

# Writing Women in Eliot's *The Waste Land*: Hysteria, Masculinity, and Silence

Arwa Al-Mubaddel\*

Department of English Language and Literature, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

\*Corresponding author: Arwa Al-Mubaddel; e-mail: [aalmubaddel@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:aalmubaddel@ksu.edu.sa)

Received: 06 February 2016

Accepted: 10 March 2016

Online: 26 March 2016

## ABSTRACT

Considered to be a twentieth-century masterpiece, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* has been the subject of much scrutiny, especially concerning Ezra Pound's role in the composition of the poem. Eliot himself affirms the function of Pound as a "co-creator" of the poem, dedicating it to him, while completely dismissing the influence his first wife as his personal editor. Therefore, this research examines Ezra Pound's drafting and editing of Eliot's *The Waste Land* facsimile, revealing their misogynistic attitudes towards what they deemed to be feminine in the text, including the notes and comments of Eliot's first wife, as well a character named Fresca, who was omitted from the final version of the poem. Further study of the poem's drafts show the hysterical and disorderly nature of the text, which leads to Pounds masculinization of the poem, which reveals his and Eliot's anxieties and tensions surrounding women in general, and women writers in particular.

**Keywords:** Facsimile, Eliot, Pound, Femininity, Hysteria, Misogyny.

## INTRODUCTION

T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* has an indisputable place as the quintessential modernist poem with more than three hundred scholarly books and articles written about it since its publication in 1922. For several years, critics have considered *The Waste Land* to be expressive of a post-World War I generation's disillusionment with Western civilization, now in ruins due to the degeneracy of war that claimed more than five million lives. However, since the publication of *The Waste Land* facsimile and transcription of the original drafts in 1971, and Eliot's personal letters from the years 1898 to 1922 in 1988 by his second wife and inheritor of his estate Valerie Eliot, a new trend in criticism emerged focusing on the composition of the poem. The manuscripts not only revealed the strenuous effort it took for the poem to be what it is today, it also revealed the substantial editing of Ezra Pound and Eliot's first wife Vivien. The manuscripts and letters also gave critics the material to examine the personal roots of the poem as well as the persistent effort it took to sculpt the poem into a modernist masterpiece. In further examining *The Waste Land* manuscript and T.S. Eliot's life, issues that arise are the nature of Eliot and Pound's alliance in editing *The Waste Land*, as well as Vivien's influence in its composition, and the position of

the silenced female of the original drafts. *The Waste Land* manuscript shows the hysterical and disorderly nature of the text, uncovers the masculine operation Pound performs on the text, and reveals further anxieties and tensions surrounding women, specifically in downplaying Vivien's influence on the text and omitting the character of Fresca from the finalized version of the poem.

In their 1893 *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud and Breuer establish a connection between common hysteria and traumatic neuroses and extend to both concepts to form a new one, that of traumatic hysteria, which is triggered by fright and psychical trauma. Any experience that has a distressing outcome whether it is feelings of shame, anxiety or even physical pain is a trauma of that kind. In other words, the hysterical phenomenon develops from psychological traumas. The splitting of consciousness under the form of "double consciousness" is present to rudimentary degree in every case of hysteria, and with it emerges abnormal states of consciousness which Freud and Breuer term "hypnoid". The hypnoid states are the basic phenomena of traumatic hysteria and they differ from each other yet are similar in being intense and being cut off from "associative communication" with the content of the consciousness. These hypnoid states

are already present before the onset of an illness. Freud asserts as a fact that there may be people of the "clearest of intellect, strongest of will, greatest character, and highest critical power" among hysterics. Hysterics in their waking states are entirely the same, yet in their hypnoid states they are deemed insane; in some instances the effects of the hypnoid states may even intrude into their waking lives and consciousness (Breuer and Freud 5-13).

In the case of a "hysterical" young woman called Anna O, Freud describes her narratives and speech as having the "character of more freely- created poetical compositions." After a long holiday vacation, Freud visits Anna to administer the "talking cure" only to find her in an anxious state of as he felt that her "imaginative and poetic vein" was "drying up." Her speech, instead of being "elaborated poetic productions" like they were before were now formulated into "stereotypical images." Through Anna's entire illness, she altered between different states of consciousness; a primary one in which she was psychically normal, and a second dream-like existence characterized by the "wealth of imaginative products and hallucinations, its large gaps of memory and lack of inhibition and control in its associations." The secondary state is also seen as a state of alienation (Breuer and Freud 29- 45).

Like Anna O, Eliot suffered from what could be called male hysteria which is exhibited in his writing of *The Waste Land*. Similar to Freud's characterization of Anna's space, *The Waste Land* is a collage of "freely created poetical compositions" and has a dream-like quality in its complex symbolism and other-worldly imagery. Lawrence Rainey, the first to study and write about *The Waste Land* manuscripts, recognizes the centrality of Eliot's personal problems in its composition. The years of 1914 to 1922, in which Eliot composed his masterpiece, were a very difficult time for him financially, spiritually, and emotionally. Not only was Eliot worried about money, which was prompted by Vivien's medical bills, he was also going through strains in his marriage and was struggling to have his work published, and was striving for recognition and approval among the English and his parents back in America. Eliot was in a precarious state that compelled his wife Vivien to take action and arrange for him to see a "nerve specialist," who prescribed a three month strict regimen of rest, change, and convalescence, ordering him not to write poetry (Rainey 11- 23).

A psychiatrist by the name of Harry Truman, who treated Eliot, describes his condition as being:

Depression with exhaustion, indecisiveness, hypochondriasis, and fear of psychosis. His personality has been aloof and distance and he guarded himself against the intrusions of other with icy urbanity. Compulsive defenses enabled him to isolate his emotions. Sexuality was a potent danger not only because intense conflict but because instinctual forces

threatened him with loss of ego control and dominance (Seymour-Jones 297).

While Eliot espoused an impersonal theory of poetry, some critics recognize *The Waste Land* as being expressive of his own personal disillusion and despair, and see in the poem material from his own life. Carole Seymour-Jones explains that Dr. Trosman's diagnosis of Eliot is in accord with his own feelings of a disintegrating self and a sense of an ill-fitting masculinity. Trosman also supported the notion that *The Waste Land* was a form of "self-analytic," which he believes is supported by the lines written toward the end of the poem "These fragments I have shored against my ruins" which describes a process of "partial integration" (Seymour-Jones 297). Since the publication of *The Waste Land*, Eliot has always emphasized the personal significance of the poem, denying any comic significance to be derived from the poem and also fervently rejecting critics view of the poem as expressing "the disillusion of a generation." Eliot may have been one of the first "confessional" poets by considering his poems, especially *The Waste Land* to be expressing only his private experience and a means "to get something off of one's chest" (Eliot as quoted by (Bradbrook 22- 23). Tim Dean also reads *The Waste Land* as "an act of therapy and exorcism," "an exercise in person catharsis," and as if it were a confessional poem in the mode of Robert Lowell (52).

Eliot himself was not unfamiliar with the concept of hysteria; however he expresses an unhealthy attitude and sees it as a solely female attribute. In a short prose poem published in 1920, Eliot writes the following poem entitled "Hysteria":

As she laughed I was aware of becoming involved in her laughter and being part of it, until her teeth were only accidental stars with a talent for squad-drill. I was drawn in by short gasps, inhaled at each momentary recovery, lost finally in the dark caverns of her throat, bruised by the ripple of unseen muscles. An elderly waiter with trembling hands was hurriedly spreading a pink and white checked cloth over the rusty green iron table, saying: "If the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden, if the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden..." I decided that if the shaking of her breasts could be stopped, some of the fragments of the afternoon might be collected, and I concentrated my attention with careful subtlety to this end.

The poem is told from the point of view of a man who, in a restaurant with a woman, witnesses her outrageous and bawdy laughter, and feels consumed by her frantic movements and gaping mouth. The woman's laughter is a sign of her sexual agency or "phallicism" and it ridicules the male speaker who is both sexually and creatively impotent. The over-gaping mouth of the woman is aggressive in signifying overarching sexual power (Lamos 84). In the psychoanalysis propagated by Freud and with which Eliot was familiar, a woman who exhibited symptoms of hysteria would sometimes develop symptoms such as excessive laughter,

incessant coughing, and breathing difficulties to express a conscious or unconscious desire for physical intimacy. It was even thought that a hysterical woman's troubles with breathing are due to a "displacement sensation" from the abdomen to the mouth and throat. For MacDiarmid, "Hysteria" "oozes physicality" and the violent laughter and shaking breasts make the woman's body vulgar (41). The woman becomes a giant snake devouring her prey alive. She further argues that the speaker witnesses his own assault, the "elderly waiter with the trembling hands" becoming disturbed by witnessing this harassment (MacDiarmid 43).

However, other critics see the poem as reflecting the hysteria of the speaker and his anxieties with female sexuality. The speaker's ego is in a state of terror due to the "forces that threaten to overwhelm it." He attempts to keep his ego intact through linguistic mastery yet like a "paranoid-schizoid," the speaker becomes fixated with parts of the laughing woman—namely her teeth, throat, and breasts (Pinkney 19- 23). To escape the woman's hysteria, the speaker attempts to regain control through writing, which serves as a phallic power in writing the woman's disease; he can write her own end and through a master narrative counteract the confusion and feelings of being overwhelmed by the woman's hysteria (MacDiarmid 45). Koestenbaum and Lamos identify the speaker of the poem with Eliot himself; they argue that the poem "Hysteria" is Eliot's own personal experience with a hysterical woman, most likely his wife Vivien, who mortified her husband by public blatant and loud displays of emotion (117, 82).

For Kostenbaum, Vivien's hysteria and *The Waste Land* are both related "editorial events," as Eliot left both his wife and the poem's manuscript in Pound's care to disburden himself of "hysterical presences" in 1916, before her went to Lausanne to be treated for his mental and neurological illnesses (120). In his award-winning article "The Waste Land: Eliot and Pound's Collaboration on Hysteria," Koestenbaum makes the case that *The Waste Land* manuscript denotes Eliot's own mental breakdown, and that Ezra Pound's work on the poem turned it from a chaotic and hysterical rambling to a powerfully disjunctive poem. *The Waste Land* is affiliated with the discourse hysteria very much like the discontinuities of Anna O's speech. In this sense, Pound's position to Eliot and his poetic fragments is analogous to Freud's position to Anna O. Freud is a collaborator who interprets the hysteric's riddles to Breuer (the other male collaborator) and male readers. Freud is like midwife who helps deliver a sane self from a "hysterical pregnancy". For Kostenbaum, *The Waste Land* manuscript is like the hysterical discourse and "private theater" of Anna O, with Pound acting as a psychoanalyst who works on the "curative" arrival of the poem to male readers. As Eliot's own mental breakdown was a condition of the poem's composition, Koestenbaum describes Eliot's affliction as being male hysteria and asserts that there was something "feminine" about Eliot's emotional paralysis and barren

condition when he was composing *The Waste Land*. The whole process of poetic production was a "cathartic birth." Another point he makes is that the biological attribute of women such as menstruation and childbirth were central to Eliot's poetry and that Pound takes the roles of the midwife to the poem, while Vivien Eliot embodies the hysteria that *The Waste Land* suffers from and portrays (115-118).

In addition to describing Pound as the midwife of *The Waste Land*, Kostenbaum also sets up Pound as Eliot's male muse by making the assertion that: "Pound is the Sire of The Waste Land." Kostenbaum even goes as far as to say, metaphorically speaking, that Pound "impregnated" Eliot with his creative seed (123). In 1954, introducing Pound's literary essay, Eliot describes Pound as one who would "cajole, and almost coerce, other men into writing poetry well" (Eliot as quoted by Bradbrook 27). Although Pound propagated Eliot's work, his relationship with Eliot is described as one of "domineering patronage," with Pound urging Eliot to suppress his religious poetry and continue on with the "Sweeney" poems that were explicitly violent against women. Pound sought to establish with Eliot a culture of "machismo" which entails "a virulent anti-feminism" which was expressed in Pound and Eliot's correspondences (Pinkney 58). The correspondence between Eliot and Pound show a homo-social literary relationship which was also a misogynist one as they both shared a dislike of women writers and an aversion to literary salons hosted by women. Eliot and Pound envisioned an elitist masculine literary salon where women were excluded and where literary men will find a sanctuary from the "femininity" of contemporary life (Kostenbaum 120). The publisher Eliot sought out for the publication of *The Waste Land*, John Quinn, also participated in this aversion to women's literary writing. Quinn at one point describes female literary writing as "excrements" and "menstruation" with the "mental stink of a natural skunk" (Kostenbaum 123). It is this kind of sexist mentality that underlies the omitted Fresca passages in *The Waste Land* drafts which will be discussed in the later on.

Furthermore, Pound treated the drafts of *The Waste Land* as a case of an effeminate male he wished to rouse. He cures the poem of its hysteria by expunging it the central representations of femininity and masculinizing the poem's core (Kostenbaum 125). In speaking of sexual inversion, Freud argues that a universal characteristic of male inverts is that they retain the mental quality of masculinity, although they possess few of the characteristics of the opposite sex (Freud 1905: 144). Pound objected to the initial drafts of *The Waste Land* and changed them drastically, cancelling out most representation of female subjectivity, as it portrayed a feminine mental state which in turn compromises the mental quality of masculinity. Pound and Eliot's project in creating a revolution in poetry was a "phallic act" and this may very well be the reason why Pound advised Eliot to omit the initial epigraph he had in mind for the poem

quoted from Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* "The horror! the horror!" since it may be considered an "emasculating" cry of terror.

Despite what was initially considered by Pound as an effeminate text, the male ego does take an assertive space in the drafts of *The Waste Land*. In unpublished verses, Eliot writes:

I am the Resurrection and the Life (I)  
I am the things that stay, and those that flow.  
I am the husband and the wife  
And the victim and the sacrificial knife  
I am the fire and the butter also (WLF 111).

These lines deal with the speaker's all-encompassing self-referent ego- libido which may also be describes as a narcissistic libido. From the viewpoint of psychoanalysis, the narcissistic libido which is directed inwards to the self, cannot always be distinguished from the object-libido in which is directed to someone or something outside a person's self (Freud 1905: 216). Eliot had anxieties about his own masculinity and expressed in a letter to his friend Conrad Aiken that: "I should find it very stimulating to have several women fall in love with me- several because that makes the practical side less evident. And I should be very sorry for them too" (Eliot as quoted by MacDiarmid 49). This male bravado shows a narcissistic and self-serving ego.

In a further attempt to regain his masculinity and distance himself from the "hysteria" of his text, Eliot writes accompanying notes to *The Waste Land* to establish him as the father of text for which references are made. This act restores the shattered ego of the poem and gives Eliot's interpretation of the poem precedence over any other reading. His citations "announce his allegiance to a host of literary fathers with whom he identifies and to whose authority he submits" (Lamos 58). He surrenders to the literary paternal lineage in an act of "moral masochism" in which Eliot acts as a son who submits to his literary forefathers with his citations representing gestures of love and restitution toward the father figure (Lamos 59). Eliot's paternal citations also establish a masculinity surrounding his text in referring to only male writers and opt for male readers and a literary homo-sociality. Eliot's "compulsion to citation" is an attempt for him to discipline himself and disassociate himself with the hysteria *The Waste Land* embodies. It is precisely this identification with male authority that leads Eliot to portray women in an abject manner. The act of writing is in itself an act of phallic power and the transmission of literary influence is to ensure the continuity and of a masculine literary tradition that is exclusive to women. A woman who writes or hosts literary salons, and engages in intellectual conversations of the time was a phallic woman who usurped the role of the father. Eliot acknowledged that the main problem of modernist literature was female power (Lamos 81). Therefore, Eliot regarded his poetry as an extension of the masculine tradition and

therefore considered female literary authority as a threat.

Before his literary partnership with Pound, Eliot has always relied on Vivien's literary skill and encouragement; however her role in the composition of *The Waste Land* has been marginalized and even forgotten. While composing *The Waste Land*, Eliot wrote to Sydney Schiff: "I have done a rough draft of part III, but do not know whether it will do, and must wait for Vivien's opinion as to whether it is printable" (as quoted by Rainey 25-7).

In the second section of *The Waste Land* titled "A Game of Chess" the drafts show Vivien's influence. She was the one who changed the title from "In the Cage" to "A Game of Chess, she also writes "WONDERFUL" on the section where there is a conversation between a man and woman "My nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad. Stay with me . . . etc." The next dialogue beginning with "Do you know nothing?" is also commended by her and both are published. Vivien makes changes in wording in inserting the word bottle after hot water in line 59 of this section. As for line 85 which originally was "It's that medicine I took in order to bring it off" became more conversational with Vivien's changes which turned it to "It's that pills I took to bring it off" (13 WLF). Line 164 of "A Game of Chess" was originally "You want to keep him at home, I suppose" yet Vivien crosses out this line and inserts "What you get married for if you don't want to have children" which Elliot incorporates in subsequent drafts and the published version. Vivien also writes "splendid last lines" for the ending of the section. Vivien then makes the following note to Eliot "Make any of these alterations - or none if you prefer. Send me back this copy and let me have it" (WLF 15). This shows the non-imposing and non-intrusive way Vivien's influence was, unlike Pound whose tone was more critical and whose editorial strokes were sharper. Vivien's suggestions have been taken up by Eliot yet since this typescript, which was in Eliot's possession and later inherited by his second wife, it can be concluded that Vivien did not receive this leaf that she requested specifically.

While Vivien commends the representations of female subjectivity in the poem's drafts; two instances beginning with "my nerves are bad tonight" and "are you alive or not? Is there nothing in your head?" Pound is wary of these passages and criticizes them with the annotation "photography" for the first sequence and "photo" for the second. The significance of these lines is that it concerns a woman's refusal to comply with conjugal duties, yet it also implies the man's sexual impotency (Kostenbaum 126-7). Carole Seymour-Jones, who wrote the ground-breaking biography of Vivien Eliot, argues that this section of *The Waste Land* is a reflection of Vivien and Eliot's marriage; it is a "virtual transcript" of Vivien's own personal assaults at Eliot. Vivien complained of Eliot's silence in a letter to a friend saying: "of course he is so reserved and peculiar, that he never says anything and one cannot get him to

speak" (Seymour-Jones 308). Readers familiar with Eliot and Vivien associated "A Game of Chess" with their marriage. John Beale Bishop had written to Edmund Wilson that according to Pound, the first part of the section is about Eliot's marriage (Brooker 136).

*The Waste Land* facsimile also shows that the drafts of "The Fire Sermon" began with 70 lines that were unpublished. These lines detail of "the white-armed Fresca" who is "aroused from dreams of love and pleasant rapes" (3-4 p.23). Fresca has just woken from bed, and summons her servant Amanda to bring her a tray of "soothing chocolate" and "simulating tea" but before having her tea, "Fresca slips softly to the needful stool/Where the pathetic tale of Richardson/Eases her labor before the deed is done" (11-14 p.23). Fresca then slips back into the sheets of her bed where she has her breakfast as her "hands caress the egg's well-rounded dome" (17 p.23). Fresca then tends to her letters where a friend asks her about her "manoeuvres" and "new lovers" (33-34 p.23). She then leaves her bed to her "steaming bath" where the French perfumes "disguise the good old hearty female stench" (41 p.23).

Initially, Fresca was a character Vivien wrote about under the initial FM (pseudonym Fanny Marlow) to *The Criterion* (vol.2, No.7, 1924). The lines that occur are almost identical to the ones in *The Waste Land* drafts, yet the "amorous" Fresca here is "aroused from dreams of love in curious shapes," not "pleasant rapes" (127 WLF). The movement of Fresca is also different in the end; in Eliot's version she moves to the bath whereas in Vivien's version she sits in her boudoir contemplating different works of art. Valerie Eliot, Eliot's second wife and editor of *The Waste Land* facsimile, explains that it was actually Eliot who wrote these verses under Vivien's name, and as editor of *The Criterion* it amused him to print what he saw as a "few poor verses". It cannot be definitely known who thought of the Fresca character, but it is safe to infer that both Vivien and Eliot were involved in her construction.

What is disturbing about Eliot's verses of Fresca is that they may be attributed to a male voyeuristic speaker, a peeping-tom who takes pleasure in seeing Fresca go to the bathroom and sit on a stool. There is a perversion here with a fixation of seeing the female and invading her privacy. According to Freud, seeing is an act derived from touching and visual impressions are the most frequent way that excites a person sexually. When interested in the beauty of the sexual object, the seeing is considered normal to some proportion, however this pleasure in looking, termed scopophilia, becomes a perversion if it restricted only to looking at private parts, or if it is connected with overriding disgust, such as people who look on at excretory functions (Freud 1905: 165). The mentioning of Fresca reading Richardson while she relieves herself in the bathroom conveys "primitive impulses" regarding personal odor and even staunch smells become dangerous reminders of forbidden pleasures (Pinkney 86).

Having Fresca wake up from "dreams of pleasant rapes" suggests the speaker's sadism. Eliot's early poetry show a fascination with raped and violated figures such as Saint Sebastian and Narcissus, yet it is not merely a presentation of abject bodies, these figures represent a "poetic ideal," due to his impersonality theory of poetry that leads to his vulnerability in imagining violated states (Dean 45). For Eliot, the female body is "a site of a repulsive violence" and women do not have the morality nor the principles in which they recognize the violence directed at them (Potter 225). The rapes are described as pleasant because, for Eliot, the female body does not recognize violence in this act and will always want it due to her insatiable appetite.

The tone of the speaker in the verses about Fresca, one critic puts forth, is "as uncertain as a boy's voice that is breaking-they crackle with Freudian implications" (Bradbrook 19). The speaker describing Fresca can be read as "psychoneurotic" that shows great degree of sexual repression, and an intense resistance against the sexual instinct with feelings of shame, disgust, and morality. A psychoneurotic that also has the scopophilic perversion, may be more disposed to cruelty as his symptoms involves suffering for dominating his behavior. In scopophilia the person's eye is directed to an erotogenic zone, most likely being the skin (Freud 1905: 169). In the Fresca verses, the only physical description of her that the speaker mentions is her bare white-arms and it is her hands that "caress" the egg's white domes as she is having her breakfast. The speaker's propensity for cruelty is evident in the way he describes her as "bruised and marred" as well as describing her as a "doorstep being dung by every dog in town." The speaker, by evoking this image, wants to reduce Fresca into something disgusting and undesirable.

In the second draft of the "Fire Sermon" Eliot again opens with the character of Fresca yet he completely abandons the lines of the earlier draft which are calmer in tone and give a stronger sense of Fresca's lethargy. The intrigue surrounding Fresca's character is now brought to the forefront:

Fresca! In other time or place had been  
A meek and lowly weeping Magdalene;  
More sinned against than sinning, (I) bruised and marred,  
The lazy laughing Jenny of the bard (40-44 p. 27)

From these lines it becomes clear the Fresca is a prostitute that comes to represent all fallen women, and an allusion is made to Dante Gabriel Rossetti's poem "Jenny" that describes a "lazy laughing languid Jenny/Fond of a kiss and fond of a guinea" (2-3) which is also an allusion to a prostitute in mentioned in Shakespeare *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Eliot conflates the attributes of Fresca to the "Jenny of the bard" and establishes a genealogy between her and Rossetti and Shakespeare prostitute. She becomes an archetype of the blasé and indulgent prostitute. Fresca has "an internal and consuming itch" (46) that lead to

her promiscuity to the extent that she is compared to a “doorstep dinged by every dog in town” (52). Fresca has “Unreal emotions, and real appetite” (54 p.27), or in other words her feelings of love and affection for her men are fake, yet her voracious desire is genuine. Fresca is also a woman of intellect and her lust for carnality is matched by her hunger for knowledge. On the nights she lies alone, Fresca “scribbles verse of such gloomy tone” (65).

Fresca is condemned by the poet for being a scribbling upper class woman with “indolent” intellectuality. She is vilified for being a degenerate social prostitute who satisfies and indulges “perverse” desires, in prostitution and excessive reading and writing. Fresca self-indulges herself with writing and this indulgence is conflated with her promiscuity and the acting of eating itself. In the drafts of the Fresca verses, Pound first crosses out more than half of the line, instead focusing on the next sequence in which “a rat crept softly through the vegetation” (73 p.27) which he puts brackets and notes as “O.K.” and “STET”. In the third draft of the Fresca verses, Pound puts a question mark by that sequence and in the marginalia describes it as “Too loose” and comments that “the rhyme drags it to diffuseness” (39 WLF). He then draws a vertical line along the verses beginning “A rat crept softly” (73 p.41) and writes “(Echt),” a German word which means authentic.

In his preface to Pound’s poems in 1928 Eliot mentions that Pound has pressured him to destroy what he thought were an “excellent set of couplets” due to their resemblance to Pope’s poetry which Pound regarded as inauthentic, yet he later on recants by calling the canceled out verses “a rather poor pastiche,” seeing that “a fashionable lady having breakfast in bed” belonged to another poetry sequence (Bradbrook 18).

In the fourth leaf of “The Fire Sermon” draft, Eliot introduces new verses of: “The typist home at teatime, who begins/ To clear s her broken breakfast way her (broken) breakfast” (130-2 p.45) which continue on for three stanzas, four lines each. Pound notes recommends cancelling out these verses, noting that they are “not interesting enough as verse to warrant so much of it” and that they are “inversions not warranted by any real experience of metre” and for the third stanza he writes a brief “not good” (WLF 45). However, the cancellation of these verses are most likely to be an objection to woman writing seeing as that makes her a phallic woman in a poem where the men are emasculated and sterile. Eliot and Pound have already shared a dislike of women writers and female literary salons and if they propose to achieve an elitist and masculine tradition in their poetic revolution there would be no place for a women writer in their verse.

Thus, *The Waste Land* drafts and manuscripts unraveled some of mystery and intrigue surrounding

the composition of this stunning success of a poem, despite the fact that it cannot be all attributed to a poet’s genius as three people had a hand in its composition. The discourse of hysteria is useful in understanding the disorderliness of the drafts and the psychological and neurological difficulties Eliot experienced while writing the poem. *The Waste Land* can be read as the ramblings of a hysteric in the Freudian sense, however this effeminate hysteria lead Eliot to surrender his text to Pound who, in an attempt to masculinize the poem’s core, cancelled out what he deemed as feminine and weak. Pound’s influence on the text has been acknowledged by many critics, with Kostenbaum describing the writing process as collaboration between Eliot and Pound, as well as crediting Pound with the fathering and deliverance of the text. Eliot has also done his part in masculinizing the text by establishing a literary genealogy with literary fathers through his numerous citations and explanatory notes to *The Waste Land*. Vivien Eliot’s influence on the poem’s composition, on the other hand, has been largely overlooked, despite her mastery of dialogues and her giving Eliot one of the best lines in the poem, which is “What do you get married for if you don’t want to have children”. The drafts also reveal an omitted character by the name of Fresca, which Eliot borrowed from Vivien, yet transforms into a fallen woman stereotype and an object of male voyeurism.

## REFERENCES

1. Bradbrook, Muriel Clara., and Ian Scott-Kilvert. *T. S. Eliot: The Making of The Waste Land*. Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1972. Print.
2. Breuer, Josef, Sigmund Freud, and James Strachey. *Studies on Hysteria*. London: Penguin, 1991. Print.
3. Dean, Tim. “T.S. Eliot, Famous Clairvoyante.” *Gender, Desire, and Sexuality in T.S. Eliot*. Ed. Cassandra Laity and Nancy K. Gish. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. 43. Print.
4. Eliot, T. S. *Collected Poems, 1909-1962*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963. Print.
5. Eliot, T. S., Ezra Pound, and Valerie Eliot. *The Waste Land*. London (3 Queen Sq., WC1N 3AU): Faber and Faber, 1971. Print.
6. Freud, Sigmund, and A. A. Brill. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Las Vegas, NV: Lits, 2010. Print.
7. Freud, Sigmund. *On Sexuality: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. London: Penguin, 1991. Print.
8. Koestenbaum, Wayne. “*The Waste Land*: T.S. Eliot’s and Ezra Pound’s Collaboration on Hysteria.” *Twentieth Century Literature* 34 (1988): 113-39.
9. Lamos, Colleen. *Deviant Modernism: Sexual and Textual Errancy in T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge UP, 1998. Print.
10. Pinkney, Tony. *Women in the Poetry of T.S. Eliot: A Psychoanalytic Approach*. London: MacMillan, 1984. Print.
11. Rainey, Lawrence S. *Revisting the Waste Land*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005. Print.
12. Seymour-Jones, Carole. *Painted Shadow*. New York: Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, 2002. Print.

© 2016; AIZEON Publishers; All Rights Reserved

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

\*\*\*\*\*