

Candidate 4

T.S. Eliot is a modernist poet who discusses aspects of change, in 'The Hollow Men', 'The Lovesong of J Alfred Prufrock' and 'The Wasteland'. All three poems incorporate the idea of a changing society after in ~~Europe's~~ ~~ruination~~ in Europe due to its ruination after the First World War. During this time, Eliot witnessed a change in ~~societies~~ morals as the ~~power~~ authority of the church and religion lost their impact on ~~influencing~~ people. Society.

The poem, 'The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock', discusses the change in sexual relation due to societies change in morality. Prufrock is a character struggling to cope with the tediousness of social expectations ~~during the~~ ~~Victor~~ ~~He~~ ~~suffers~~ and pressures his inward desires which were not acceptable as a result of Victorian repression. ~~Through the poem~~ ~~there are~~ allusions to 'His inability to express his desires and frustrations, 'It is impossible to say just what I mean.' exacerbates his introverted nature and sexual inadequacy. Eliot's allusion to Shakespeare highlights Prufrock's negativity of his ~~own~~ self-image. 'No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be; just like Prufrock, Hamlet's greatest fault was his indecisive personality. Although there is a sense of irony as Hamlet is a Hero figure and Prufrock isn't. He then compares himself to the King's fool who is a minor character and ultimately at the receiving end of jokes. This conveys Prufrock's ~~negative~~ self inadequacy. Another aspect of change that Eliot discusses is the contrast in

morality during the era set in the poem. He presents us with 'tea and cakes and ices,' which is a metonym for social convention and highlights the Victorian enforcement of traditional values. However, the poem reaches a suggested climax point as Prufrock contemplates whether he has 'the strength to force the moment to its crisis.' Word choice of crisis has a sexual undertone and is contrasted with an allusion to the Bible, 'I have wept and fasted,' which is an allusion to the Bible where Jesus ventures into the desert and encounters the Devil. This contrast suggests Prufrock's guilt at his sexual thoughts so he supplements this with a Bible reference. By doing this he is conforming with Victorian ideals. 'The Hollow Men,' also looks at the desire for intimacy which cannot be fulfilled. The sexual connotations when the hollow men 'grope together' is negative a desperate and almost instinctual desire for human contact which mirrors Prufrock's situation perfectly. This suppression of the sexual represents the modern man trying to come to terms with human desires in a changing era.

The effect of war on the human psyche is another aspect of change that Eliot also explores. In 'The Hollow Men' he presents us with a group of people in a state of limbo and, as stated in Steve Ellis' 'A Guide for the Perplexed', 'condemned to spend eternity in a kind of waiting room (though they have nothing to wait for) on the very outskirts of the hereafter.' The hollow

men could possibly be the soldiers killed in the First World War who are damned and waiting to be judged. They feel forgotten (or forsaken) by God as they 'Form prayers to broken Stone.' which suggests that the hollow men are worshipping false idols. The choice of the word, 'stone', suggests lifelessness and coldness which could link to their spiritual and physical desolation. This reference to God's abandonment of the soldiers in the afterlife echoes the impossibility of remembering the individual after mass murder. Another change in the poem is the representation of Europe itself. The town setting in which the hollow men find themselves in is a 'dead land' and a 'cactus land.' Both of these suggest a lack of growth and their desire for rebirth which could ~~mirror~~ be symbolic of the contemporary situation. ~~as Europe post war was Europe~~ The image, 'Lost Kingdoms' could represent Europe at the time ~~at~~ after the WWI and the disjointedness of the nations. ~~The Waste Land~~ 'The Waste Land' also discusses the effects of the war on the living. The 'Unreal City' is a ~~description of~~ ~~the~~ London. The people crossing the bridge are those affected by war and are like Dante's characters who sinned by inaction. Even though Eliot's characters haven't died, the death of those in war created a personal 'hell' for the public. This emphasises the ~~bleak~~ bleak psyche at the time.

Another change that Eliot experienced was the change in religion. 'The Hollow Men' fear

judgement day, 'Let me be no nearer,' as they are aware that they have lead a spiritualless life.

In conclusion Eliot discusses many aspects of change in his poetry. Particularly the change in man's psyche post war in Europe. ~~and its~~