



T.S. ELIOT

1888-1965

“Prufrock”

Life:

- 1. highly influenced by grandfather, mother and father.
- 2. brilliant student, technical proficiency, sense of humor.
- 3. British or American?
- 4. Current sailing images in his poetry?

Style & Works

- 1. Eliot is classicist, innovator, critic, social thinker, philosopher and mystic.
- 2. a writer of poetry, drama, literary and social essays.

His Poetry is divided into 5 phases

- 1. **Juvenilia** (1905-1909).....school boy exercises, published in school and college magazines.
- 2. (1909-1917).....written in Boston, Europe and first year in England.....French symbolists, urban streets, sophisticated people, rottenness and corruption, ironic treatment of love.

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- 3. (1918-1925).....distress, corruption of European civilization, enlarged scope, fragmentation, pessimistic in tone (reasons?), generic, symbolic characters.

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- 4. (1925-1935).....Christian poetry, Anglican church, searching for right way and right solution, traditional imagery and material, optimistic tone.

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- 5. (1935-1943).....more general religious poetry linked to a grim picture of modern society, problems of space and time, life and death, past and future, yet, there is faith and hope.

Theory of Poetry

- Against Georgian poetry.
- Complexity—reaction and reflection.
- Rejection of Subjectivism.

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- Focus on tradition.
 - Impersonality.
 - Intensity.

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- Objective Correlative.
 - Function of Poetry.

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.
Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo
Non torno vivo alcun, s'i'odo il vero,
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.



"If I thought that my reply would be to one who would ever return to the world, this flame would stay without further movement; but since none has ever returned alive from this depth, if what I hear is true, I answer you without fear of infamy."



Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:



Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question ...
Oh, do not ask, “What is it?”

Let us go and make our visit.
In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.



The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the
window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the
window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the
evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from
chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.



And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along
the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window
panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that
you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,



And time for all the works and days of
hands

That lift and drop a question on your
plate;

Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,

And for a hundred visions and revisions,

Before the taking of a toast and tea.



In the room the women come
and go
Talking of Michelangelo.



Thanks for Your Patience