's actions. Its principal tenets are reincarnation or metempsychosis, and expiation. Mankind is rewarded or punished in succeeding incarnations according to actions based on free will, from past and present lives. "One of the Hindu doctrines that attracted Eliot is that of karma. According to this doctrine, the past always lives with us and the future is inseparably woven into the past."[2] Also, "Karma and rebirth (reincarnation, metempsychosis, transmigration of souls) are twin doctrines. They cannot be separated".[3] According to Smidt, "one of the basic features of Oriental religions is the belief in metempsychosis".[4]

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[1]B.N. Chaturvedi, "The Indian Background of Eliot's Poetry," English 90, (1965) : 223.

[2]Dwivedi, p. 21.

[3]F.M. Ishak, The Mystical Philosophy of T.S. Eliot (Connecticut: New Haven University Press, 1970), p. 69.

[4]Smidt, Poetry and Belief, p. 185.

In Eliot's earlier poem "Circe's Palace", referred to by Ghosh, we find the karmic lines:

> The peacocks walk so stately and slow,
> And they look at us with eyes
> Of men whom we knew long ago.[1]

The crucial factor which sustains karmic rebirth is "desire". This desire is traditionally symbolized in metaphysical Indian texts as thirst (trisna). The spiritual quest for water symbolized the mystical pattern of overcoming "the craving for the gratification of the passions, for continued existence in the worlds of the senses".[2] Expiation, atonement and purification are the common ingredients needed to refine karma. The concept of life as a purgatorial existence suits both eastern and western schools of mysticism:

> so existence is purified by existence in the countering of discursive thought by its own kind. Those who have been burned by the fire of passion, must suffer the fire of passion ... and gain thereby the release from the bonds of existence.[3]

The goal, according to the Upanishads, is to become "free from worldly desires and attachments",[4] which means "free

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[1] Ghosh, p. 20.

[2] M. Volin and N. Phalen, Sex and Yoga (London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1968), p. 13.

[3] Ben-Ami Scharfstein, Mystical Experience (Maryland: Penguin Books Inc., 1973), p. 125.

[4] The Upanishads, p. 15.

from pain and suffering",[1] free from the wheel of karma. For Eliot, only karma could display the main destructive features of modern and contemporary life while also promising that ultimately, "all manner of things shall be well". ("Little Gidding" CPP, p. 143)

Karma provides insights into the consistency of psychology in The Waste Land. There is a ready movement from the soul to the ego. "The self is born every moment"[2] since the "ego is something which is constantly being formed anew in the succession of events which constitute our existence".[3] In psychological terms, when we think of the word "surrender" we think of one's ego surrendering.

Karmic cycles also help to explain the historical and the aesthetic features of the poem, in particular its timeless quality, as well as its melting together of various characters. The link to past lives, naturally, is memory. In the Yoga Sutras, "there is reliance upon the principle of transmigration, which causes memory to extend backwards

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[1]Mircea Eliade, Yoga: Immortality and Freedom Bollingen Series LVI (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 11. Hereafter cited as Immortality as Freedom.

[2]Chaturvedi, p. 223.

[3]Sex and Yoga, p. 13.

without end".[1] Karma accounts for the existences and reincarnations of all of the waste lands and their citizens. It is primarily through an examination of past and present lives that poet, protagonist and reader may comprehend the nature of our spiritual dilemma, materialistic existence; of the destitute soul trapped by desire, yet yearning for a better state of existence. Karma is a basis for the image-making aesthetic in The Waste Land, the creation of a landscape which occurs in

> that shifting present consciousness in which perception and memory meet. The floors of memory are dissolved in order to achieve the synthesis: the perceptions become images, and the images consciousness.[2]

Bergonzi quotes from Eliot's doctoral dissertation: "ideas do not qualify a real past and future.. past and future are as such themselves ideal constructions".[3] Eliot added "It is possible to regard the literature of the past, or some part of it, as a synchronic entity, coexisting with the present".[4] The creative process for Eliot "is invariably

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[1] Sex and Yoga, p. 40.

[2] John Fuller, "T.S. Eliot," in The Twentieth Century ed. Bernard Bergonzi (London: Sphere Books, Barrie and Jenkins, 1970), p. 155.

[3] Bergonzi, p. 63.

[4] Ibid., p. 64.

achieved by way of the transubstantiation of the old ".[1] The literature to which Eliot alludes forms "past lives". Eliot employs psychological, historical and aesthetic "images" of it in The Waste Land, including the image of the wheel. The wheel of rebirth unites all of the lives in The Waste Land. The "Gītā also has the 'wheel' symbol in it to convey the recurrent, circular birth and death of human beings ".[2] The wheel "is to be identified with the Logos itself. The wheel is a unified symbol of this central conflict of Becoming and Being ".[3] It is not the medieval wheel of fortune; rather, the circular movement of the karmic wheel parallels the mandala-like pattern of The Waste Land. The heart of the mandala is the point beyond suffering, beyond time and space, the point at which karma aims and tantrism unfolds, reached by a complex renunciation of illusions and desires.

> Only by the practice of disaffection, by spiritual discipline and askesis, can release from the circle of suffering be attained. Krishna explains the 'Karma Yoga' to Arjuna, and declares that 'even a little practice of this yoga will save you from the terrible wheel of rebirth and death.[4]

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[1] Bolgan, p. 90.

[2] Dwivedi, p. 149.

[3] Poetry and Belief, p. 186.

[4] Fuller, p. 176.

The Judaeo-Christian concept of original sin would appear to have strengthened Eliot's sympathy towards the eastern metaphysical concept of karma. Eliot employs a fusion of these two traditions in his poem "To the Indians Who Died in Africa" (1943), which was not included in the edition of the Complete Poems and Plays (1909-1950):

> Let those who go home tell the same story of you:
> Of action, with a common purpose, action
> None the less fruitful if neither you nor we
> Know, until the judgement after death,
> What is the fruit of action.[1]

Similarly, Eliot wrote in choruses of "The Rock", "of all that was done in the past, you eat the fruit, either rotten or ripe" (CPP p. 101).

Sexual Waste Lands

The Buddhist view of sexuality is generally a negative one, holding that just as procreation extends the unreal world of the senses, so desire leads to rebirth. Since sexual problems are viewed as a symptom of deeper spiritual problems in both eastern metaphysics and in The Waste Land, sexual waste lands will be examined first, those of sexual excess (lust and passion) followed by those of sexual failure (impotence and castration, indifference and profane marriage).

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[1] T.S. Eliot, "To the Indians Who Died in Africa," quoted by A.N. Dwivedi, p. 16.

Sexual Excess: Lust and Passion

Lust, an obvious manifestation of desire, is portrayed negatively throughout The Waste Land. To illustrate the karmic pattern, Eliot presents a great number of individuals trapped by cycles of lust.

In a chronological examination of lust throughout The Waste Land, the first negative references to lust occur indirectly in Part One. The view of women as temptresses and whores is personified in:

> Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks
> The lady of situations (49-50)

She is spiritually contrasted to the Madonna. Her names means "pretty lady"; hence the drug employed by women to dilate the pupils was called "belladonna". In the poem, as in eastern metaphysics, lust is linked to a problem of "vision". Belladonna appears as a victim of her own sexuality as well as a dangerous siren luring men to their destruction. She illustrates the pattern of negative karmic reincarnation, and is part of a long line of seductresses such as the Grail maiden who tempted Gawain. A further indirect reference to lust, and the fear of its recurrence, in Part I is the line "Oh keep the dog far hence" (74), which alludes to the "dirge" in John Webster's The White Devil. This revenge tragedy, situated in sixteenth century Italy, revolves around a quarrel based on lust. The mad Cornelia sings the dirge to her son, Flamineo, while she is preparing for burial the corpse of her other son Marcello, whom Flamineo has killed in a quarrel over Zanche, a Moorish maidservant.

In Part Two of The Waste Land there are both indirect and direct references to lust. The indirect ones allude to "situations" in Middleton, James, Dante, Ovid, Pope and Shakespeare. "A Game of Chess" alludes to the seduction scene in Thomas Middleton's Women Beware Women. In Middleton's play, Livia knows that Leantio's mother is playing chess while her daughter-in-law is being seduced by the Duke. Livia makes references to the chess pieces in terms of social class and sexual conquest:

> Here's a Duke
> Will strike a sure stroke for the game anon
> Your pawn cannot come back to relieve itself
> (Women Beware Women 2: 2,348-50).[1]

In the play, lust and vision are again linked:

> Livia: "I've given thee blind mate twice.
> Mother: "You may see, madame,
> My eyes begin to fail.
> Livia: "I'll swear they do wench.
> (Women Beware Women 2: 2,.364-7)

The word "mate" links the themes of lust and death etymologically.

In The Waste Land, the failure of vision is a key problem of the wastelanders. We recall the Hyacinth garden where "eyes failed" (39), and "the one-eyed merchant" (52). Two other linkings of lust and vision are in the foreground dramas of Part II. In the "rats' alley" of a lustful relationship between the lady and the other speaker, both of them "see nothing"

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[1]Thomas Middleton, Women Beware Women, ed. C. Barber (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1969).

although ironically they possess "lidless eyes". The second reference is to Lil who is urged to "look" good for her husband, the partner of a relationship that is now merely lustful. Both references embody the meaning of lust and indifference. The "pills" Lil takes "to bring it off" (159) link lust and death (the consequence of lust).

Livia, who suggests the "lady of situations" (50), personifies the hypocrisy of the waste land of the play's setting, Florence. Loveless marriages of convenience, boredom, lust, procuring, adultery, greed and violence indicate not only social but sexual waste lands; each intensifies the other. The movement is from boredom to lust to rebirth, since Florence is a land "where lust raigns" (Women Beware Women 5: 2, 246). As there is no love, women are referred to as jewels, treasure, gems, and other dehumanizing symbols of materialism. Eliot's examination of the upper class in "The Game of Chess" employs images (such as "marble", "golden" and "ivory") combining beauty and the sterility of materialism, life in a gilded cage.

Eliot's original title,"In the Cage", refers to Henry James' novella by the same name. The speaker of the poem is "trapped in a loveless marriage, trapped in 'memory and desire'".[1] In both story and poem the cage metaphor is appropriate to the animalistic passions dramatized. In the story, a "young lady

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[1]James E. Miller Jr., T.S. Eliot's Personal Waste Land: Exorcism of the Demons (University Park and London: Penn State University Press, 1977), p. 78.

working in a telegraph 'cage' becomes the center of an adulterous manoeuvering which she only dimly understands, is fascinated by, and ultimately contributes to ".[1] The original title focused upon the subjective vision of a protagonist. In The Waste Land coyness and sexual insinuations are evident in such verbs as "peeped" and "lurked", which ostensibly describe the perfume and Cupidon but which suggest the erotic as well. Even the perfume is synthetic. "The woman's dressing room is a temple ... where the senses are confused."[2] Eliot stresses the metaphysical reaction: "drowned the sense" (89). The "standards wrought with fruited vines" (79) suggest the sexuality of Bacchus. The diction of the lines:

> From satin cases poured in rich profusion:
> In vials of ivory and coloured glass. (85-86)

alludes to lines from Pope's great mock epic, Rape of the Lock:

> This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
> And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.[3]

The allusions to Pope's poem where the standard, if more material than that of the classical epic, is still one of order, here reinforce the negative aspects of modern sexuality by accentuating its erotic, sterile and violent elements as well as

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[1]Miller, p. 78.

[2]A.J. Wilks ed. "A Critical Commentary on T.S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land,'" MacMillan Critical Commentaries (London: MacMillan, 1971), p. 52.

[3]Alexander Pope, Rape of the Lock, in The Norton Anthology, ed. M.H. Abrams (New York: Norton and Co., Ltd., 1962), p. 743.

its chaos. For the lines,

> Under the firelight, under the brush, her hair
> Spread out in fiery points
> Glowed into words, then would be savagely still.
> (108-10)

Melchiori quotes Dante as the source ("Inferno," 27): "tips of the flames enclosing spirits of the damned would move and 'glow into words'."[1] The references to the lady will be intensified in the lady of Part Five. The negative reincarnation of Antony and Cleopatra, two lovers associated with the near East, into these two modern lovers, underlines the negative karmic pattern. Cleopatra's throne "Burn'd on the water" (Antony and Cleopatra 2: 2, 191)[2] while in the modern London apartment the lady's chair merely "Glowed on the marble " (78). Cupid, son of Venus, represents earthly, not divine passion. Here even the cupid is reincarnated into a lower form:

> a golden cupidon peeped out
> (Another hid his eyes behind his wing). (80-1)

The movement is from indifference to seduction to rape. The desire for rape is implicit in the lady's lines, "I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street with my hair down" (132-3). She is one of the "femmes fatales who descend from the Whore

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[1] G. Melchiori, "Echoes in 'The Waste Land,'" English Studies 32, No. 1 (Feb. 1951) : 9.

[2] William Shakespeare, The Complete Works of William Shakespeare 3 vols. (New York: Walter J. Black Inc., 1937). All subsequent references to the works of Shakespeare will be to this edition.

of Babylon, all women who met violent deaths through passion, ... sufferers at the hands of lust and treachery",[1] as well as those who caused death. The "sylvan scene" (98) is a direct quote from Paradise Lost (4: 140).[2] Satan's spiritual act of violation in Eden is brilliantly juxtaposed in The Waste Land with Philomela's sexual violation and violent metamorphosis, suggesting the karmic link between spiritual and sexual problems.

> The change of Philomel, by the barbarous king
> So rudely forced. (99-100)

Sexuality and violence are frequently paired by Eliot through allusions used in The Waste Land. Ovid's Metamorphoses is the source for the story of Philomela. Her sister Procne was the wife of Tereus, the king of Thrace. Tereus, violently enamored with Philomela, raped her while she was travelling to see her sister. Tereus silenced Philomela by cutting out her tongue and confining her to a tower. He informed Procne that her sister was dead. Philomela managed to weave her story into a tapestry. Procne, at the discovery of the crime, killed Tereus' son, Itys, and served him his flesh. The sisters both fled, and before they were to be slain, they prayed to the gods and were transformed; Tereus into a hoopoe bird and the sisters into a nightingale and a swallow. Lust

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[1] Helen Williams, T.S. Eliot: The Waste Land (London: The Camelot Press, 1973), p. 56.

[2] John Milton, Paradise Lost, in Norton Anthology, p. 504.

itself has proceeded from seduction to "savagery". Many examples of lust and rape are chronicled by Weston, from allusions to King Amangons ("One of the maidens he took by force"[1]) to the Grail maidens who themselves were violated ["forced the fairest of the maidens, and robbed them of their cups of gold" (Weston, p. 172)].

Ophelia has had to go mad in order to preserve her vision of integrity. Ophelia, another "flower" girl like the Hyacinth girl, represents a contrast to the surrounding sexual corruption of her society. However Ophelia, in joining purity and love to madness, presents a more hopeless version of the Hyacinth girl. In Part One of the poem salvation through "earthly" love was at best a remote possibility. In Part Two of the poem the possibility is even less credible. This notion is supported by the reference in the last line of the section to Hamlet: "Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good night" (172). These are Ophelia's last words before her drowning, and, in The Waste Land, constitute an elegy for all "sweet ladies".

In Part Three, "The Fire Sermon", the theme of lust comes to a climax. Images of lust and death are juxtaposed or superimposed. The ambiguous line: "White bodies naked on the low damp ground" (193) reveals the fusion of sexuality and mortality, as bodies could refer to corpses or to live people. The karmic fusion of lust and death is also evident in the lines:

> But at my back from time to time I hear
> The sounds of horns and motors, which shall bring
> Sweeney to Mrs. Porter (196-8).

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[1]Jessie Weston, From Ritual to Romance (New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1957), p. 172. All subsequent references to this book will be internalized.

The link, according to Eliot's footnotes, is to John Day's masque-like play, The Parliament of Bees:

> When of a sudden, listening, you shall hear,
> A noise of horns and hunting, which shall bring
> Actaeon to Diana in the spring,
> Where all shall see her naked skin.

Actaeon, a celebrated hunter encountered, during a hunt, Diana, the Greek goddess of childbirth and hunting, who was bathing with her nymphs. Diana transformed him into a lower form, a stag, in which form he was subsequently destroyed by his own hunting hounds; a literal and metaphorical example of karmic self-destruction of the ego through desires and the illusions of the senses. Actaeon, whose history of past negative reincarnation is here alluded to, is in the present world negatively reincarnated into Sweeney, and Diana is now Mrs. Porter. Sweeney is a Caliban-like figure of degenerated man. The proximity of the reference to Philomela:

> Jug jug jug jug jug jug
> So rudely forc'd
> Tereu (204-6),

links Sweeney, Actaeon and the Thracian king Tereus.

The encounter between the clerk and the typist represents a meeting of lust and indifference. The clerk, "the young man carbuncular" (231) is "One of the low" (233). The carbuncles suggest intemperance and he is described as a Sweeney-like creature of lust:

> Flushed and decided, he assaults at once;
> Exploring hands encounter no defence;
> His vanity requires no response (239-41).

The clerk's lust is also linked to a failure of metaphysical vision; he leaves "finding the stairs unlit" (248).

The reference to the casual amorous encounter of "Elizabeth and Leicester" (279) evokes continuing cycles of lust. The subsequent allusion to Dante strengthens this concept of endless encounters "Enacted on this same divan or bed" (243). Boredom and lust are further linked in this reference to Dante:

> Highbury bore me. Richmond and Kew
> Undid me. By Richmond I raised my knees
> Supine on the floor of a narrow canoe (293-5).

La Pia's words to Dante as he begins the ascent of the Mount of Purgatory are: "Remember me, who am La Pia; Siena made me, Maremma unmade me" ("Purgatory" 5: 133). According to the legend, La Pia was the wife of a nobleman who, in order to rid himself of her so that he might marry another woman, forced her to live in a house in the marshes of Maremma until she died of malaria. La Pia is shown as another victim of lust.

The karmic link between lust and sterility reaches its peak in the images of burning in "The Fire Sermon". This burning is associated with St. Augustine, Dante and Buddha. The line, "To Carthage then I came" (307) specifically refers to St. Augustine, a victim of his own lust. He wrote about his youth, when "I became to myself a barren land."[1] He thus

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[1] St. Aurelius Augustinus, The Confessions 2: 18, Trans. E.B. Pusey (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1955). All subsequent references to St. Augustine's Confessions will be internalized.

personifies the wastelander who is filled with lust, and who hungers for sensual experiences: "To Carthage I came, where there sang all around me in my ears a cauldron of unholy loves" (The Confessions 3: 1). The link between fire (heat) and lust, which started as early as the fiery hair of the lady, the candle flames in the "Game of Chess" section, the reference to hot gammon and developed through the young man carbuncular, is now completed. The image of St. Augustine crying out against lust dissolves into Buddha burning out of it, an eastern concept of the transcending of lust.

The Waste Land exhibits love relationships which cannot be classified as lustful, impotent, indifferent or fearful, specifically Antony and Cleopatra, and Tristan and Isolde. These western tragedies of erotic love are, however, while death-directed, not "tragic" in India nor in The Waste Land. Desires, even when linked to great and noble passion, invariably lead to suffering and death. One recalls Yeats' view that India knows nothing of tragedy, believing in karma rather than in fate. According to the Gītā, "While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachments lust develops" (Gītā, p. 149).

Tristan and Iseult (var. Isolde) are a famous pair of tragic lovers in the world of courtly romance. Although this

tradition follows a strict, conventional code of behavior, the story involves a bewildering and ecstatic love. The lovers contribute to the "erotic element in the Grail legends".[1] In the Strassburg and Wagner versions, Tristan is a heroic knight of King Mark's. On the advice of Merlin he embarks on the Grail quest, which provides another link to The Waste Land. Tristan brings Iseult to King Mark but along the way they both drink of a magic love potion and discover love "forever, in life and in death".[2] The potion leads to "passion and Joy most sharp, and Anguish without end, and Death".[3] The link between passion and destruction is obvious: "yearningly longed-for love-in-death" (Tristan and Isolde, Chap. 3)[4] is the only possible quietus for their unquenchable love. Isolde longs,

> to drown now,
> descending,
> void of thought --
> highest bliss! (Tristan and Isolde, Chapter 1)

Tristan and Isolde drown in a sea of uncontrollable passion, their mode of death recalling that of Phlebas, Alonzo, Captain Lichas (Satyricon) and the "drowned senses". The condition of the lovers is similar to that of the other wastelanders (like the Sibyl) who, like them could "neither live nor die,

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[1]Williams, p. 69.

[2]The Romance of Tristan and Iseult, retold by Joseph Bédier (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1965), p. 32.

[3]Ibid., p. 33.

[4]Richard Wagner, Tristan and Isolde, 1st ed., trans. Stewart Robb (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1965). All further references to this text will be internalized.

for it was life and death together ".[1] Before Tristan leaves Iseult, he tells her: "My death is near, and far from you my death will come of desire ",[2] a statement of karmic pattern. Tristan is surprised in a garden and is fatally wounded. Unlike the Fisher King, he unsuccessfully awaits the healing of his wounds, sending a watcher to watch for the ship carrying Iseult, who is coming to cure him. "Oed' und leer das Meer" (42) a quote from Wagner, is the watcher's response, signifying a watery waste land.

Enflamed emotions are self-destructive. The use of a "magic" potion suggests that the degree of passion shown by the lovers is unnatural and unstable. Eliot's choices of references and allusions invariably portray the sexual or erotic path as one that is unsatisfactory and destructive. This would be true for Antony and Cleopatra as well. Eliot easternizes these two great love stories by stressing the karmic aspects; that desire leads to suffering, perhaps thus explaining the failure or limitations of erotic love in the hyacinth garden. In The Waste Land death is often necessary to relieve the pain of love, as it was for Tristan and Isolde, Dido and Ophelia. The theme of expiation becomes much stronger in Part Three of The Waste Land. The final line of Part Three "burning"

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[1]Bédier, p. 107.

[2]Ibid., p. 141.

(311), in its fusion of eastern and western ascetic images provides a climax to the theme of lust which disappears in Parts Four and Five of The Waste Land indicating progress in the spiritual quest against memories and desires.

Sexual Failure: Impotence and Castration, Indifference, Profane Marriage

"The central conception of the poem is sexual impotence used as a symbol for .. spiritual malady."[1] The allusion to the Satyricon's Sibyl in the first epigraph of The Waste Land is the first of many brilliant uses to which Eliot put this rich source book. Specifically, the theme of lust and the quest for lost potency in the Satyricon enabled Eliot to counterpoint similar themes in The Waste Land. Encolpius, "a soldier now without a spear"[2] is the anti-hero of Petronius' Satyricon who goes on a "picaresque quest to restore his lost potency, taken from him by the wrath of Priapus".[3] Encolpius, in a sexual / spiritual dilemma, felt "like one of the damned in hell" (Satyricon, p. 157). Circe, lamenting the fact that Encolpius is one of the "impotent men" (Satyricon, p. 158) says: "One might almost say you were dead already" (Satyricon, p. 158). When Encolpius answers "it was less myself than my instrument that failed " (Satyricon, p. 159), we recall the

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[1] Dwivedi, p. 38.

[2] The Satyricon of Petronius, trans. W. Arrowsmith (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959), p. 159. All subsequent Satyricon references will be to this text, and will be internalized.

[3] Bergonzi, p. 14.

Hyacinth garden where "eyes failed".

> ...Yet when we come back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
> Your arms full and your hair wet, I could not
> Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
> Living nor dead, and I knew nothing. (37-40)

The potential was there for a fulfilling sexual experience. The Hyacinth girl with her wet hair waits as one of the maidens of fertility rites, but the male is physically unable to respond. The vocabulary is negative: "could not", "failed" and "nothing". Eliot ironically parodies metaphysical passivity which requires serene detachment, with the impotent responses on the part of the wastelanders, here the Hyacinth girl's lover, and in Part Two the companion of the lady.

Eliot employed the impotence motifs of the Grail quests to denote the spiritual quest and the sexual dangers which threaten its successful culmination. In the Sone de Nansai, Joseph d'Abaramathie's "crime" links impotence to lust. As a result of his marriage to a pagan girl,

> His loins are stricken by this bane
> For which he suffers lasting pain.
> (Weston, p. 22)

Impotence is portrayed in The Waste Land as a sexual problem which is symptomatic of a spiritual problem.

In karmic terms, the effects of individual impotence expand outwardly in a general "arrest of consummation".[1] Thus the apparently outer results are cumulatively formed from each individual's impotence. The loss of harmony results from the

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[1]Elizabeth Drew, T.S. Eliot: The Design of His Poetry (New York: Scribners, 1949), p. 70.

severance of man from divine truths and is merely symbolized by the death or wounding of god, priest, knight or king.

The wounding motif is sufficiently strong in The Waste Land to make fear of castration a specific form of impotence. The fear is conveyed in the imagery: "limp leaves" (396), "withered stumps of time" (104) and "lost their bones" (115). The "dead tree" (23) is a symbol of sexual failure; the "castrated" vegetation is a strong contrast to Buddha's tree of enlightenment or the Judaeo-Christian "tree of life". Another major link exists between the "dead tree" and the trees of fertility cults beneath which castration of gods occurred. Attis castrated himself under a Pine tree. In the symbols common to Grail quests and tarot cards, the bleeding lance also suggests the sexual wound. In eastern metaphysical literature, the story of Naropa, a tantric master, illustrates the link between desire and suffering (i.e. lust and castration). Having betrayed his renunciation of the world by sleeping with a girl, Naropa punishes himself:

> I suffer from having hit my penis
> In answer to desire which is the root of all evil.[1]

The "impotence of Eliot's speakers",[2] evident in poems such as "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "Gerontion" resurfaces in The Waste Land in the Fisher King, in

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[1] Scharfstein, p. 114.

[2] Rosemary F. Franklin, "Death, or the Heat of Life in the Handful of Dust?" in "Notes and Queries" -- American Literature vol. 41, (1969) : 278.

the lover of the Hyacinth girl, (or, if that is a passage dealing with homosexual love, in the implied impotence), in the male speaker in "A Game of Chess" and in their archetypes, all of the wounded and impotent figures of Grail quests and fertility cults.

In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917) the impotent responses are "Do I dare?" (CPP, p. 4), and "how should I presume?" (CPP, p. 5). One of the major themes in "Prufrock" is isolation or alienation of the individual. Prufrock, one of the "lonely men in shirt-sleeves" (CPP, p. 5), yearns for "an overwhelming question" (CPP, p. 3) which might "Disturb the universe" (CPP, p. 5).

"Gerontion" (1920) shares with The Waste Land "its dense conflation of spiritual with sexual failure, its sense of exhaustion and disgust".[1] The theme of dryness or lack of fertility, is a common one in "Gerontion", where we find the individual impotence of old age. This is "a recurrent theme of Mr. Eliot's; the mixing of 'memory and desire' in present barrenness, the old man in his 'dry month' waiting for the life-giving rain".[2] In "Gerontion" the potency exists "In memory only, reconsidered passion" (CPP, p. 22).

There is a major contrast between these two poems and The Waste Land, for in the latter the particularized individual examples of impotence have expanded to cause the engulfment of an entire civilization. By the end of The Waste Land,

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[1] Fuller, p. 165.

[2] F.R. Leavis, New Bearings in English Poetry (London: Chatto and Windus, 1931), p. 84.

we find "falling towers" (374) of crumbling civilizations.

Although impotence and castration preclude procreation, they cannot be equated with an active ascetic denial of sexuality, because they are associated with the frustration of desire which karmically must lead to reincarnation. In Christian terms, "desire shall fail" (Eccles 12:5)[1] as a result of sin.

In The Hollow Men (1925), we find the shadow which falls

> Between the desire
> And the spasm
> Between the potency
> And the existence (CPP, p. 59).

The relating of the shadow to impotence would seem to stress the Buddhist views which explain sexual failure as based upon a lack of light, of vision. A "contrary" to enlightenment, darkness is an archetypal Indian symbol for metaphyiscal confusion in the Vedas, Upanishads and Gītā. Those severed from ritual and sanctification "go forth from this world, impotent and devoid of merit".[2] The Hollow Men approaches impotence from a more universal view, following the same approach as The Waste Land.

The males who fear impotence, castration and non-fulfillment are counterpointed in The Waste Land by fearful or indifferent females. Although April is the traditional time

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[1] Holy Bible, King James Version. All subsequent biblical references will be internalized.

[2] "Brhadaranyaka Upanisad," vol. 2. The Twelve Principal Upanisads in 3 vols., ed. Dr. E. Roer (Adyar, Madras, India: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1931), p. 438.

of rebirth and of love, in The Waste Land,

> April is the cruelest month, breeding
> lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
> Memory and desire, stirring
> Dull roots with spring rain. (1-4)

Rather than face renewed life cycles, the wastelanders like Marie[1] desire to lie under "forgetful snow", (6) buried like Stetson's corpse. She reacts to the revival of nature by escaping and living a life of inverted time and space: "I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter". (18). Spring brings no love here, and the wisdom of ancient fertility rites, of growth in renewal, is entirely forgotten. The life-force, symbolized by water is feared, so people flee it: "And if it rains, a closed car at four" (136). The dead land, however, not only suggests the change of seasons; it also refers to all the waste lands and fertility gods associated with rites involving flowers and rebirth. The memories suggest the karmic pattern of reincarnation caused by illusions and desires. Spring is resented because it stirs the inhabitants from their spiritual lethargy: "The waste landers are living in a dead land and they like it".[2] This is a savage contrast to the General Prologue from the Canterbury Tales, for in Chaucer's poem spring is a positive time with its eager, natural and spiritual rhythms of life:

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[1] Marie, according to Rao, p. 30, is Countess Marie Larisch (niece of Austrian empress Elizabeth), a famous neurasthenic.

[2] Franklin, p. 279.

> When that Aprill with his showres soote
> The droughte of March hath perced to the roote,
> And bathed every veine in swich licour
> Of which vertu engendred is the flowr;...
> Thaane longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,...
> The holy, blisful martyr for to seeke
> That hem hath holpen when that they were seke.[1]

The metaphysical crisis facing the wastelanders is rebirth, another incarnation, life itself.

Rejection of, or indifference to, sex characterizes many females in The Waste Land aside from Marie. The upper class lady complains, "my nerves are bad tonight" suggesting a negative attitude towards any possible sexual liaison. Similarly, the typist does not show the same lust as the clerk does: "she is bored and tired" (236) and his "caresses", though "unreproved", are "undesired" (238). Since the clerk is insensitive and self-centered, he "makes a welcome of indifference " (242).

The Thames lines reveal an emphasis on purity and water which are more important in eastern than in western holy rites. Spenser's "daughters of the flood" are "departed" (175), a term suggesting death. The nymphs are to be found, negatively reincarnated in modern society, as casual lovers. The sacred grove of fertility rites is now merely a place for casual sex; the holy bodies of water are now polluted. The sinking leaf, suggestive of winter's imminent approach, is paralled by the garbage which is also now buried by those indifferent to water;

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[1]Geoffrey Chaucer, "The General Prologue" from The Canterbury Tales, in Norton Anthology, pp. 13-4.

> The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
> Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
> Or other testimony of summer nights. (177-9)

The use of the word "bears" followed by "no" suggests the cessation of birth. The wastelander fears fertility and renewed life cycles. The effigy of the fertility god thrown into the river has become hideously transformed into modern garbage. The sacred river, long a symbol of life forces in eastern rites, has become another waste place, just like the land. The bottles, sandwich papers and cardboard boxes, all empty containers, suggest a spiritual emptiness or degeneration. The "silk handerchiefs" which have replaced the effigy in modern fertility rites suggest that materialism has replaced spirituality. The cigarette ends seem to recall the loneliness of Prufrock: "to spit out the butt ends of my ways and days". (CPP p. 5) The "testimony of summer nights", appears to be a euphemism for contraceptive devices, reinforcing the concept of the present sterility of those who fear to be true lovers. They fear the consequences of casual sexual relationships, hence the prophylactic devices and the anonymity, for they "have left no addresses" (181).

Indifference is even worse than lust and we recall those "neither alive nor dead" in Dante's "Purgatorio", in Baudelaire's Paris, and in Eliot's London. The boredom signifies the horror of changelessness, the endless repetition of karmic patterns. The mechanical progression of the "act" of sex reveals that the typist is also dehumanized:

She smoothes her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone., (255-56)

Similarly, the second Thames maiden and her seducer appear indifferent to their own doubts and fears. Characteristically, she employs a euphemism for sex:

After the event
He wept ...
What should I resent? (297-9)

The theme of sexual failure rooted in indifference concludes with the final Thames maiden who is less horribly the victim of the male quester's lust than she is of her own indifference and that of her people who "expect nothing". The indifference of the wastelanders is based upon their inability to "give" of themselves both sexually and spiritually, to achieve:

The awful daring of a moment's surrender
Which an age of prudence can never retract (404-5)

The Waste Land dramatizes another form of sexual failure: the profanation of marriage. Eliot seems to find this profanation rooted in the mistrust between the sexes, in the unwillingness to surrender "power". The connection between mistrust and love is first alluded to in a reference to Beaumont and Fletcher's Philaster where Philaster hurls at Arethusa his angry complaint against women:

... how that foolish man,
That reads the story of a woman's face
And dies believing it, is lost for ever;
How all the good you have is but a shadow,
I' the morning with you, and the night behind you
Past and forgotten. (Philaster 3: 2)

The association of marriage and mistrust continues in the allusion to Webster's warning:

> O Men
> That lie upon your death-beds, and are haunted
> With howling wives, neere trust them, they'le re-marry
> Ere the worme peirce your winding sheete: ere the Spider
> Make a thinne curtaine for your Epitaphs.
> (The White Devil 5,6)

Kristian Smidt finds "a general misogyny in The Waste Land which cannot be disregarded. The women are frauds and neurotics, loveless and passionless".[1]

Marriage, when we are presented with it directly in The Waste Land is a profane institution filled with jealousy, fear and conflict. Profane marriage is symbolized by the "game of chess" (137) played by the neurasthenic and her mate. It is a game of manipulation. Even "marriage is seen as just such a game of strategy and one ending all too often in a very stale mate".[2] In the Elizabeth and Leicester lines alluded to by the footnote to line 279, they "talk nonsense", wondering "why they should not be married". Marriage becomes a jest, another institution which has degenerated in The Waste Land.

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[1]Kristian Smidt, The Importance of Recognition: Six Chapters on T.S. Eliot (Norway, Tromsø, 1973), p. 15. This text will be hereafter referred to as "Six Chapters."

[2]Bolgan, p. 79.

Morally, we find little difference in the Lil lines between marital and extra-marital love. In both, the lust is emphasized, "If you don't give it him there's others will, I said" (149). The moral degeneration is paralleled by the physical degeneration of those "obsessed with the denial of nature, artificial teeth, chemically procured abortions, ... [and] spurious ideal images of one another".[1] The barman's calling out "Hurry up please it's time" (165), is a warning because death will merely lead to rebirth and unwanted cycles of life. A recurring theme in The Waste Land is that of fear of betrayal via sex, so that lust is seen not only as aggression but lovelessly staying together, a passive alternative to a meaningful relationship that might lead to procreation. Even in marriage sex and procreation are separated, thanks to prophylactics and abortions and "pills" (159). Yet the contempt felt by the persona of the poet / protagonist is mitigated by his identification with the suffering of the wealthy lady, Philomela, Lil and Ophelia. Sexuality and suffering are synonymous in The Waste Land, melting all victims together, and introducing the potential salvation through the overcoming of desires in a changed vision of suffering. The word "gammon" (166) in the Lil lines, aside from referring

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[1]Hugh Kenner, The Invisible Poet: T.S. Eliot (London: and New York: W.H. Allen, 1960), p. 56.

to ham, has a secondary and ironic meaning in British slang, "deceitful nonsense"[1] or pretense. Underneath their various self-created infernos of misdirected sexual desire lurks the desire to save themselves.

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[1]Random House Dictionary, p. 582.

Spiritual Waste Lands and Wastelanders

Christ and Karma

Christ does not play a central role in The Waste Land, where he is easternized and presented as another fertility god, like Osirus, Attis, Adonis or Hyacinth, and not as the saviour of civilization. Christ's resurrection, with its association of sacrifice, transformation and transcendence is a direct contrast in The Waste Land to karmic patterns of continuation, repetition of cycles rather than growth or progression. In the West, Christ's resurrection is the counterpoint to the eastern pattern of spiritual transcendence which others may follow. In both East and West the total giving of oneself is open to all. In the East however, no "external" god, grace or salvation is required.

Eliot's use of fertility cults and Grail quests provides an underlying framework for the karmic cycles of The Waste Land. In the legends treated by Jessie Weston in From Ritual to Romance, "the land has been blighted by a curse".[1] The karmic pattern of rebirth which parallels rebirth in nature, is evident here: "The shift in meaning from physical to spiritual sterility is easily made and was, as a matter of fact,

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[1] Cleanth Brooks Jr., "The Waste Land: An Analysis," Sewanee Review vol. 3 (Summer 1963): 107.

made in certain legends".[1]

> The basis of all vegetation ceremonies is the same. The seasons of the year are seen as reflecting the life cycle of a god who dies and is resurrected, who is wounded and cured of his hurt, or who descends to the nether world and returns again. These events are celebrated or enacted by his worshippers; and the growth of the crops and, by extension, the fecundity of beasts and men are dependent on the god's revival.[2]

The fertility rituals do not summon the absent god; they accentuate his absence. The god dies in the winter and is reborn in the spring. The dead god/bulb is planted in sexual and sacrificial rites during winter and summer solstices. The reference to the sprouting corpse and the "transfer" of nails from Christ to the "Dog" (74) provide a further karmic transformation of Christ. He too was hung from a tree, the cross. Some critics such as D. Merritt have related "dog" to "god":

> The reason for the capital letter in 'Dog' is that the word is simply 'God' spelled backwards. The nails which will dig the buried corpse are the nails which bound Christ to the cross and through which, symbolically, man is redeemed -- in other words, he is dug up again.[3]

As Weston has shown the same esoteric message of death and rebirth is to be discovered in fertility cults and Grail quests, in Christian and Aryan traditions.

The karmic link between the dead god and the people is clearly delineated:

> He who was living is now dead
> We who were living are now dying (328-9).

The fear of the protagonist is easternized; it is not the

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Wilks, p. 14.

[3]D. Merritt, "Eliot's 'The Waste Land'", Explicator 23 (December 1964), Item 31.

Christian fear of death or damnation but of "something different" (27) from these, that is, "fear in a handful of dust" (30), fear of reincarnation, revival on the wheel of generations. The waste land, lacking spiritual faith, is the karmic domain of all, "gentile or Jew" (319) recalling the biblical lines: "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin"(Romans 3: 9). In the poem, Eliot provides a hallucinatory presentation of Christ (empty chapel, disciples on the road to Emmaus). In both eastern and western metaphysics the senses are unworthy tools to perceive the divine, the transcendent.

The pattern of spiritual rebirth is evident in East and West. In certain western rites effigies of the gods were hung, buried or thrown into the water, and the initiates of fertility rites were seen as "dead men in life"[1] those who, through sacrifice and ritual will be reborn in the spiritual sense. These initiates represent a direct contrast to the "living dead" inhabitants of The Waste Land who are severed from belief. Christian and fertility rites echo earlier eastern quests where one attempts to overcome both māyā and karma. Purity and sacrifice are found in the character of the hero/initiate.

The sterile "red rock", like St. Mary Woolnoth with its "dead sound" (68) and the remote Magnus Martyr whose walls

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[1] Immortality and Freedom, p. 273.

hold not the sacred host but only "inexplicable splendour" (265) of architecture, suggest that organized religion, symbolized by the church, does not contain the required divine truth, or god. At the end the quester sees only an "empty chapel" (389), and not a resurrected god. Grace apparently lies in the self, not in an outside god. The empty chapel appears to be linked to the "decayed hole" (386), fusing spiritual and sexual waste lands.

Amalthea the Sibyl

The first wastelander encountered in the poem, is Amalthea, the Erythraen Sibyl who is found in the opening epigraph, taken from Petronius' Satyricon:

> For, indeed, with these very eyes I saw
> the Sibyl of Cumae hanging in a glass
> bottle; and the boys said to her: "Sibyl,
> what is the matter?' she always answered
> 'I long to die'.[1]

The epigraph "presents an image of literally suspended life (death-in-life, Cleanth Brooks calls it), from which death proper would be an escape".[2] Endless life not mortality, is the karmic trap that is feared by the Sibyl. Amalthea is karmically cursed by Apollo to remain alive for as many years as the grains of sand she had been holding: "fear in a handful of dust " (30). Her continuous existence, like Tiresias', dramatically presents an ironic parallel to Buddha's "thousand lifetimes of endeavor". Amalthea's positive message of

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[1] The Satyricon, cited and trans. by A.J. Wilks, p. 25.

[2] Ibid., p. 25.

desired self-sacrifice reveals that even death is preferable to an empty existence on the wheel of karma. Amalthea, like Tiresias, is the prophet wailing in the wilderness, providing a secret message to the world, of spiritual suffering required to gain transcendence. The significance of her rejection and cry, like that of Philomela, is misunderstood by the wastelanders. The wisdom and power of older traditions is invariably discarded by the wastelanders. The Sibyl's secret wisdom suggests eastern metaphysical rituals, with Amalthea as the wise woman or priestess of vedic tradition. She understands the spiritual predicament and its symbols. Her bottle and the dust suggest the hourglass and the trap of time. The Sibyl embodies and rejects the waste land.

Satyricon is a satirical examination of the corrupt state of Rome. The book is ironically based upon a quest undertaken by one of the characters, Encolpius, to restore his lost potency. The book reveals the triumph of materialism and the degeneration of the state. The pattern of spiritual degeneration, ensuing impotence and the quest, perfectly parallels the pattern in The Waste Land. Encolpius's mentor Eumolpus, like the Sibyl, rejects the corrupt state. Rome is rejected on both spiritual and historical grounds: "Well, that's why the gods have stuffed their ears, because we've gotten unreligious. The fields are lying barren " (Sat., p. 42), and "As for our own times, why, we are so besotted with drink, so steeped in debauchery, that we lack the strength even to study the great achievements of the past" (Sat., p. 90).

Negative reincarnation remains the problem to be overcome. Amalthea is destined to return as Sosostris, a degenerated priestess and a charlatan, who is ironically presented by Eliot as "the wisest woman in Europe " (45), not in the East. She is a fortune teller who employs the symbols of the tarot without really comprehending or revealing their significance. "Fear death by water" (55) she advises, ironically advocating continued existence in the waste land. Her fear of colds and police, stresses the negative nature of Sibyl's reincarnation. She merely identifies cards:

> Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks,
> The lady of situations
> Here is the man with three staves, and here the Wheel.
> (49-51).

The oracular words spoken by Sosotris are misunderstood by the wastelanders. The reader recalls the lines of the third Thames maiden,

> I can connect
> Nothing with nothing (301-2)

which also parody the incantatory, paradoxical diction of Indian metaphysics. Karmically, the state itself, corrupt Rome, will be reincarnated as modern London.

Stetson: Eternal Soldier of Fortune

In the references to Stetson and the Punic Wars:

> Stetson!
> You who were with me in the ships at Mylae! (69-70)

karmic reincarnation is evident. With the Punic Wars, we are presented with an example of materialistic conflict on a social level. Mylae was the scene of the Roman naval victory over their great rivals, the Carthaginians, in the First Punic War (264-241 B.C.), a war that was equivalent in scale, in terms of loss of life and political upheaval, to the First World War and "like World War One, was fought for economic reasons".[1] Even a cursory study of the histories of the Punic Wars reveals similarities to World War One. "Punic" is derived from the Latin word "Poeni" meaning Phoenician. Possibly Eliot associated the Dardanelles with the Punic battles. In The Waste Land ancient wars are reincarnated into modern ones, just as the ancient warrior returns in Stetson. Stetson personifies the individualistic adventurer in the contemporary world, typified in the image of the soldier, gangster and cowboy. The American West itself was a waste land, filled with violence and "an eye for an eye" justice. The praire "dog" is a rat which, along with Joyce's relating of both images in Ulysses, might explain their fusion in The Waste Land. The dog undergoes its own tiny karmic cycles in The Waste Land becoming in Sections Two and Three "a rat" and in Section Four merely an elemental destructive force picking the bones of Phlebas.

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[1] Norton Anthology, p. 1948, FN. 6. Editor's footnote to The Waste Land.

The ancient language of ritual and mystery resurfaces in the modern slang describing the burial or hiding of a body:

> That corpse you planted last year in the garden,
> Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
> (71-2)

The "planting" (a gangster expression) of a body provides a link to waste lands of fertility cults. The sprouting of the bulb recalls the rites for Attis, Adonis, Tammuz and Osirus. The resurrection of the god is linked to karmic cycles of reincarnation in The Waste Land. Stetson's associations with fertility rites and with the Near East link him to such characters as Phlebas and Eugenides.

The warrior Stetson is a wastelander whose existence is based upon violence, revealing the negative cycles of rebirth for individuals and societies whose actions stem from spiritual errors; karma sustains the continually unfolding patterns of reincarnations. Through Stetson we move from the past to the present, and from Mylae to London.

Hieronymo: Mad Againe

Thomas Kyd's play, The Spanish Tragedie or, Hieronimo is Mad Againe, is a bloody drama of revenge. It deals with political intrigue between the Spanish and the Portugese which explodes with the murder of Horatio, the son of Hieronymo, marshal of Spain. Hieronymo conspires to stage a play at a royal party at which the killers are present. The villains

are lured into taking parts in the play and are subsequently killed. Hieronymo bites off his tongue to ensure that he will not betray his confederates, even under torture. He is linked to Philomela through their similar mutilations. Ironically, he loses, while she transcends, human voice. Hieronymo's vow to settle the score, to "fit you" (The Spanish Tragedy 4: 1,67)[1] is quoted in The Waste Land, in the line "Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe" (432). Like the Sibyl and Tiresias, he is both the endurer of the waste land's horrors and the mad, inspired prophet who envisions the fall of the state in spiritual terms:

> Now shall we see the fall of Babylon
> Wrought by the heavens in this confusion.
> (The Spanish Tragedy 4: 2, 195-96)

In Revelation, Babylon is revealed as the whore. Violence and revenge reveal the spiritual degeneration of Hieronymo's society.

The reference to this tragedy concludes a motif of violence "breeding" violence as seen in the poem's references to the Punic war, World War One, the cowboy Stetson, Tereus and others. Revenge is a karmic manifestation sustaining the horror of the waste land.

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[1]Thomas Kyd, The Spanish Tragedy, ed. B. L. Joseph, (London: E. Genn, 1959), p. 67. All refetences to this volume will be internalized.

London: From Dante's "Inferno", via Baudelaire's Paris to The Unreal City

London is the city most completely scrutinized under Eliot's metaphysical examination. I shall limit myself to the city's most sustained and particularized evocations: the London Bridge lines of the "Burial of the Dead" section and the opening Thames lines of the "Fire Sermon". Eliot portrays London as part of māyā.

> Unreal City,
> Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
> A crowd flowed over the London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many.
> Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled (60-4)

Originally the reference was to:

> London, the swarming life you kill and breed,
> Huddled between the concrete and the sky;
> Responsive to the monetary need,
> Vibrates unconscious to its formal destiny.
>
> Knowing neither how to think, nor how to feel,
> But lives only in the awareness (transformations)
> of the observant eye
> London, your people are bound upon the wheel![1]

The wheel represents illusion and rebirth. The 'unreal city' is not only London, but every city time-bound by karma. London is given depth by its link to Dante's "Inferno": "so long a train of people that I scarce could have believed

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[1] The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts Including Annotations of Ezra Pound, ed. V. Eliot (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., University of Oxford Press, 1971), p. 31. Hereafter cited internally as FT.

death had undone so many" ("Inferno" 3: 55-7)[1]. The spectre-like existence of the crowds as described by Baudelaire, Dante and Eliot is apparently universally evident. The fact that the wastelanders exhaled, suggests a loss of "spiritus", and that they are "These wretches, who never were alive" ("Inferno" 3: 64), having "lived without infamy and without praise " ("Inferno" 3: 34). Ironically these poor souls inhabit the 'vestibule', for they are neither in nor out of hell. "These have not the hope of death" ("Inferno" e: 46), recalling the karmic plight of the Sibyl and the "crowds of people walking around in a ring" (56), which Madame Sostris read in the tarot cards.

Baudelaire's Paris is another spiritual waste land which Eliot karmically links to the "Unreal city" (60) of London:

> Fourmillante cité, cité pleine de rêves,
> Où le spectre en plein jour raccroche le passant.[2]
>
> (Swarming city, city full of dreams,
> Where the spectre in broad daylight buttonholes
> the passer-by).

The unreal crowds, whether from Paris, Purgatory or London are the living-dead wastelanders. Eliot closes the first part of the poem with: "You hypocrite lecteur! -- mon semblable, -- mon frère!" (76), another reference to Baudelaire's Les Fleurs

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[1]Alighieri Dante, The Divine Comedy, trans. C.F. Singleton (Princeton, New Jersey: The Princeton University Press, 1970).

[2]Charles Baudelaire, "The Seven Old Men" -- from Les Fleurs du Mal, ed. M. and J. Mathews (New York: New Directions Books, New Direction Publishing Corp., 1955), p. 82.

du Mal. The reader is referred to the prefatory poem where the monstrous menagerie of human sin is described, ending in the ugliest sin of all:

> Boredom! -- his eye full of involuntary tears --
> He dreams of gallows, smoking his pipe.
> You know him, reader, this dainty monster.
> -- Hypocrite reader, -- my double, -- my brother!
> (Préface Les Fleurs du Mal).

"Eliot's prime concern, like Baudelaire's, is with the ugly monster 'Ennui.'"[1] In subsequently excised lines of the original manuscript[2], Eliot shows himself more concerned with the horror or re-enaction and the phenomenon of māyā than was Baudelaire. Eliot saw the ennui "arising from the unsuccessful struggle towards the spiritual life".[3] The karmic perpetuation of the waste lands through time and space is based on man's spiritual paralysis.

Although Baudelaire's concerns were primarily Christian ones: "Sin and redemption",[4] Eliot easternizes Baudelaire's vision to encompass the karmic horror of unchanging patterns. London is every corrupt city negatively reincarnated through

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[1] W.T. Moynihan, "Burial of the Dead", ed. J. Martin, in A Collection of Critical Essays on The Waste Land (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1968), p. 29.

[2] c.f. above page 59 of this thesis.

[3] T.S. Eliot, "Baudelaire" (1930) Selected Prose ed. J. Hayward (London: Penguin Books, Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 178.

[4] Ibid., p. 181.

time and space. This is evident through references in The Waste Land to: the crowds over London Bridge, the pub, the Thames, the London apartment and London as the final city in the vision of crumbling civilization:

> Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
> Vienna London
> Unreal. (375-7)

London is the profane place, as contrasted to the sacred places such as the Ganges in metaphysical rites of India. As part of māyā, London is a metaphysically unreal city: "A well known prayer in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad begs the Lord to lead the devotee from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to light, from death to Immortality".[1]

The Thames: The Heart of Darkness

In "The Fire Sermon" section, Eliot takes us to the Thames where we find a fusion of powerful images implying sex and death, and providing a karmic link between lust and suffering:

> 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. (173-5)

The phrase "The river's tent is broken" suggests sexual penetration, the broken maidenhead, the consequences of which are negatively reinforced in The Waste Land by all of the allusions and references to sexual victims of seduction and rape such as Philomela . The drowning leaf relates to all the drowned gods

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[1]The Upanishads, Introduction by Swami Nikhilanada, p. 40.

of fertility cults and recalls the phrase in "Mr. Apollinax": "Dropping from fingers of surf " (CPP p. 18). The brown land, like the brown fog, symbolizes sterility. The lack of spiritual awareness is symbolized by the wind (spiritus), which is unheard by the inhabitants of the waste land. We recall "The wind under the door " (118), which seemed to irritate the neurasthenic lady.

In the original manuscript, The Waste Land is introduced by a quote from Conrad's The Heart of Darkness:

> Did he live his life again in every detail of desire, temptation, and surrender during that supreme moment of complete knowledge? He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision, -- he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath -- "The horror! the horror! (FT p. 3)

Life lived "again" is the karmic horror of rebirth, fear of the repetition of life cycles caused by "Desire, temptation, and surrender". Also, there is a frequently expressed belief that before you die, your whole life flashes before your eyes. The "cry" and "a breath" signify physical rebirth. The metaphysical "vision" recalls Christ, Tiresias, and all the prophets in The Waste Land. Another link exists between the barges drifting with the turning tide in the Thames, and the Nellie drifting with the turning tide at the beginning and the end of Heart of Darkness, where the boat image suggests a cyclical movement, with spiritual paralysis at its center. The contrast is to the phrase "The boat responded" (419) which suggests control. The image emphasizes the wheel of

samsara, the reincarnation of events, people and objects, since Conrad's narrative began on the Thames. Another link to the Heart of Darkness, is to be found in the phrase "heart of light" (41), a transcendent contrasting phrase to the book's title and source line: "The brown current ran swiftly out of the heart of darkness".[1] Kurtz is described as "hollow at the core" (HD, p. 83), and the reader is presented with a metaphysical sense of his "impenetrable darkness" (HD, p. 99). Eliot stresses the view of Kurtz as an eastern quester for light/vision, having "suffered too much" (HD, p. 81). The "brown" current is linked to the metaphysical darkness in The Waste Land with its "brown fog" (61) and "brown land" (175). Eliot continually stresses eastern concepts and symbols in his allusions to western works. Marlow, "in the pose of a meditating Buddha" (HD, p. 111), is linked to Amalthea's "handful of dust". In Conrad's "Youth", "Old Marlow comments cycnically, but wistfully, on his initiation into seamanship ... 'the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust'".[2]

The Hollow Men (1925) is a poem partially composed of fragments from The Waste Land. The epigraph to that poem also is an allusion to Heart of Darkness. The line: "Mistah Kurtz - he dead" (CPP, p. 56) is significant in that the context involves a primitive culture where an afterlife is believed in.

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[1]Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness (Great Britain: Cox and Wyman Ltd., Penguin Modern Classics, 1979), p. 97. All subsequent references to this text will be internalized as HD.

[2]Franklin, p. 278.

The notion of Kurtz as unsuccessful quester leads directly to Phlebas.

Phlebas: Death by Water

Phlebas symbolizes the unsuccessful quester in The Waste Land. "The theme of drowning is a very important one in The Waste Land, where the destructive power of the sea is sardonically juxtaposed with the life-giving power of rain."[1] The negativity of Phlebas' death is evident in the fact that "he rose and fell" (316). The "current" picking his bones is linked to to Eugenides' "currants". Phlebas, "Entering the whirlpool" (318) recalls Lichas in the Satyricon:

> But even as he shouted the wind blew him into the water, a squall whirled him round and round repeatedly in a fierce whirlpool, and sucked him down.[2]

The whirlpool is linked to the wheel of rebirth. In the line, "He passed the stages of his age and youth" (317), Eliot links Phlebas to the Conrad epigraph. Phlebas' spiritual destruction is ensured because of his interest in material "losses" rather than in self-loss. The "current" picking his bones is a sharp contrast to Alonzo's transformation and recalls the brown current of Heart of Darkness. There is also a link to Aeneas' journey to the underworld where the Sibyl of Cumae had predicted the drowning death of Misenus. The key significance

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[1]F.N. Lees, "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Satura: Petronius and 'The Waste Land,'" Sewanee Review Special Issue LXXIV (Jan.-March 1966) : 340.

[2]Ibid., quoting the Satyricon, p. 341.

here is prophecy unheeded. Madame Sosostris had warned: "Fear death by water" (55). Phlebas drowns, senses and all, in s sea of samsara, having forgotten "the cry of the gulls" (313). In The Waste Land (as in the Upanishads) birds are linked to prophecy and reincarnation,[1] through references to Philomela, the 'hermit-thrush' and the Sibyl in her cage. No positive, spiritually transforming death, like Alonzo's, awaits Phlebas, who is karmically linked to Stetson and other descendants of materialistic Phoenicians trapped on the wheel of reincarnation. One of these is "Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant" (209) whose name ironically suggests euegenics, the scientific improvement of the species, though he represents cycles of negative rebirth.

Eastern Europe

With the phrase "mudcracked houses" (345), Eliot takes us to eastern Europe. This is reinforced by his allusion to Hesse's Blick ins Chaos (fn. 376-7): "der halbe Osten Europas auf dem Wege zum Chaos" ("one half of eastern Europe on its way to chaos"). Evidently the karmic horror is universal. According to Rao,

> The decay of Europe and the fall of towers and cities denote the annihilation of a false civilization and the ideals guiding it, the total decay of the hollow life leading to the birth of a genuine one. It is the 'decline' associated in Spengler's view with the exhaustion of all vital energy of culture, the type of 'drunken

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[1] In early civilizations like Egypt and Rome, the flight of birds and the state of their internal organs served as auguries.

> march and chaos' of progress, at which, in the words of Herman Hesse, the outraged burgher laughs scornfully, the saint and seer hears with tears.[1]

Oswald Spengler, a philosopher of history, wrote The Decline of the West 1918-1922 which reflected the post World War One pessimism. Spengler maintained that civilizations follow recurring historical patterns of birth, growth and decay. He predicted the fall of the state as do the Sibyl, Hieronymo, Philomela and others. Both Hesse and Spengler reflect a view of cultural decline when social institutions degenerate; that society ceases its progress and seeks a totalitarian solution. "Caesarism" is Spengler's term for this final stage of social collapse when vital progress (artistic, social, religious) ends. Karmic patterns are seen in historical terms. The lines

> Falling towers
> Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
> Vienna London
> Unreal (374-7)

are rich with historical allusions. The "Falling towers" suggest social destruction (recalling Babylon and Troy). The cities of man are "Unreal", part of the illusion (māyā) which sustains karma on personal and social levels. The lines support Spengler's view of the inevitable decline of civilization: "Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air" (373). The

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[1] Rao, p. 53.

violet , associated with Caesar's purple, partly explains Eliot's use of the word. As well, the "violet" is associated with fertility rites and the karmic theme of rebirth. The "maternal lamentation" (368) suggests the mourners of Tammuz and also various fertility rites at the moment of social and spiritual desolation. The lines:

> Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth
> Ringed by the flat horizon only (370-1)

describe not only the physical setting but the spiritual one as well. The words "endless" and "Ringed" suggest Dante's circles, crowds walking in a ring and the wheel of karma.

Although the movement in The Waste Land is eastward, eastern Europe is presented as another historical and spiritual waste land deaf to prophetic warnings of disaster. Eliot apparently shared the views of the historical inevitability of social degeneration, negative karmic patterns. Eliot invariably chooses the most eastern concepts and views even from such westerners as Hesse and Spengler.

India

At the end of The Waste Land, the poem takes us to India, the source of western Grail quests, fertility cults and language, with the lines "Ganga was sunken and the limp leaves/Waited for rain" (396-7). This is the critical moment of the quest and of fertility rites in a waste land where life is at its minimum. The level of the Ganges, like that of the Nile, determines life and death cycles of nature. In ancient India, the level was

divined by tarot readings. It is in the sacred language of Sanskrit that Eliot refers to the holy Ganges (whose waters are reputed to wash away sins) as an impotent or dying god. The waste land of India, awaiting physical and spiritual quenching, is at once closer than the West, to both death and rebirth.

The sexual imagery related to fertility rites climaxes in the image of the "decayed hole" (386) which suggests that the life sources are sexually threatening to the protagonist. The "decayed hole" may also be an ironic allusion to the fragmentation of māyā, and the Brahmanistic search for the "whole". The sense of sexual forces to be faced by the initiate is sustained by the image of the "cock" (392) and the line: "The jungle, crouched, humped in silence" (399). The symbols of the "tumbled graves" (388) and the "empty chapel" (389), the western counterparts to the eastern "decayed hole", present a fusion of various fragments to suggest the universality of the metaphysical initiation to be undertaken by the protagonist/quester.

Tiresias: The Seer/Quester

Tiresias is the key figure in The Waste Land who, like Encolpius in the Satyricon, is the impotent, lustful quester on the karmic wheel of rebirth. There are three main stories dealing with Tiresias alluded to in the poem. The first concerns his rebirth and sexual transformation:

throbbing between two lives,
Old man with wrinkled female breasts.
(217-18)

The verb "throbbing" suggests not merely life, but "desire" which has led to karmic rebirth. Tiresias, like Amalthea, is trapped between the hope of change and the karmic fear of changelessness. In Ovid's Metamorphoses, Tiresias was transformed: "from a man he was changed into a woman, and in that form spent seven years".[1] In the East this would be interpreted as negative karmic rebirth. Tiresias, though blind, possesses the true inner sight of the prophet or oracle. He gained this vision from Jove so it suggests divine inspiration. Jove "soothed his sufferings with a prophet's fame" (Metamorphoses 3: 322). Thus, Tiresias, a Greek western culture figure associated with prophecy and blindness is, in The Waste Land, easternized and associated with karma and the quest. He symbolizes the karmic axiom that desire leads to rebirth.

The second story concerning Tiresias occurs in Oedipus Rex where he stood "by Thebes below the wall" (245), knowing the source of the plague and saying nothing. In The Waste Land, unlike Oedipus Rex, Tiresias knows the source of the plague to be within his own condition: the inability to

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[1]Publius Ovidius Naso, Metamorphoses, trans., F.J. Miller (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 322. All subsequent refernces to Ovid will be to this volume and will be internalized.

overcome the karma of successively destructive cycles. His knowledge, presented as inner knowledge of spiritual desire, is also easternized.

The third story refers to The Odyssey, where "he walked among the lowest of the dead " (246). Odysseus descended into Hades to learn from the ghost of the seer Tiresias how he could reach home. According to Eliot, "Even in the lower world he was believed to retain the powers of perception", so he is able to transcend not only time and space but the spiritual and physical worlds as well. The ability to internalize and to transcend "space and time are the preliminary footholds of the transcendental world".[1] As Eliot himself further stated in a footnote to line 218:

> Just as the one-eyed merchant, seller of currants, melts into the Phoenician Sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman, and the sexes meet in Tiresias. What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem.

He is also the figure given the greatest epic quality of movement in The Waste Land, from Hades to Thebes and then to modern London:

> Tiresias's quasi-immortality lends his observations historical perspective. His acquaintance with the dead, the fact that his 'powers of 'perception' and imagination are one (he is blind),

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[1] Ishak, pp. 19-20.

> and his role of 'spectator', all make it easy for us to believe that 'what Tiresias sees' is what the mind of the poet sees. Tiresias is important because his mind is a miniature of the consciousness which is the subject of whole poem.[1]

Tiresias personifies the problem of the ego, the "I" which he repeatedly cites as well as the ability to overcome this psychological and spiritual limitation. Tiresias' most apparent 'handicap', his blindness, is paradoxically linked to vision. Paradox itself is a common theme of eastern metaphysics.

Ironically, he is the prophet who, with hindsight: "Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest" (229). His diction seems to suggest the purgatorial refining of a Buddha or Christ:

> And I Tiresias have foresuffered all
> Enacted on this same divan or bed (243-44).

In karmic terms, the bed, as a location of sexual relations, procreation, dreams and death signifies the recurring cycles of memories, desires and rebirths. Tiresias has the opportunity to see the greater implications of our lust, the historical gamut of sexual experiences from Oedipus and Jocasta, to the typist and her mate. Tiresias, as a visionary and as a fusion of male and female, is better able to understand the nature of desire.

Tiresias is "Everyman", for he represents the karmic procession of egos questing for sexual and spiritual harmony:

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[1] Wilks, p. 59.

"For the soul there is never birth nor death" (Gītā, p. 98); it is eternal. The continuous stream of existences is the way the soul is refined, paralleling the purgatorial flames of purification: "Ultimately every unit of life will reach Enlightenment",[1] as enough incarnations and experiences are garnered by each soul on its voyage to perfection. As seer, Tiresias is easternized in The Waste Land and corresponds to the drasta in the Upanishads as well as to the priest or guru of cults and quests. Tiresias, who died after predicting the fall of Athens, is linked to all the prophetic voices and the questers of The Waste Land. The prophet's blindness suggests the eastern linking both of sexual desire with a metaphysical obscuring of vision, and of metaphysical clearing of vision with release from sexual desire.

Personal Waste Lands

Eliot called The Waste Land "the relief of a personal ... grouse against life" (FT, p. 1). D.E.S. Maxwell agrees that "The Waste Land in its peculiar and marvellous way, is a personal poem".[2] As such, it is an expression of a personal sexual and spiritual waste land.

Eliot married Vivienne Haigh-Wood in 1915. The "poet's

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[1]Christmas Humphreys, Exploring Buddhism, (Illinois and London: A Quest Book, The Theosophical Publishing House, 1974), p. 52.

[2]D.E.S. Maxwell, "He do the Police in Different Voices," Mosaic VI, no. 1 (Fall 1972) : 180.

marriage was a sexual failure".[1] Vivienne was viewed by Eliot's friends and acquaintances as being promiscuous, vulgar, neurotic and "mad as a hare".[2] According to Virginia Woolf Vivienne accused Eliot of having affairs and being a snob. Virginia Woolf wrote: "He is clearly getting into a bad state of health",[3] and that he mentioned "his wife's constant illness."[4] As their health deteriorated, Eliot faced a psychological crisis, which he termed "an aboulie"[5] or lack of will. "In a state of near nervous collapse in late 1921, Eliot went to Margate with Vivienne and then alone to see a psychiatrist"[6] at Lausanne: "By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept" (182), where he finished The Waste Land over a six week period.

Evidently the institution of marriage had lost its sacred nature for Eliot personally, becoming increasingly profane and less a viable alternative. The theme of the sexual wound or impotence and the corresponding "fear of sex"[7] in The Waste Land suggest

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[1]Miller, p. 27.

[2]Virginia Woolf, The Letters of Virginia Woolf, ed. N. Nicolson, vol. 3, A Change of Perspective (1923-28) (London: The Hogarth Press, 1977), p. 508.

[3]Ibid., p. 12.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Eliot's letter to Richard Aldington 1921, quoted by Miller, p. 24.

[6]Miller, p. 23.

[7]Smidt, "Six Chapters", p. 116.

that sexual and marital problems were part of Eliot's pysch-ological crisis. The no-win choices regarding procreation in a profane marriage evident in the words unexpectedly hurled at Lil "What you get married for if you don't want children?" (164), seem surely to spring from some personal anguish or guilt. According to Miller there is a note of realism in the nerves passage of "'A Game of Chess' which both Vivienne Eliot and Ezra Pound seem to have recognized".[1]

In the original facsimile, in the section "The Death of the Duchess", we find the line: "But it is terrible to be alone with another person" (FT, p. 107). This line perhaps indicates the heart of the poet's personal waste land, his degenerating relationship with Vivienne. Its suppression in The Waste Land removes the reader from the western problem of non-communication and takes him more to the eastern concerns: problems of fear and lust. The need is created in the male for solitude, in order to avoid the erotic. According to eastern metaphysics, a psychological crisis, the kind of "physical and spiritual exhaustion Eliot himself suffered at about that time",[2] can precipitate a psychological journey and subsequently, a spiritual quest. Eliot and Vivienne separated provisionally in 1932, and permanently in 1933.

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[1]Miller, p. 23.

[2]Edwin Honig, quoted by Rao, p. 7.

Eliot's sexual and marital problems help to explain his choice of ascetic tantrism as the major solution to escape karma. Elizabeth Schneider points to "the main theme of salvation for the waste land of the world through change in the individual "[1]. As in the East, the quest is personal and something negative can lead to something positive. The references to a personal waste land (Switzerland), failure in marriage and neurotic or mad women betrayed by male partners, almost disappear in Part Three of the poem and do so completely in Parts Four and Five.

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[1]Schneider, p. 67.

CHAPTER TWO: TANTRIC TRANSCENDENCE

Tantrism: An Introduction to its Function in The Waste Land

Tantrism is a metaphysical doctrine based on actions which lead one to enlightenment. The term "tantra" in Sanskrit signifies a loom or warp. The root word "tan" means to stretch, expand or unfold. There are two metaphysical schools composing tantrism. The major one is the right-hand school, Vedic, which is based on an ascetic approach to the problems of sexuality. The minor left-hand school, Maithuna, is based on a ritualistic use of sexuality, averting the problem of procreation by strict training of initiates to avoid ejaculation.

The two schools are essentially the same. The key to both the sexual and the ascetic schools of tantrism is "control", and the resulting freedom of the soul from the prison of karma and from the illusions which are our desires. Thus denial or acceptance of the erotic can both lead to the same goal, overcoming desires. In The Waste Land, there are references to both schools, although asceticism constitutes the major advice given by men and gods to the poet, protagonist and reader. While karma is the problem to be overcome, tantrism unfolds solutions for man to transcend

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[1] Immortality and Freedom, p. 200.

[2] Herbert V. Guenther, Buddhist Philosophy in Theory and Practice (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books Inc., 1971), pp. 156-57.

the sexual problems which are connected with spiritual ones. The aim of both schools "is transcendental experience"[1] accomplished by the willing self-sacrifice of the ego. Tantrism helps to explain both the sexual and the ascetic references in The Waste Land primarily through links to fertility rites, Grail quests and their sources in eastern metaphysics.

Sexual Transcendence: Maithuna Tantrism

Fertility Cults as Quest

The poem begins in April, the traditional time of rebirth, of rain and of the revival of the vegetation cycles. It is also the time when Christ was resurrected. April breeds "Lilacs out of the dead land" (2) and the rebirth of the vegetation here is linked to the fertility cults. Specifically, the flowers associated with Attis and Adonis sprang up where their drops of blood fell to the ground, indicating rebirth. Similarly, the reference to the Hyacinths recalls the god of the same name, and the flowers which also were reputed to have sprung from his blood. In The Waste Land the quest for renewed life sources is the Maithunic path. The major link in The Waste Land to tantric rites of sexual intercourse is found through Eliot's references to fertility cults. F.O. Matthiessen has examined Eliot's use of Weston's From Ritual to Romance:

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[1]Scharfstein, p. 23.

> What he learned especially from it was the recurring pattern in various myths, the basic resemblance, for example, between the vegetation myths of the rebirth of the year, fertility myths of the rebirth of the potency of man, the Christian story of Resurrection, and the Grail legend of purification. The common source of all these myths lay in the fundamental rhythm of nature, that of the death and rebirth of the year; and their varying symbolism was an effort to explain the origin of life. Such knowledge, along with the researches of psychology, pointed to the fact that their symbolism was basically sexual - in the Cup and Lance of the Grail legend as well as in the Orpheus cults: pointed in brief, to the fundamental relationship between the well-springs of sex and religion.[1]

As Jessie Weston put it, there is "a double initiation, the Lower, into the mysteries of generation, i.e. of Physical Life; the Higher, into the Spiritual Divine Life, where man is made one with God " (Weston, p. 182).

The fertility basis of these rites descended from early "animal worship, phallism, the cult of trees, and of water ".[2] The roots of Maithuna tantrism can be traced to "orgiastic sexual union to the end... of procuring universal fecundity (rain, harvests, flocks, children etc.)"[3] Sexual union is employed in order to achieve a union of opposites: "Sexual union is transformed into a ritual through which the human couple becomes the divine couple ".[4] Eliot wrote in The

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[1] F.O. Matthiessen, The Achievement of T.S. Eliot: An Essay on the Nature of Poetry, (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 36.

[2] Immortality and Freedom, p. 354.

[3] Ibid., p. 254.

[4] Ibid., p. 260.

Criterion, 1931, that "the love of two human beings is only made perfect in the love of God",[1] an exquisite summary of the goals of Maithuna Tantrism. Many elements from Maithuna rites are to be found in The Waste Land such as holy places, priests, fire, water, hymns and sacrifice. The heart "is the locality of the initiatory rite "[2] and the tantric sexual act itself "is to be regarded as a sacrifice"[3] of the ego.

It must be remembered that it is not the senses being satisfied which constitutes the spiritual danger, but the frustration of desire, which of course can grow, if unsatisfied or repressed, until it becomes an obsession which one attempts to satisfy only in the flesh over countless incarnations. Maithuna tantrism is most frequently symbolized by the god Shiva who overcomes dualism in the sacred dance of life and death:

> Shiva is the dancer who dances the universe in harmony or in destructive violence. He is the lover enlaced with his goddess in an eternal act of love. He is the god of the third, fiery eye that projects felicity and consumes duality. He is the ascetic who burns the god of carnal love to ashes.[4]

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[1]Eliot, quoted by Dwivedi, p. 130.

[2]Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, p. 307.

[3]The Upanishads, p.251.

[4]Scharfstein, p. 21.

The myths underlying the fertility cults have a definite eastern background. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad describes the "doctrine of the Five Fires"[1] concerning the five stages of rebirth. In summary, the stages include cremation of the dead body, ascension of soul to the "Plane of the Moon" to receive rewards for correct action and the fall of the soul into clouds, descending with the rainwater which enters cereals and plants. These cereals are eaten by man where they are transformed into semen which is deposited in the womb where it will lead to rebirth of the soul.

People assemble for fertility activities (planting, feasts, music and intercourse) near holy or profane places presented in a number of passages in The Waste Land. In Part One of The Waste Land the positive associations of the Hyacinth garden with fertility cults are offset by refercces to the Starnbergersee, the Hofgarten, the mountains where Marie escapes, the stony valley, the "Unreal City" and Stetson's garden. The sacred bodies of water associated with fertility rituals have become desolate. The Thames is polluted, the canal dull and the plain arid. The sea itself is "Oed' und leer" (42), empty and desolate. The apartment, the Thames, the bar, the divan and the canoe are places of unholy sexual activities in The Waste Land. It is in Part Five, however, of The Waste Land where the majority of

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[1]The Upanishads, p. 368.

examples of holy places associated with fertility cults are to be found. The Garden of Gethsemane and the images of the sandy road, the chapel and the rock-strewn mountain are holy places, "But there is no water " (359), or spiritual sustenance. Significantly, the quester himself chooses a place most removed from the institutional, a "decayed hole" (386) in the mountains, at dawn. This image, which is both sexual and spiritual, represents the hole of death, the hole of karmic rebirth and the "whole" of tantric rebirth.

In the Satyricon, Encolpius' impotence is finally cured. Mercury, "the god who guides our unborn souls to the light and leads the dead to hell, has taken pity on me" (Satyricon 179). The Lance and Grail, as symbols of male and female sex organs, suggest that an ironic answer to the problem of sexual impotence is the act of spiritual and psychological surrender. The hope is held out to the protagonist of The Waste Land, that he too may overcome the impotence caused by karmic memories and desires. The sacrifice of the ego implied in suffering, and in giving, is embraced by Eliot in The Waste Land. The sexual approach entails the danger that self-consciousness and lust, overcoming the sacred and spiritual purposes of sex, will lead to karmic cycles of rebirth. The danger of procreation in the sexual approach to desires is evident, as mentioned earlier in the Thames and Lil lines, through references to birth control and abortions, As in the East, the ascetic path appears to be a safer, preferred solution.

Ascetic Transcendence: Vedic Tantrism

Grail Quests Fulfilled

In The Waste Land, the quest for the Holy Grail is the path of ascetic (Vedic) transcendence. The initiate/quester discovers that it is by means of purifying ritual and test that wisdom is unfolded and vision attained. The Grail quest is traced by Jessie Weston to the legends of the Rig-Veda:

> The quester, a knight of surpassing purity, must undergo a ritual quest which always involves a series of temptations and terrifying trials culminating in a nightmarish ordeal at the Perilous Chapel to which he must finally repair in order to ask specific questions. If he asks these properly, the healing waters flow and both the King and the Waste Land are restored.[1]

The quester-hero most closely associated with successfully completing the Grail quest is Parsifal (var. Parzival). In Wolfrom Von Eschenbach's version, Parzival goes to the Grail castle where the king, Amfortas, can only be cured by an innocent. At first Parzival is more concerned with etiquette, the social path, than with compassion, the subjective path. It is only after he meets a hermit and acquires humility that he is able to progress spiritually, ask the correct questions and thus to cure Amfortas, who is revealed to be the Grail king. The quest is a metaphysical "questioning". The words are etymologically linked.

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[1] Bolgan, p. 27.

by the lines,

> We think of the key, each in his prison
> Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison. (414-5)

According to the Bradley quote in the footnotes to these lines, this prison is "regarded as an existence which appears in a soul; the whole world for each is peculiar and private to that soul ".
Eliot links eastern and western spiritual and psychological images by fusing references to Bradley and to Indian metaphysics. The "keys" are also a name for the tarot cards which are linked to prophecy and eastern quests and mystic rites.

In the lines:

> Damyata: The boat responded
> Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar
> The sea was calm, your heart would have responded
> Gaily, when invited, beating obedient
> To controlling hands, (419-23)

'Damyata' or 'control' is linked to the poem through the boat, sea and heart symbols, all three being sexual and spiritual images of tantrism: "As a boat on the water is swept away by a strong wind, every one of the senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence" (Gītā, p. 153). Ascetic self-control is presented as the primary spiritual and psychological solution in The Waste Land. Deussen quotes the Maitrayana Upanishad: "without being an ascetic it is impossible either to attain the knowledge of Ātman or to bring work to fruition".[1] The Ātman is the true eternal "self" which neither is born nor dies; it is the seer or spectator, the soul rather than the ego. "If the voice of God in the thunder is obeyed it means a breaking out of isolation

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[1] Deussen, p. 70.

which prevents a fruitful intercourse, and the consummation of a final union"[1] between man and god.

Buddha is the most powerful example of transcendence in The Waste Land.

> The title of Part Three, 'The Fire Sermon', is borrowed from the famous sermon delivered by Lord Buddha to the assembled priests on the sufferings of human beings arising from the reckless pursuit of passions and sensuality.[2]

In his Fire Sermon, Buddha states:

> Everything, O Jatilas, is burning. The eye is burning, all the senses are burning, thoughts are burning. They are burning with the fire of lust. There is anger, there is ignorance, there is hatred, and as long as the fire finds inflammable things upon which it can feed, so long will it burn, and there will be birth and death, decay, grief, lamentation, suffering, despair, and sorrow.[3]

The link to the poem is found in the line "Burning, burning, burning, burning." (308). The purgatorial flames of suffering link Buddha to St. Augustine and Dante. The burning soul is the self-centered ego, filled with lust and fear. The allusion to "The Fire Sermon" consitutes a climactic fusion of sexual and spiritual forces, and a turning point in the quest of the protagonist who is shown "a Way, from suffering to the end of suffering",[4] and the possibility of attaining "liberation from illusion".[5]

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[1] Smidt, Poetry and Belief, p. 188.

[2] Dwivedi, p. 43.

[3] The Gospel of Buddha, comp. by P. Carus, (Chicago and London: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1915), p. 64.

[4] Humphreys, p. 50.

[5] Ibid., p. 52.

The initiate must:

> become wary of his eye, wary of all his senses, wary of his thoughts. He will divest himself of passions and become free. He will be delivered from selfishness and attain the blessed state of Nirvana.[1]

Correct vision is metaphysically essential. Illusions lead to rebirth. Buddha himself had been tempted by lust and fear. He shows that consciousness comes with the discovery of the divine within oneself. Through Buddha's suggested "withdrawal of the senses",[2] particularly in relation to sexual desire, one can attain the "peace born of detachment",[3] or renunciation:

> Nirvana, whether called Awakening or Enlightenment can never be fully described. It is the end of illusion; reality seen face to face. All sense of a separate self is here transcended, and personal desire in any form is dead.[4]

Dwivedi points out that linguistically, "Buddha" signifies one "who is awake and who awakens a new life form in others, a life of light or knowledge".[5] Each soul is on a spiritual voyage through the flames of memories and desires, making the spiritual battle an inward one: "And victory over self - the greatest of all victories, and the key to peace and joy in this life and beyond - will be won".[6] The "Fire Sermon of

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[1]Buddha, comp. by Carus, p.64.

[2]Frits Staal, Exploring Mysticism (London: Penguin Books, Cox and Wyman Limited, 1975), p. 64.

[3]Mircea Eliade, Patanjali and Yoga (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), p. 163.

[4]Humphreys, p. 52.

[5]Dwivedi, p. 49.

[6]Buddha, quoted by J.E. Miller Jr., p. 87.

Buddha had an immediate effect: "Now while the exposition was being delivered, the minds of the thousand priests became free from the depravities".[1] As Buddha himself stated: "This is my last existence; now there is no re-birth".[2] For him, the round of incarnations was overcome and his soul found freedom through ascetic renunciation. Buddha's transcendence, that of a man rather than a god such as Christ, sets a greater example of potential transcendence for all.

Asceticism is the crucial link in The Waste Land between Christ, St. Augustine, Buddha and eastern metaphysical texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads and Bhagavad-gītā. Indra's release of the rivers was accomplished by the backbone of an ascetic "which, because of his asceticism, has the strength of a club of diamonds".[3] In order "To be free from the wheel of birth, death and rebirth, according to the Buddha, one must follow the path of asceticism which leads to Nirvana".[4] The Buddhist attitude to sex is invariably negative. At best sex is viewed as a necessary evil to be endured until overcome.

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[1]Edwin A. Burtt, ed., Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha (New York and Ontario: New American Library, 1955), p. 133.

[2]Ibid., p. 31.

[3]Dwivedi, p. 37.

[4]Ibid., p. 45.

Eliot naturally turned to eastern models to embody the ambivalent symbols of the spiritual quest. As in eastern metaphysics, many "negative" images take on a positive quality in The Waste Land. The burning fire of purification also symbolizes the purification of the soul overcoming desires; fragmented prophecy still contains truths and the empty chapel shows that it is institutionalized religion only which is depleted. The unheard wind itself is transformed into the "damp gust". Buddha himself is linked to the Fisher King; Buddha is known as the fisherman: "With the help of the boat of all-knowledge I must rescue all these beings from the stream of samsara".[1] The link to The Waste Land is found in the word "Fishing" (425) and in the boat image of the "Control" lines.

Literary Transcendence

Dante, Shakespeare and Ovid: Transcendent Metamorphosis

In The Waste Land Eliot alludes repeatedly to key western literary works that provide examples of transcendence. Dante presents a powerful source not only for experiences and images of the karmic condition but also for images and themes of transcendence. In the section dealing with the Hyacinth girl, when the speaker is unable to respond, he

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[1] Buddha, ed. Burtt, p. 15.

is left "Looking into the heart of light, the silence" (41). The phrase "heart of light" suggests both the anthropomorphic as well as the transcendental elements, for light, since it is absolutely necessary for sight, is the quintessential symbol of transcendent vision in both the East and the West. The lover of the Hyacinth girl "reacts as Dante does to Beatrice's appearance as Revelation, an appearance compact of memories of earthly love. Dante too is deprived of sight".[1] This "condition of eyes . . . just smitten by the sun . . . made me remain a while without vision" (Purgatory 32: 1-12). Beatrice is metamorphosed into revelation through transcendent images of the poet's own metamorphosis.

While Part I of The Waste Land seems to parallel Dante's Inferno, Part III, though more intense in its pain, seems in its urgency ["O city city" (259) and "O Lord" (309)] to pray for purification and to entertain a longing for the purgatorial condition which is refining through suffering. In Part V, the two people, Virgil and Dante, encountering the third, suggests that the protagonist in his growing awareness of the nature of his suffering, is beginning to take on the purgatorial condition.

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[1] Ronald Tamplin, "The Tempest and The Waste Land", American Literature 39 (April 1967): 356.

The allusion to "Purgatory","Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina" (Purgatory" 26: 148) -- "Then he hid himself in the fire which refines them" (428) -- refers to Dante's journey through purgatory where he meets a group of souls who, while on earth, had failed to restrain their carnal appetites. Among them is the troubadour Arnaut Daniel, who tells of his condition, and implores Dante's prayers:

> I am Arnaud who weeps and goes a-singing; in thought I see my past madness, and I see with joy the day which I await before me. Now I pray you, by that Goodness which guideth you to the summit of the stairway, be mindful of my pain. Then he hid himself in the fire which refines them. ("Purgatory" 26: 141-8)

The concepts of hell and purgatory, and the differences between the two, fascinated Eliot. About the Arnaut Daniel Canto, he wrote:

> In this canto the lustful are purged in flame, yet we see how clearly the flame of purgatory differs from that of hell. In hell, the torment issues from the very nature of the damned themselves. . . . In purgatory the torment of the flame is deliberately and consciously accepted by the penitent.[1]

The fire of lust has become the fire of accepted suffering. This acceptance, rather than a Grail received from a god, symbolizes spiritual progress. The movement from Dantean

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[1] Eliot, "Dante," (1950) in Selected Essays, p. 255.

inferno to purgatory in The Waste Land exemplifies literary transcendence. Eliot chose those purgatorial allusions which were closest to the Buddhist concept of karma as suffering and refinement. The Dante and Buddha references easily blend into each other: "The refining flames cleanse the soul and melt the dross of impurity. Dante also recounts 'I saw spirits going through the flames' careful never to step outside them. In this 'refining', venial sins are gradually removed",[1] or as Eliot put it: "The souls in purgatory suffer because they wish to suffer. . . . In their suffering is hope".[2] The word 'refines' is an aesthetic as well as a moral and physical term. Especially important to the poet is the potential transmutation of sacrifice and suffering into art.

Eliot alludes to The Tempest to provide further examples of transcendence. The Tempest is perhaps Shakespeare's most eastern and most transcendental play, with such themes as illusion, transformation, restoration, repentance, renunciation, reconciliation and magic. Prospero is a magician whose kingdom was usurped. He and his daughter, Miranda, had been set afloat on a worthless ship in which they landed on an island. Prospero's magic causes the shipwreck which brings the usurper

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[1] Ishak, p. 20.

[2] Eliot, "Dante," in Selected Essays, p. 256.

(Prospero's half-brother Antonio), who is now duke of Milan and another enemy, Alonzo, king of Naples. Ariel is a spirit being who employs magic on Prospero's behalf. His music casts a spell on various characters. The line: "Those are pearls that were his eyes" (125) is a quote from Ariel's song:

> Full fathom five thy father lies;
> Of his bones are coral made;
> Those are pearls that were his eyes:
> Nothing of him that doth fade,
> But doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange. (The Tempest 1: 2)

The song is sung to Ferdinand, Alonzo's son, who believes his father to be dead, and describes the changes following Alonzo's supposed death. The "death by water" links Alonzo to all the fertility gods and effigies who were part of the cycle of drowning and spiritual rebirth. Here we find no Phlebas sinking, but an enriching experience of metamorphosis, where bone is transformed into coral and eyes into pearls, symbolizing a spiritual as well as an aesthetically painful transcendent vision. Metamorphosis is a pattern of descent, a renouncing of or withdrawal from "human" identity: Dante descends into Inferno, Philomela is changed into a bird and Alonzo into a corpse.

The word "suffer" suggests the acceptance of purifying pain, a tantric process. The achievement of transformation by a corpse suggests the degree of ego-submission which must precede metamorphosis.

There is further reference to The Tempest in the line: "This music crept by me upon the waters" (257), which refers to Ferdinand's lines:

> Sitting on a bank
> Weeping again the king my father's wreck,
> This music crept by me upon the waters;
> Allaying both their fury, and my passion,
> With its sweet air. (The Tempest 1: 2)

The music suggests harmony sought by poet and protagonist. The love between Ferdinand and Miranda, the repentance on the part of Alonzo who is restored to his son and the reconciliation between Prospero and the king's party are all transcendent elements. Eliot, having chosen in The Tempest, a play with strong mystical elements, focuses upon the most eastern metaphysical element, transformation or metamorphosis.

Eliot employs allusions to Ovid's Metamorphoses in much the same way he does to The Tempest. Philomela is a major Ovidian symbol in The Waste Land of the transmutation of suffering, through art, into "something rich and strange". A victim of lust and violence, Philomela is changed into a nightingale:

> . . . the nightingale
> Filled all the desert with inviolable voice (100-1).

Although many are incapable, as they are with other prophetic sources of hearing the true message of the nightingale, her voice is "inviolable". She can never be violated again and although she has lost her tongue, she has gained eternal voice. Ovid achieves transcendent metamorphosis through art. Eliot's quote from "Pervigilium Veneris", an anonymous Latin poem, "Quando fiam uti chelidon" (429) is a cry by the poet, ("When shall I be like the swallows?"). In this version, the swallow is identified, not with Procne, but with Philomela:

"The maid of Tereus sings under the poplar shade, so that you would think musical trills of love came from her mouth and not a sister's complaint of a barbarous husband . . . she sings, we are silent. When will my spring come? When shall I be as the swallow that I may cease to be silent? I have lost the Muse in silence, and Apollo regards me not."[1] The line "O swallow swallow" (429) may also refer ironically to metaphysical "thirst" or desire. The concept of metamorphosis in Ovid ties into the eastern theme of metempsychosis or transmigration.

The art of Philomela's music orders and ritualizes pain. The acceptance, ritualization and universalization of suffering into art, makes it a tantric unfolding of patterns of spiritual transcendence. The artist takes over the function of the gods in Ovid's story; hence the protagonist-artist is not only the hero/protagonist in his own quest, but is the culture hero/protagonist as well. He takes on the function of priest, by refining in the creative mind the experience of suffering and by revealing positive spiritual patterns in negative material. In The Waste Land Ovid, Shakespeare and Dante provide literary allusions to both the karmic plight and the tantric patterns. These works suggest that art itself, metamorphosing ego into extinction of ego, may be a tantric solution.

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[1] "Pervigilium Veneris," quoted by Eliot in FN. 5 to The Waste Land, in Norton Anthology, p. 1960.

CHAPTER THREE: AESTHETIC METAMORPHOSIS

The Poetic Activity and its Goals

The voice of the suffering poet calls out directly to us in the lines:

> These fragments I have shored against my ruins
> Why then Ile fit you.
> ...
> Shantih shantih shantih (431-4)

recalling the promise of Hieronymo that

> the conclusion
> Shall prove the invention and all was good
> (The Spanish Tragedy, IV: 1, 182-3)

Hieronymo corresponds to the madman, seer and prophet (Tiresias) as well as to the poet who seeks to speak, with an inviolable voice, the assurances of Prajapati. The Waste Land is "a poem about the making of poetry, the transmutation of feelings, images etc., into a work of art".[1] Eliot was conscious that writers such as Shakespeare were "occupied with the struggle -- which alone constitutes life for a poet -- to transmute his personal and private agonies into something rich and strange, something universal and impersonal".[2] Thirty years after The Waste Land was published, Eliot would still maintain that "Poetry not only must be found through suffering but can find its material only in suffering".[3] According to Eliot, the

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[1] Smidt, "Six Chapters", p. 16.

[2] Eliot, "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca," (1927) in Selected Prose, p. 53.

[3] Eliot, "Dante," in Selected Essays, p. 262.

ideal path for the poet-priest would entail a "continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality"[1] an aesthetic and spiritual attempt to transform the experience of suffering into art. Poetry is "an escape from personality".[2]

The eastern notion of the artist/priest, although evident in western Romantic literature surfaces in modernist terms in Joyce. In The Waste Land however, the artist is more of a "guru" in that he reveals patterns of suffering and the refining of experience into an aesthetic and metaphysical vision of potential transcendence. The poet himself is bound on the wheel of his cycles of suffering and attempts to unfold tantric solutions: "Genuine poetry is conceived . . . in the soul".[3] Eliot phrased this transmutation in mystical, ascetic terms, both before and after The Waste Land. He had very precise views regarding the task of the poet and the purpose of this self-extinction: "Most people, no doubt, need to be aroused to the perception of the simple distinction between the spiritual and the material",[4] for they are victims of "the living death of modern

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[1] Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent", (1919) The Sacred Wood - Essays on Poetry and Criticism (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1967), pp. 52-3.

[2] Ibid., p. 58.

[3] Matthiessen, p. 5.

[4] ASG, pp. 64-5.

material civilization"[1] which is symbolized by the waste land. According to Eliot, poetry "enlarges our consciousness or refines our sensibility . . . Without producing these two effects it simply is not poetry".[2]

The reader must be shocked into an awareness of his own trapped soul. Awareness of the quest turns the protagonist/reader into an initiate. The message of overcoming memories and desires through the selfless action of "self-giving", is ultimately heard in The Waste Land. However, like the tantric heroes of the Vedas and the Upanishads, it is only after ascetically overcoming the flesh that the protagonist becomes conscious of the prescriptive voices of gods, saints, prophets, mystics and artists. Since the pattern of The Waste Land is subjective and intuitive, the reader/protagonist is reached on the non-rational level through the ritualistic, the incantatory and the symbolic. The reader/protagonist's quest becomes a self-questioning which transforms his relation with others. The self-centered "I" in The Waste Land: "I Tiresias have foresuffered all" (243) becomes "we": "What have we given?" (402) The "we" encompasses the reader who is involved in the poem through his response to symbols and through his psychological and spiritual identification with the quest of the protagonist and poet. The involvement of the reader is a crucial

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[1] Ibid., p. 65

[2] Eliot, "The Social Function of Poetry," On Poetry and Poets, quoted by Dwivedi, p. 26.

eastern technique Eliot employed in The Waste Land. The process of spiritual "orientation" (an etymologically significant term) is evident in The Waste Land where Eliot has balanced negative karmic problems with transcendent images, persons and texts. The life cycles on the wheel ensure that both the problem and potential solution are eventually comprehended and experienced by poet, protagonist and reader.

Bradley -- Philosophy, Metaphysics and Aesthetics

According to Smidt, "Eliot's quest for knowledge is reflected in his poetry throughout. And in this quest the nature of Reality is a main objective. The phrase 'Unreal City' in The Waste Land has far-echoing philosophical implications to a person familiar with Bradley's Appearance and Reality".[1] Through Bradley, Eliot discovered that he could fuse philosophical and aesthetic elements: "Every part of Bradley's Absolute contains within itself the whole, and to grasp a part means to grasp the whole".[2] Bradley's concepts bridge the fields of psychology and metaphysics, as do Eliot's. For Bradley, "the self is not isolated from the objects it perceives, nor from the 'Absolute' of which it is a part. In this Absolute everything finite is completed".[3] The ego is

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[1] Smidt, Poetry and Belief, pp. 158-9.

[2] Ibid., p. 159.

[3] Ibid.

a manifestation of the true self, or âtman, in eastern terms, the yoking of the finite to the infinite. Eliot's "poetry shows an awareness of connectedness and wholeness co-existing with the prevalent awareness of dissolution . . . or in Bradley's terms, to a transmutation of the parts in the individuality of the total experience".[1] The fragmentation of reality requires an aesthetic counterpart to the view of "the part as whole" and in The Waste Land, truth is paradoxically presented as riddle, fractured language, symbol and sound.

The Poem as Riddle

Riddles are associated with eastern and childhood wisdom, and with a sense of creative play. Certain eastern stories and wise men employ riddles which celebrate the power of the irrational, of the individual and of the person with patience. A riddle contains an implied solution which the listener must both intuit and deduce. As a teaching tool, it is more indirect and subtle than the western sermon, allegory, or fable. Tantrically, the riddle is both question and answer.

In 1930 Eliot wrote an introduction to, and translated, St. John Perse's "Anabase" (1924), a poem about the soul's quest for transcendence. Although he was explaining techniques of that poem, he reveals techniques he used in The Waste Land as well:

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[1] Ibid., p. 160.

> any obscurity of the poem, on first readings is due to the suppression of 'links in the chain', of explanatory and connecting matter, and not to incoherence, or to the love of cryptogram. The justification of such abbreviation of method is that the sequence of images coincides and concentrates into one intense impression of barbaric civilization. The reader has to allow the images to fall into his memory successively without questioning the reasonableness of each at the moment: so that, at the end, a total effect is produced.
>
> Such relationship of a sequence of images and ideas has nothing chaotic about it. There is a logic of the imagination as well as a logic of concepts.[1] (My underlining)

According to Eliot, "The ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary . . . in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes",[2] a tantric unfolding. The reader, like the poet becomes a quester for meaning:

> The Sibyl expressed herself in riddles; Tiresias answered Odysseus in a riddle when he descended into hell to question him; Philomel wove her story into a peplus; Madame Sosostris, the 'famous clairvoyante', expressed her meaning through the riddle of a 'wicked pack of cards' and the Thunder's tripartite message is a final riddle which draws on the hidden meaning of all the episodes that have gone before.[3]

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[1] St. John Perse, Collected Poems, Bollingen Series LXXXVII (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 675-6.

[2] Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," (1921) in Selected Prose, pp. 110-11.

[3] Williams, p. 18.

Many riddles are asked in The Waste Land:

> What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
> Out of this stony rubbish? (19-20)

and

> 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? (71-3)

Both riddles involve fertility rites of rebirth. The Mrs. Porter jingle,

> O the moon shone bright on Mrs. Porter
> And on her daughter
> They wash their feet in soda water (199-201)

is itself a riddle. The sacrificial aspects of the foot-washing act have become debased and corrupted: "In the original ballad, the parts washed by Mrs. Porter and her daughter were private".[1] In Leviticus, instructions are provided for the prefatory foot washing of animals to purify them for sacrificial rituals. The debasement of spiritual rites into sexual activities, as at the Thames, is common in The Waste Land. The ritual use of purifying water will lead to the sacrificial offering in the fire. The foot washing in The Waste Land recalls the same ceremonies which involved Christ and Parzival. With the destruction of the temple (institutionalized religion), the "temple" and the sacrifice must be found within oneself. Another riddle concerns the Shackleton/Emmaus reference: "Who is the third who walks always beside you?" (360). This riddle concerns the

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[1] Friar and Brinnin, p. 487. The then popular American ballad "Red Wing" ("O the moon shone bright on pretty Red Wing") is parodied by a bawdy Australian ballad. Eliot in a footnote to line 199 claimed to be unfamiliar with "the origin of the ballad from which these lines are taken".

identifying of the divinity which is to be found within, not outside. The line "London bridge is falling down . . ." (427) is a final riddle which reveals māyā and karmic cycles, ancient wisdom in a nursery song.

The effects of the karmic experiences are evident in The Waste Land where we find confused multiplicity and lack of pattern on one hand, and the cunning tantric unfolding of pattern and unity on the other hand; juxtaposition simultaneously provides the obscurity and the clarification. In eastern works referred to in The Waste Land, the search for meaning keeps the "mind diverted and quiet, while the poem does its work".[1] "Like the Upanisads, Eliot's poem is a secret, wise message to the people living in The Waste Land to liberate themselves from the bond of flesh and to pursue the metaphysical way of life."[2] As Rao puts it, "The fragments, hitherto meaningless, acquire a whole new meaning in the same way as the esoteric Grail objects become meaningful when the successful questing knight solves the riddle".[3]

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[1]T.S. Eliot's On the Use of Criticism, quoted by Miller, p. 158.

[2]Dwivedi, p. 37.

[3]Rao, p. 70.

The use of riddle is not only a direct aesthetic technique; its metaphysical function underlies three of the most distinctive verbal strategies in The Waste Land: word reduction, mantra and symbol.

Word Reduction

According to Eliot, modern art must be fragmented, since the culture which produced it lacks unity. In The Waste Land, Eliot employs word reduction to express this cultural and linguistic breakdown at these points when the burden of karmic desperation struggles most for relief in speech. This technique can be found in the neurasthenic's lines in Part II.

> My nerves are bad to-night. Yes, bad. Stay with me.
> Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak.
> What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?
> I never know what you are thinking. Think. (111-4)

The loss of communication accompanies the breakdown of language. In Part III the wailing of the Thames maidens:

> Weialala leia
> Wallala leialala (290-1)

becomes "la la" (306). Reduction is also evident in the references to St. Augustine's Carthage and to Buddha's Fire Sermon.

> To Carthage then I came
> Burning burning burning burning
> O Lord Thou pluckest me out
> O Lord Thou pluckest
> burning (307-11).

The same reduction is used for the water references in Part IV:

> And also water
> And water (349-50).

The references to Philomela:

> Twit twit twit
> Jug jug jug jug jug jug
> So rudely forc'd.
> Tereu. (203-6)

are reduced to "Jug Jug to dirty ears" (103). "Jug jug" is the Elizabethan mimetic sound for the nightingale. Kenner quotes John Lyly as the source in "Alexander and Campaspe" (1584)

> What bird so sings yet so does wayle?
> O 'tis the ravished Nightingale.
> Jug, Jug, Jug, tereu, shee cryes,
> And still her woes at Midnight rise.[1]

Although the nightingale sings of transcendence, the degeneration of morals, language and culture permits the wastelanders to hear it merely as a sexual cry and a cry of loss. They remain incapable of learning from the nightingale's experiences. "Tereu" is a skillful allusion to Tereus and the rape. "Apparently the world partakes in the barbarous king's action and still partakes in that action."[2] In the original manuscript, the line read: "Jug, Jug, into the dirty ear of death; lust" (FT, p. 11). The linking of lust and death is, as we have seen, the essence of negative karma. The "jug" may well represent a debased Grail, signifying degeneration on the materialistic, spiritual and sexual levels, which the technique of linguistic reduction reinforces. This technique would later be used in The Hollow Men,

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[1] Kenner, p. 154.

[2] Brooks, p. 116.

For Thine is the Kingdom-
For Thine is (CPP, p. 59).

However, the use of reduction can also be seen as a means of reaching the roots of language and meaning. In The Waste Land the use of the root word "Da" is expanded positively into the meaningful words: Datta, Dayadhvam and Damyata, unfolding the tantric pattern of expansion, the part revealing the whole.

The Mantra and the Auditory Imagination

The eastern chant of the mantra, that sound which helps to put man in harmony with the natural vibrations of the universe; and the western incantatory technique of poetry are fused in The Waste Land. In the Vedas "The oldest division, the mantra (saying, song)",[1] is composed of songs. "The Trika philosophers of Kashmir regard the brilliant consciousness which is, they think, the fundamental reality of the universe, as a vibration; and this vibration, they think, is the seminal absolute word or idea on which all relative words or ideas depend."[2] The mantras are harmonious sounds and meaningful words, employed "to startle the novice into mystic insight".[3] According to Gertrude Patterson:

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[1]The Rigveda, p. 2.

[2]Scharfstein, p. 101.

[3]Ibid., p. 99.

> The poet's voice is imperceptible, merging with all the other voices of the poem to become a universal statement of loss, decay and death among the mountains. It is an almost ritual chant in which the voices of the disciples at the first Christian death merge with the poet's to become the 'we' who plod wearily through the dry sand longing for water and spiritual refreshment.[1]

This use of incantation or spiritual mantra climaxes in the poem in the sounds of the thunder: Da-Datta, Dayadhvam and Damyata. Since the deeper metaphysical insights work intuitively, mantras "yield immediate fruit".[2] According to Eliot,

> the 'auditory imagination' is the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back, seeking the beginning and the end. It works through meanings, certainly, or not without meanings in the ordinary sense, and fuses the old and obliterated and the trite, the current, and the most civilized mentality.[3]

Eliot had learned from Poe, "the incantatory element in poetry . . . the magic of verse".[4] Like the mantra, the incantatory "effect is immediate".[5] The incantatory rhythms are linked to liturgical ones and liturgical formulas in such subsequent works as The Hollow Man and The Rock have an important mantric power. Eliot's insights into the effect of mere

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[1]Gertrude Patterson, "'The Waste Land' in the Making," Critical Quarterly 14 (1972), 281.

[2]Tantra of the Great Liberation (Mahanirvana Tantra), trans. Arthur Avalon (New York: Dover Pub. Inc., 1972), p. 16.

[3]Eliot, "The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism" (1933), Selected Prose, p. 89.

[4]Eliot, From Poe to Valery, 1st ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1948), p. 12.

[5]Ibid., p. 13.

sound patterns and the resulting responses were seen as a tool to sustain the "first intensity",[1] which Eliot, like Poe, felt is so difficult to achieve in a long poem. Eliot displays in The Waste Land "the deeper sonorities and incantatory formulas of the biblical prophets".[2] The use of music (songs, instruments, opera), foreign languages (French, German, Sanskrit et al.), onomatopoeia of the song of the hermit thrush ("drip drop drip drop drop drop drop" (358)), and repetition (burning burning burning) are all employed by Eliot in The Waste Land to enhance the mantra-like quality of the poem, a quality emphasized in his reading of the poem, in particular of Section Five.[3] Rather than naturalistic, the effect is ritualistic:

> If there were water
> And no rock
> If there were rock
> And also water
> And water
> A spring
> A pool among the rock (346-52).

The pool is an archetypal eastern symbol of the mind. The spiritual thirst is manifested as a physical thirsting -- a moment of crisis in the poem. In the Rigveda, the mantra "formulas are . . . for healing",[4] physically, psychologically

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[1]Fuller, p. 166.

[2]Schneider, p. 85.

[3]The Waste Land/and Other Poems Read by T.S. Eliot, (New York: Caedman Records Inc., 1971).

[4]Rigveda, p. 86.

and spiritually. In tantric rites, it is the mantra which the sacrificer receives previous to sacrifice, an indication of spiritual progression. The Rigveda is composed of "Formulas of Incantation"[1] and "Poetical Riddles".[2] As well one finds in the "Atharva or Brahma Veda, Knowledge of Incantations".[3] Significantly the poem ends with the repetition of the word "Shantih" which is a positive mantra, signifying transcendent harmony closing all ritual chants.

The Symbol

"The symbol is a visible sign of an invisible entity."[4] Spiritual values of the symbol are rooted in its natural values. Symbols are anti-linear, lacking "discursive or chronological continuity",[5] but presenting unity through instantaneous presence of layers of meanings. The use of ambivalent symbols has always been an eastern technique to lead initiates to new insights and is crucial in The Waste Land in order to bridge the fields of aesthetics and metaphysics.

Not merely a sound, "A mantra is a 'symbol' in the archaic sense of the term; it is simultaneously the symbolized

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[1]Rigveda, p. 85.

[2]Ibid., p. 86.

[3]Ibid., p. 4.

[4]The Upanishads, p. 52.

[5]Schneider, p. 60.

'reality' and the symbolizing 'sign'. . . . By working on the 'symbol', one awakens all the forces that correspond to it, on all the levels of being".[1] The image according to Eliot "is the word beyond formulated language".[2] These mantras constitute "a secret, initiatory language",[3] designed to reconcile the individual to universal harmony, a tantric process of spiritual progression. The direct relationship between the essence and the symbolic representation in the works of metaphysical poets leads to "a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling".[4] Eliot combines discursive and non-discursive elements, in his words "transmuting ideas into sensations . . . transforming an observation into a state of mind".[5] The basic tenet of Sanskrit literary criticism is the inseparable relationship of form and content "and it comes very close to T.S. Eliot's concept of 'objective correlative'".[6] The symbol is the aesthetic result of his theory. We shall look at the occurrence of some of the key symbols: tarot, fire, water, wind, darkness, flowers, music, birds and chess.

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[1]Eliade, Immortality and Freedom, p. 215.

[2]Eliot, From Poe to Valery, p. 18.

[3]Immortality and Freedom, p. 213.

[4]Eliot, "Metaphysical Poets," in Selected Essays p. 386.

[5]Ibid., p. 290.

[6]Dwivedi, p. 23.

Tarot symbols are of eastern origin. In Eliot's The Waste Land fragments paradoxically reveal the ultimate unity of pattern. Tarot employs "opposing yet complementary symbols",[1] which "were devised to represent grades or stages in a system of initiation".[2] According to Edith Sitwell, "The miraculous organization of the poem is shown, not only in the use of the Tarot Pack as a setting off point, but in the way in which the themes are repeated on all different levels of human consciousness and human experience".[3] Tarot cards were originally used to predict the levels of the Ganges, "waters which brought fertility to the land" (Weston, pp. 79-80). The link is to "the arid plain" (425) of The Waste Land. The tarot symbols of lance and cup are linked to Christ, to Grail quests and to the fertility cults, since they are sexual and spiritual symbols related to various themes such as sacrifice and rebirth. Symbols of the Major Arcana of tarot cards surface over and over again in The Waste Land. The Star is related to Sirius "the Dog" (74).[4] The Hermit is transformed in the poem to "the hermit thrush" (98). Other examples include: The Wheel of Fortune, "you who turn the wheel" (320); The Magician, Prospero; The Hanged Man, fertility gods and effigies; The Tower, recalling the Prince of Aquitaine at the ruined tower

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[1]Alfred Douglas, The Tarot: The Origin, Meaning and Uses of the Cards (London: Victor Gollanez Ltd., 1972), p. 37.

[2]Ibid., p. 39.

[3]Edith Sitwell, "Lecture on Poetry since 1920", Life and Letters Today 39 (Nov. 1943): 89.

[4]The dog may also be linked to the jackal-headed god Anubis, son of Osiris. Anubis was judge of the infernal regions and presided over funeral rites.

and "Falling Towers" (373); The World, "Unreal" (377), represented by Shiva, an "androgynous figure dancing";[1] The Emperor, Antony; The Empress, Cleopatra and Elizabeth; Death, leading to karmic rebirth or tantric escape, "the transformation of consciousness which must now take place. The ego must be transcended; the death of the old self must be sought";[2] and Judgement, "the reawakening of nature under the influence of the spirit, the mystery of birth in death",[3] "tumbled graves" (388). The Fool is apparently the "one-eyed merchant" (52), as he is in profile. His bag, which Sosostris is "forbidden to see" (54) contains, according to tradition, the archetypal symbols of earth, air, fire and water.

Meditation upon tarot symbols "serves to activate the hidden faculties of the unconscious".[4] There is a link between the juxtaposition of images, and the inter-relationship between the cards. The "arrangement of the cards undoubtedly brings strange parallels and correspondences between them to light".[5]

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[1]Douglas, p. 43,

[2]Ibid., p. 42.

[3]E. Gray, The Tarot Revealed (New Jersey: Signet Books, New American Library, 1969), p. 190.

[4]Douglas, p. 44.

[5]Ibid.

Tarot cards are linked to esoteric rites of initiation where the symbols constitute the "focal points of consciousness".[1] The goal of this meditation "is to concentrate attention on the level of symbolic consciousness which lies between the ego and the inner self. The powers of the unconscious cannot be contacted directly by the rational mind but may be approached via the use of appropriate symbols".[2] The Hanged Man "signifies that the highest knowledge can only be acquired by suffering".[3] Tarot is "concerned with man's quest for wisdom",[4] the eastern metaphysical quest for the tantric unfolding of meaning.

Many symbols besides tarot are to be found in The Waste Land. Fire is a key "Hindu symbol"[5] and is central to Buddha's "Fire Sermon". However, the fire of desire is also the fire of purification. It is both "sacred and sacrificial".[6]

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[1]Ibid., p. 213.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Theodore Lawrence, How the Tarot Speaks to Modern Man (New York: Bell Pub. Co., 1972), p. 21.

[4]Douglas, p. 37.

[5]Smidt, Poetry and Belief, p. 187.

[6]Dwivedi, p. 121.

The Gītā speaks of two kinds of fire: the fire of desire "which burns like fire" (Gītā, p. 206) and "the fire of knowledge" (Gītā, p. 263). Eliot would later use the image in "Little Gidding": "To be redeemed from fire by fire" (CPP, p. 144), from desires by purgatorial suffering. Tantrically, "The fire of knowledge turns all karmas to ashes".[1] Fire is generally a positive symbol in Sanskrit literature: "The word for fire is 'Agni' , to ignite or lead to knowledge".[2] On the other hand, the word "Nirvana" signifies the "blowing out" of the fires of desire. Fire accompanies all Indian ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death. The soul is spiritually,

> ... restored by that refining fire
> Where you must move in measure, like a dancer.
> ("Little Gidding," CPP, p. 142)

The dancer, Shiva, represents both the left and the right-hand schools of tantrism, the consummation and purgation of lust. Fire and hair, two tantric sexual symbols are linked:

> Under the firelight, under the brush, her hair
> Spread out in fiery points
> Glowed into words, then would be savagely still.
> (109-11)

The references to hair in The Waste Land are traced by Frits Staal to the Rigveda where the mystical moment of transcendence is described: "Long-hair holds fire . . . Long hair declares it light".[3] In the Gītā and Upanishads, fire is

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[1] Ibid., p. 189.

[2] Ibid., pp. 48-9.

[3] Rigveda, quoted by Staal, p. 185.

associated with death (cremation) and sacrifice (burnt offerings) on the one hand, and with desires on the other hand. In The Waste Land " burning" is an ambivalent symbol as well, at first representing suffering and then, through acceptance, refining.

Water is a key symbol in " the waste land " and is essential in restoring fertility to the land. The quest for water is explained in eastern metaphysics by thirst, the symbol for desires. Man's natural search for water, "came to symbolize his metaphysical quest".[1] Water, like fire, is an ambivalent symbol; it can represent the physical death of a Phlebas or the transcendent death of an Alonzo. The horror of life with no presence of water intensifies in the broken and isolated lines:

> And also water
> And water
> A spring
> A pool among the rocks (349-52).

The unbearable thirst amid the "delusive sound of dripping water symbolically represents one who is struggling for faith".[2] In the Vedas water is a symbol of nourishing faith. The water-dripping song has the potential to develop from a sheerly mimetic, untranscendent cycle ("drip drop drip drop") to the receptive condition, approaching sanctity, present in the lines from

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[1] Dwivedi, p. 37.

[2] Rao, p. 58.

Rigveda: "Hitherto have the Somas streamed, the drops . . . are purified."[1] "The life-giving element of water can alone restore the kingdom; (water is one of the most ancient symbols of sexual fertility)".[2]

Water in the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad represents the "water of knowledge"[3] needed to overcome burning desires. When Indra/Rishyaçringa/Gawain released this "water", fertility and harmony were restored: "The realization, that the cure for a life burning in the fire of lust is to quench that fire with the waters of knowledge, drives the person to an unsparing self-scrutiny leading to a quest after the true ideal of life."[4] Symbolically, "The earth thirsting for rain is the mind thirsting for meaning",[5] or the poet seeking to order and ritualize multiplicity and suffering. In the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad water is linked to semen, "From the semen sprang the waters".[6] This would explain symbolic karmic links between individual and general fertility or sterility. The source of the "Ganga", a sacred river whose very name signifies sacred water, is the "Himavant", a sacred mountain. The sprinkling of holy water in sacred places in eastern spir-

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[1] The Hymns of the Samaveda, trans. Ralph T.H. Griffith, in The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies, vol. 28 (Varawash, India: The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1963), p. 175.

[2] Matthiessen, p. 137.

[3] Rao, p. 52.

[4] Ibid., p. 53.

[5] B. Rajan, "The Dialect of the Tribe," The Waste Land in Different Voices, ed. A.D. Moody (London: Edward Arnold, University of York Press, 1974) : 8.

[6] Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, p. 99.

itual rites parallels the "damp gust" (394). The holy water, unlike that of the West which has been blessed by the clergy, is, in both the far and near East, water from specific holy places accessible directly to the quester. "Water, the source of all life, was considered sacred . . . in ancient Egypt . . . . Every temple had its sacred lake . . . . The priests purified themselves in the water before officiating. On the banks of the lake . . . the nocturnal mysteries of Osiris's resurrection took place."[1]

The wind also can be seen as a positive or negative symbol: "It was with a noise and shaking, and with a blast of wind, that the dead in Ezekiel's valley of dry bones received the breath of life and stood on their feet",[2] grotesquely counterpointing the creation of Adam through divine inspiration, when the red clay was transmuted into living man. The wind can be a cause of uneasiness:

> the wind under the door . . . .
> What is the wind doing? (118-9)

In the lines, "Then a damp gust/Bringing rain" (354-5) "gust" is etymologically derived from the German "geist", or ghost, suggesting the eastern "atman" and the Christian "spiritus". We recall that "The wind/Crosses the brown land,

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[1]Robert Boulanger, Egyptian and Near Eastern Painting, trans. Anthony Rhodes (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1965).

[2]Grover Smith Jr., T.S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays: A Study in Sources and Meaning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 81.

unheard" (1745). In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, mention is made of the importance of breath, "prana". The vital breath is a crucial part of the mantric chant and is equated in the Upanishads with sacrifice, the way gods defeat demons. In yoga, it is linked to self-control, "Damyata" (419).

Darkness is a key symbol of spiritual ignorance in the Gītā and Upanishads. There are many such references to darkness in The Waste Land. The "brown fog" (61 and 208) prevents vision, and the "smoke" (92) in the upperclass chamber distorts the senses. The phrases: "the evening hour" (220), "summer nights" (179), "the violet light" (380), "faint moonlight" (387), "black clouds" (397), "nightfall" (416), and "the stairs unlit" (248) all suggest the spiritual darkness covering the land. The phrase "sad light" (96) particularly combines the anthropomorphic and the metaphysical. The darkness is linked to the moment of Christ's death at "the final stroke of nine" (68). Spiritual darkness is especially implied in Tiresias' blindness.

Flowers are an important tantric symbol. Since they are reborn year after year, they are linked to cycles of physical and spiritual rebirth through the gods who are metamorphosed into flowers. Since flowers are the sexual organs of plants, the themes of wounding or impotence suggest that the "plucking" in The Waste Land may have overtones of castration. The aesthetic and psychological search for lost potency becomes the metaphysical quest for spiritual transformation. Narcissus provides a link between flowers and fertility gods. The

phrase "the violet air" (373), which precedes "Falling towers" (374), is linked, as previously mentioned, to Spengler's 'Caesarism', which precedes social collapse. The juxtaposition of "violet" (flower), time ("the violet hour" (215)), "violate" and vision ("the violet light" (380)) sustains the notion of flowers symbolizing historical and metaphysical cycles. Other allusions to flowers in The Waste Land include the direct reference to the hyacinth garden, quotations from Les Fleurs du Mal and more ambiguously the dried tubers of the opening section, as well as the anticipated blooming of Stetson's garden.

Music is ambivalently used in The Waste Land to suggest transcendence, as in Ariel's song, or degeneration as in the reference to "'The Shakespeherian Rag', a hit song of 1912",[1]

> It's so elegant
> So intelligent (129-30).

Similarly, the typist, "with automatic hand . . . puts a record on the gramophone" (255-6). In the poem, one "hears": the children singing for Parsifal, opera from Wagner, allusions to various dirges, the siren's fiddle music, Mrs. Porter's ballad and the mandoline music of the bar. Eliot's versatile use of music encompasses both spiritual harmony, and the personal and social degeneration which must be overcome. An especially important musical manifestation in The Waste Land

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[1]B.R. McElderry Jr., "A Game of Chess", in Collection of Critical Essays on 'The Waste Land', ed. Martin, p. 30.

is Philomela's cry. In the Gītā the bird is an ambivalent symbol of "bondage and liberation".[1] In The Waste Land, a hermit-thrush provides the mantra of water sounds. The Gītā itself is a song. Music, like poetry, is the ordering process, the "inviolable voice" sought by the poet.

Birds are also an important eastern symbol. In the Svetasvatara Upanishad: "Two birds, united always and known by the same name, closely cling to the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit; the other looks on without eating."[2] They symbolize the individual soul and the "Supreme Self". The "jīva", or individual soul, "moans, bewildered by its impotence".[3] In the Gītā and Upanishads, birds often symbolize divine harmony, metamorphosis and metaphysical transcendence. The sage Satyakama in Chhandogya Upanishad was approached by two birds, a swan and a "kind of water bird"[4] and they provided him with metaphysical insights into the nature of Brahman.

Chess is another source for the symbols chosen in The Waste Land. The game is linked to tarot cards; the "court cards" "may have been taken from figures used in the game of chess, which had reached Europe via India".[5] In fact, "most

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[1]Rao, p. 194.

[2]The Upanishads, p. 134.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 310, FN. 104.

[5]Douglas, p. 22.

early tarot cards had chequered backs, suggesting the design of a chess board".[1] The word "chess" is derived from a Persian word for king, "shah". "Shah Mat", check mate, means "the king is dead". The chess board is an excellent symbol of a waste land. The game is based upon war-like strategies of aggression and defence. The defeat of the king is accomplished by attacks and sacrifices of various pieces (castles, bishops, knights and pawns) until the king is immobilized, rendered impotent. The impotent king and aggressive queen are represented by a host of characters in the poem, from the Fisher King to Elizabeth. A game of chess suits the neurasthenic in the poem, for it is "a silent unnerving warfare".[2]

Two of Eliot's frequently used images of death and decay in The Waste Land are the rats and bones associated with cemeteries and battlefields. The corpse symbol is suggested in the line "Dead mountain mouth of carious teeth that cannot spit" (339) and is linked to physical disintegration in the reference to Lil: "get yourself some teeth"(144). Even "the rocks are dry like the rotten teeth of a skull".[3] This is "rats' alley / Where the dead men lost their bones" (115-6).

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[1] Ibid., p. 36.

[2] Kenner, p. 152.

[3] Smith Jr., p. 93.

In The Waste Land, "the rattle of the bones" (186) is linked to

> bones-cast in a little low dry garret
> Rattled by the rat's foot only, year to year
> (194-5).

Similarly,

> A rat crept softly through the vegetation
> Dragging its slimy belly on the bank.
> While I was fishing in the dull canal
> On a winter evening round behind the gashouse
> (187-90).

Eliot's probable source for these images has been traced by Ray Smith: "In Ulysses', Mr. Bloom's musings on his way to the funeral of Paddy Dignam . . . . contain the phrase 'Rattle his bones'; and his route to the graveyard, where he imagines a rat at work on the corpses, goes via the Dublin canal and gas-works."[1] The reference to the "gashouse" may be for Eliot, as for James Joyce, a symbol of the spirit (geist) trapped in the decaying individual body and decaying western religious institutions (in the Hades section, Bloom speculates about the vaults of Saint Werburgh's where holes were punched into "coffins sometimes to let out the bad gas and burn it",[2] since "the insides decompose quickly"[3], producing "an infernal lot of bad gas".[4]) The entire Hades section is critical of western views of death and afterlife. Communion is viewed as

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[1] Ray Smith, Eliot's 'The Waste Land,'" Explicator 23 (1964) Item 31 : 44.

[2] James Joyce, Ulysses (New York: Vintage Books, Random House Inc., 1966), p. 104.

[3] Ibid., p. 98.

[4] Ibid., p. 103.

"eating bits of a corpse".[1] This notion is supported by such phrases as "Chewer of corpses"[2] and "carrion dogs".[3] Bloom, through his rejection of a Christian afterlife, is the 'real' caretaker of the graveyard. In the Telemachus section of Ulysses, Stephen Dedalus' sense of impotence and decay is symbolized by "rotten teeth"[4], referred to by Buck Mulligan while conversing with the old woman who brought the milk. As well, it was in Hades where Ulysses met Tiresias, providing links to Dante.

The motif of the trapped spirit runs through The Waste Land passage: "But at my back from time to time I hear / The sound of horns" (196-7) which alludes to Marvell's untranscendent graves, and soda water employed by Mrs. Porter and her daughter. Paramount is the implied sacrificial act which links the various references to death. World War One is suggested here: young men in trenches and canals, gas warfare in Flanders and postwar nihilism. The rats and bones signify negative metamorphosis. The mythic hero Bloom, with his eastern awareness, meditates from time to time upon metempsychosis and transmigration. In The Waste Land, at the end of the quest, the fear of death is overcome: "Dry bones can harm no one" (391).

In The Waste Land one discovers both eastern and western sexual images such as "the cock" (392), "The jungle crouched, humped in silence" (399) and "The boat responded" (419). The

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[1]Ibid., p. 80.

[2]Ibid., p. 10.

[3]Ibid., p. 99.

[4]Ibid., p. 14.

Brhadaranyaka Upanishad is filled with sexual imagery: "Her lap is a sacrificial altar".[1] Similarly, "Woman, O Gautama, is the fire, her sexual organ is the fuel, the hair the smoke, the vulva the flame, sexual intercourse the cinders".[2] The use of symbols naturally involves the reader, who like the quester, is "to ask what these relics mean",[3] the significance of the "fragments" (413) which the poet has "shored against my ruins" (431).

Fusion and Juxtaposition: Unity and Discontinuity

A major technique employed by Eliot in The Waste Land is the juxtaposition of various fragments. Antrim links this stylistic device to the quest for release from suffering:

> Individual events, voices, remain disparate, fragmentary, but the pieces are all encompassed by the force of the mythic journey of the questing figure seeking purification and release. The quest is itself neither **private nor public** but both, for as the land is waste because of a falling away from belief, it is redeemable by the representative suffering of its questing figure. Thus the central characters in the poem interfuse with one another, the quest spans time and place, and the identity of the seeker is a collective consciousness in its own right.[4]

Baudelaire's poetry revealed to Eliot a Symbolist technique for rendering a quest whose spiritual and psychic condition is multiplicity. Eliot also discovered "the possibility of fusion between the sordidly realistic and the phantasmagoric, the possibility of the juxtaposition of the matter-of-fact and the

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[1] Brhadaranyaka Upanisad, p. 438.

[2] The Upanishads, p.249.

[3] Kenner, p. 178.

[4] H.T. Antrim, T.S. Eliot's Concept of Language: A Study of its Development (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1971), p. 43.

fantastic."[1] Music is another technique for rendering unity through discontinuity. In two of Eliot's poems of 1917, "Preludes" and "Rhapsody on a Windy Night", the terms "Preludes" and "Rhapsody" both signify musical pieces, irregular or "free" in form and of an improvised character. The lyrical nature (repetitions, onomatopoeia, assonance and alliteration) of these two poems and the sense of both fragmentation and unity (counterpoint) are an early manifestation of Eliot's techniques. Eliot's constant fusion and counterpointing has led to the plethora of musical analogies used by critics to describe the style of The Waste Land.

Tiresias is the most striking example of one who combines both multiplicity and unity in The Waste Land. The mind of Tiresias "is a collective personality containing all times and persons at once."[2] The central mind is at once both a disintegrated personality, reflecting māyā, and a collective one which reveals the fragmented insights gained by the protagonist during karmic cycles of existence. This stylistic unifying device not only reveals psychological truths, but also the metaphysics underlying them. Jung's insights into the collective unconscious were themselves gained from eastern metaphysical texts. The technique of juxtaposition is used in The Waste Land not only to overcome limitations of time and space, but also to help shock the reader into new insights concerning pattern and meaning.

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[1]Eliot, To Criticize the Critic, p. 126.

[2]Antrim, p. 41.

Similarly, The Waste Land reveals the multiplicity and unity of language. The poem ends at the beginning of language cycles, fusing Sanskrit, the sacred language of ancient India, with European languages which are its offshoots.

Allusions

The most evident technique for juxtaposition and fusion is that of allusion. Halloway has collated a collection of phrases used by the critics to describe the framework of allusions and references. These include: "intertwined threads", "mosaicist method", "fusion of themes", "subtle cross-references", "compression and richness of connotation".[1] Mesterton called it a "complexly interwelded structure",[2] and "Wilson, Cleanth Brooks, and other critics have shown every part of it is connected with the others, not in a conventional way, but by means of a complicated system of echoes, contrasts, parallels and allusions".[3] The juxtaposition or fusion of the allusions and references create these effects. Antrim echoes I.A. Richards in asserting that: "By using allusion and myth, Eliot has in The Waste Land seemingly discovered a means of compressing all of past time into the short

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[1] J. Halloway, "The Waste Land," Encounter 31 (1968): 73.

[2] E. Mesterton, The Waste Land, Some Commentaries, trans. L. Jones (Chicago: Argus Book Shop, 1943), p. 14.

[3] J. Korg, "Modern Art Techniques in 'The Waste Land'", in Collection of Critical Essays on 'The Waste Land', ed. J. Martin, p. 14.

compass of one poem."[1] Eliot wrote "I gave the references in my notes, in order to make the reader who recognized the allusion know that I meant him to recognize it."[2] This is highly significant in its conscious effect of reassuring the reader concerning the sense of hidden knowledge which yet has always been there. It supports the notion of the part as whole, of the riddle-like quality of The Waste Land. The reader gains a sense of recognition and involvement, as in eastern metaphysics.

The task of the poet as part of a historical tradition is to "rearrange and synthesize images, motifs, phrases which are inherited from the past".[3] Eliot wrote: "I have tried to point out the importance of the relation of the poem to other poems by other authors, and suggested the conception of poetry as a living whole of all the poetry that has ever been written".[4] Eumolpus had stated: "the imagination is bitterly incapable of conceiving, let alone producing a real poem unless the poet's mind has been literally saturated in the poetry of the past" (Satyricon, p. 136). He added: "No reference or allusion, no idea not strictly relevant to the inner logic of the poem can be admitted; the texture of great poetry is intrinsic; its beauty is formal and internal"

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[1]Antrim, p. 43.

[2]Eliot, To Criticize the Critic, p. 128.

[3]Antrim, p. 38.

[4]Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," (1919) In Selected Prose, p. 26.

(Satyricon, p. 136). The poet requires "a whole tradition at his finger tips" (Satyricon, p. 137). Petronius is saying that we are all saturated with the wisdom of the past but that the poet is most aware. His function becomes the eastern one of making us conscious that wisdom is eternally available. Allusiveness, like the use of the symbol, is a characteristic of eastern art. According to Eliot, "Poets in our civilization or as it exists at present, must be difficult: Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning".[1] Poetry, with its wealth of connotative richness, takes advantage of the fact that "words have associations, and the groups of words in association have associations".[2] According to Eliot, "It is only at certain moments that a word can be made to insinuate the whole history of a language and a civilization. This is an 'allusiveness' which is not the fashion or eccentricity of a peculiar type of poetry, but an allusiveness which is in the nature of words, and which is equally the concern of every kind of poet".[3] The phrases: "at

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[1] Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," (1921) in Selected Prose, p. 112.

[2] Eliot, "Dante," in Selected Essays, p. 240.

[3] Eliot, "The Music of Poetry," (1942) in Selected Prose, p. 57.

certain moments" and "the whole history", suggest that specific allusions are only forms of an overall allusiveness by which the multiple and hidden become one with the surface, and the divisions in time, in space, between spirit and flesh, between the rational and the irrational, characteristic of western perception, are overcome.

Irony

Irony is a more surprising, yet subtle device for creating unity from juxtaposition. The most sustained example is the typist scene. The language is filled with biting mockery. The clerk is

> One of the low on whom assurance sits
> As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire (233-4)

Bradford is an industrial city in Yorkshire, where many fortunes were made by war propheteers during World War One. The "Rape of the Lock" couplets suggest Eliot's mockery of mock epic:

> Out of the window perilously spread
> Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays.
> (224-5)

The incongruity of the image exemplifies the degeneration of the modern love relationships. By using an incongruous adjective like "perilously", a part of the Grail quests ("Chapel Perilous"), Eliot is suggesting the psychological decline into fear. Eliot's ironic tone also parallels the eastern metaphysical device of manipulating the reader both psychologically and spiritually into an awareness of the discrepancies that the rational order evaluates mockingly.

> Eliot treats the most serious issues in a comic way: he is flippant in the face of the ghastly, offhand concerning 'The Horror', ... seriously deadpan about trivia. He unhesitatingly and outrageously mixes his metaphors, fuses the grand with the prosaic, the material with the spiritual, the sentimental with the sexual, mirth with anguish.[1]

As with riddles, there is an "alliance of levity and seriousness".[2] Although "Prufrock" is mock-epic, The Waste Land is much sadder. In the civilizations and in the individuals presented, we are as much aware of identity as of gap. Similarly, in eastern religion and literature, the spiritual is as possible in the ordinary, even the debased, and every man is potentially a saint and hero.

Cinematographic Techniques -- The Visual Imagination

Fusion and juxtaposition are both embodied in cinematographic techniques. According to A.W. Litz, Pound's editing of the poem "threw the balance of The Waste Land from drama and narrative to symbol and image, enhancing the 'cinematographic' effect".[3] Referring to the Phlebas lines, Spender writes,

> The fact that this section of the poem is a translation of an earlier poem of Eliot, written in French, confirms the suspicion that the linkingup is an arbitrary cinematic effect like a 'fade-in.'[4]

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[1]Martin, p. 11.

[2]Matthiessen, p. 13.

[3]A.W. Litz, ed., Eliot in His Time, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 461.

[4]Stephen Spender, "Remembering Eliot," Encounter vol. 24, No. 4 (April 1965) : 5.

Eliot stylistically has gone beyond Joyce's mythic techniques, although Eliot had written: "In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him".[1] However, due to Eliot's use of karma in The Waste Land, the parallels are more overt and the shock effect on the reader is greater. Dante is as much a source for cinematographic effects as is Joyce. According to Eliot, "allegory means clear visual images,"[2] and "Dante's is a visual imagination".[3]

The technique of fade-ins and fade-outs is apparent at various moments and places. We move effortlessly from the Hofgarten through the Hyacinth garden and Stetson's garden to the garden of Gethsemane. The reader begins to feel the eternal cycle of gardens, from Eden through sacred groves to the final decayed hole in the jungle. The cinematographic techniques, like allusions or word reduction, allow compression as well as movement. The very richness of allusion helps to provide the reader with greater awareness, stimulating the visual imagination. Fade-ins help to account for the journey in The Waste Land from hell to purgatory, from the unreal city of Rome/Paris/London to India. The endless love scenes and lovers merge into each other and into Tiresias. The pastiche

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[1] Eliot, quoted by Smidt, "Six Chapters," p. 13.

[2] Eliot, "Dante," in Selected Essays, p. 242.

[3] Ibid., p. 243.

of images and allusions reveals both the discontinuity and the unity. Cinematographic techniques are perfectly suited to the "reincarnation" of people and places. They give The Waste Land a quality of time and space which resembles much more the classic eastern notion of ceremony or of drama, with its use of recurrence and mixture of genres, than it does the classic western notion with its linear and unified notion of time, place and decorum. As with karmic cycles tantrically overcome, temporal and spatial limitations are aesthetically overcome in cinematographic art.

The Circle as Pattern: The Wheel and the Mandala

The pervasive symbol in The Waste Land, not just in reference to metaphysical themes but aesthetically essential as pattern, is the circle. A mandala, "circle" in Sanskrit, is a schematized representation of the cosmos, generally employing concentric circles (recalling Dante), each with its particular divinity, and used to help guide the thoughts of the individual onto progressively higher levels of spiritual consciousness. Concentrating on spiritual symbols and patterns aids the initiate to gain metaphysical insights:

> The ritual of Tantrism is largely based upon projection. The mandalas it makes use of are complex representations of the universe, designed to teach a disciple that he can emit and be this universe, for the ontological structure is his own. Ring on ring of reality and image on image of truth surround the micro cosmic-macro cosmic center. The ring of fire excludes the profane and burns away ignorance, the ring of diamond casts the illumination of pure consciousness, the

> ring of leaves is rebirth, the fierce guardians of the inner palace hold off enemies, the terrifying gods are one's fears to be overcome, and the palace is the transcendency that may be entered.[1]

The Waste Land itself becomes a mandala of thoughts, objects, experiences and images. In fact according to G. Seldes, the themes "dictated the form".[2] In Patanjali Yoga, the final concentration is on a single point, the potential center of the circle, beyond space and time, the heart of the mandala: "'the still point of the turning world' which is beyond time and stands for 'release from action and suffering'. This is a mathematically pure point like the center of the 'mandala' ... which remains changeless even though the circle may revolve".[3] In The Waste Land, the center is the conscious mind. The circle is the perfect form and is whole. Also, "The 'circular spread' is one of the most reliable"[4] methods of reading tarot cards. "The Wheel of Fortune and The World are both mandala-like designs."[5] The word 'tarot' may be "an anagram of the Latin word 'rota' meaning 'a wheel' -- the cards then symbolizing the circle of life from birth to death".[6] Possibly

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[1] Scharfstein, p. 211.

[2] G. Seldes, "T.S. Eliot," The Nation CXV (December 6, 1923) : 616.

[3] Chaturvedi, p. 223.

[4] Douglas, p. 208.

[5] Ibid., p. 45.

[6] Ibid., p. 21.

"tarot" is based on the Egyptian words "Tar ro" or "royal path" which also was the eternal circle.

In "the Great Wheel of Eliot's mandala 'the way up is the way down, the way forward is the way back'".[1] Time in The Waste Land is a fusion of past and present; one tense slips into another. The poem begins in the present: "April is the cruelest month" but slips into the past: "You gave me hyacinths," and back to the present "My nerves are bad tonight". The Waste Land covers twelve hours, from morning to evening. The first reference is "a winter dawn" (208) and the third is "the evening hour" (220). This karmic "day" goes beyond Bloom's day; it encompasses all of time: past, present and future. "The three divisions of time exist now."[2] In The Waste Land, events and allusions "are brought into such proximity that the time lapse between them gives the illusion of being zero".[3] Crowds walk "in a ring" (56), people "turn the wheel" (320) and enter "the whirlpool" (318). The karmic recurrence of former events is experienced by present characters. The memories which sustain karmic patterns of reincarnation help explain the timeless quality of The Waste Land. The use of

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[1] Ibid., p. 43.

[2] Guenther, p. 65.

[3] S. Foster, "'The Waste Land' and the Modern World," in Collection of Critical Essays on 'The Waste Land' ed. Martin, p. 19.

present participles in The Waste Land naturally suggests images of continuing karmic action: "breeding", "mixing", "covering", "feeding" and "striding".

The circular arrangement of tarot cards constitutes a mandala in its own right. The Upanishads are based on cyclical patterns of karma and tantric paths to unity. Arjuna's spiritual progression in the Gītā, is tantrically unfolded, metaphysical insights attained, and karmic cycles overcome. The quest is internalized; the knowledge had always been available. Also "The symbols 'wheel' and 'ring' frequent the pages of the Gita ".[1] Dwivedi traces references to the wheel in Eliot's works such as "Gerontion", The Waste Land, "Ash Wednesday", "Triumphal March", "Burnt Norton", Murder in the Cathedral and The Family Reunion. The wheel in the Gītā and in these works, is "the terrible wheel of rebirth and death".[2] The symbol of the wheel in the Upanishads was later incorporated into Buddhist thought. "The cyclic concept of time has a very logical connection with the doctrines of rebirth."[3]

The poet/priest leads the reader/initiate through a refining process which is necessary to attain the requisite

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[1]Dwivedi, p. 39.

[2]Ibid., p. 184.

[3]Ghosh, p. 185.

vision for artistic creation and spiritual transcendence. Smidt quotes Eliot's view of The Waste Land in the poet's letter to Bertrand Russell, dated October 15, 1923. It is "a poem of hope, almost of affirmation".[1] Having revealed underlying psychological and spiritual insights, the poem suggests that the overcoming of the purgatorial condition of desire entails a sacrifice of the ego which is "the connecting bond of being".[2]

Metaphysical Themes and Symbols in Works After The Waste Land

The Hollow Men (1925) written just after The Waste Land has many similarly negative images such as "death's other kingdom", "hollow valley", "dead land", "rat's coat" and the falling of the "Shadow". The negative symbols create the landscape of spiritual desolation. Eliot's conversion to a more Christian view is evident in Murder in the Cathedral (1935) dealing with the assassination of St. Thomas à Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury. However we still find many parallels to The Waste Land: "the land became brown sharp points of death in a waste of water and mud".[3] We find misgivings similar to those of the waste landers: "Now I fear disturbance of the quiet seasons" (CPP, p. 176). There is karmic

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[1]Smidt, "Six Chapters," p. 19.

[2]The Rigveda, p. 90.

[3]Eliot, Murder in the Cathedral, in CPP, p. 175. Subsequently, this will be internalized.

destruction: "Root and shoot shall eat our eyes and our ears." (CPP, p. 176) The play contains prophecy: "all the daughters of music shall be brought low" (CPP, p. 179). As in The Waste Land, the living dead here have:

> Succeeded in avoiding notice
> Living and partly living (CPP, p. 176).

The karmic truth is revealed:

> Acting is suffering and suffering is action
> That the pattern may subsist, for the pattern is action,
> And the suffering,
> That the wheel may turn and still
> Be forever still (CPP, p. 182).

Becket also "adopted an ascetic manner of life" (CPP, p. 278). Karmic patterns recur "from generation to generation" (CPP, p. 192). However, the theme of martyrdom along with refusal to even think of oneself as turning the wheel in any way, confirms Eliot's movement from an eastern to a Christian perspective.

The Family Reunion (1939) combines social comedy with Greek tragedy. As its title indicates, the play deals with a family reunion. Harry, the son, has drowned his wife and faces the Furies. In the play, however, one also finds eastern metaphysical images. There is the wheel of samsara "a momentary rest on the burning wheel"[1] and "liberated from the human wheel" (CPP, p. 273). The wheel is linked to spiritual and seasonal cycles in The Family Reunion:

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[1]Eliot, The Family Reunion, in CPP, p. 235. Subsequently, this will be internalized.

The season of birth
Is the season of sacrifice (CPP, pp. 251-2).

Like the wastelanders, "They don't understand what it is to be awake" (CPP, p. 266). As in The Waste Land, the underlying themes of death and rebirth suggest the death of the ego and liberation of the soul from the wheel of time and illusion through patterns of suffering and purification.

Spender points out that in the plays, as well as in Four Quartets (1936-42) "Eliot had expressed his belief in a metaphysical world, and hope for the redemption of each individual; but he still offered no hope for civilization".[1] According to Eliot, it is the individual quest which remains important to "the man who suffers",[2] his "personal and private agonies".[3]

"Burnt Norton" (1936) reveals Eliot's continued interest in aesthetic and metaphysical (both Christian and eastern) problems; and the methods to overcome temporal and spatial limitations. The pattern of time "which is always present" (CPP, p. 118) and space revolves about "the still point of the turning world" (CPP, p. 119) which is not "fixity" but rather a stillness, where "the dance is" (CPP, p. 119). The dance is one of life and death. The quest is for "release from action

[1]Spender, p. 12.

[2]Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," (1919) in Selected Essays, p. 18.

[3]T.S. Eliot, "Poetry and Philosophy," (1927) in Selected Prose, p. 53.

and suffering" (CPP, p. 119) in "the world of sense" (CPP, p. 120), where the soul is "distracted from distraction by distraction" (CPP, p. 120) and where "words / Decay with impressions" (CPP, p. 121). Both art and metaphysics supply transcendent images such as the "heart of light" (CPP, p. 118), birds, flowers and "the pool". The metaphysical image of "a white light still and moving" (CPP, p. 119) is linked to the artistic experience:

> Only by the form, the pattern
> Can words or music reach
> The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
> Moves perpetually in its stillness
> (CPP, p. 121).

Although the serene center is still, "the pattern is movement" (CPP, p. 122), creating an image of the mandala-like wheel of samsara.

"East Coker" (1940) is a continuation of Eliot's metaphysical struggles for the "wisdom of humility" (CPP, p. 126) and for the aesthetic ability "to use words" (CPP, p. 128). The "words and meanings" (CPP, p. 125) are of crucial importance to both art and religion, where:

> The pattern is new in every moment
> And every moment is a new and shocking
> Valuation of all we have been (CPP, p. 125).

Eliot focuses on the karmic cycles "Of death and birth" (CPP, p. 127) sustained by desire: "the coupling of man and woman" (CPP, p. 124). Release from cycles is attained through the refining process of "purgatorial fires" (CPP, p. 128) which, as in The Waste Land, symbolize the acceptance of suffering. This quartet begins with "In my

beginning is my end"(CPP, p. 129) and is completed by:"In my end is my beginning" (CPP, p. 129); evidently the cycles of life and art are congruent.

"Dry Salvages" (1941) is concerned primarily with the themes of time and renunciation. Time is symbolized by Shiva: "Time the destroyer is time the preserver" (CPP, p. 133). The cycles of karma and sin are evident in the line "our own part is covered by the currents of action" (CPP, p. 133) The "past has another pattern" (CPP, p. 132). Aesthetically, the

> approach to the meaning restores the experience in a different form (CPP, p. 133).

Krishna, who "admonished Arjuna" (CPP, p. 135) in the Gītā, advises: "Fare foreward, travellers: not escaping from the past / Into different lives" (CPP, p. 134). To go beyond time and timelessness requires love, attained through "self surrender".

In "Little Gidding" (1942) we again find a fusion of aesthetic and metaphysical concerns:

> the communication
> Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living.
> Here, the intersection of the timeless moment
> Is England and nowhere. Never and always.
> (CPP, p. 139)

The "tongues of flame" (CPP, p. 145) seem to parallel Philomela's inviolable voice in The Waste Land. Similarly, as in The Waste Land and in eastern metaphysics, there is an ambivalent use made of flames, which represent both desire and purgation. We are "Consumed by either fire or fire" (CPP, p. 144) just as we are "redeemed from fire by fire" (CPP, p. 144),

by accepting our need for purification:

> From wrong to wrong the exasperated spirit
> Proceeds, unless restored by that refining fire
> Where you must move in measure, like a dancer:
> (CPP, p. 142).

The "expanding of love beyond desire" (CPP, p. 142) is the ascetic path of becoming "renewed, transfigured, in another pattern" (CPP, p. 142). The ultimate karma of mankind is that "All manner of thing shall be well" (CPP, p. 143), a line which is significant to both western and eastern religous views and which is repeated like a mantric refrain. History "is a pattern / Of timeless moments" (CPP, p. 144) like metaphysics or art.

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