**Introduction to modernist poetry**

The poem consist on a series of dramatic monologue so the reader can listen to different voices. The title of the work is *“the waist land”* that probably appears grey, brown, arid, empty, desolated, sterile, an Italian traduced this title: “la terra guasta”. The poem was published in 1922 that was an important period for literature; it was written by T.S. Eliot. It is dedicated to Ezra Pound and is an imagery poem. The poem starts with a dedication and a quotation from Greek: the epigraph is from Satyricon, written by Petronio “del resto la sibilla a Cuma l’ho vista anche io, con i miei occhi, penzolare dentro un ampolla e quando i fanciulli le chiedevano: “Sibilla, cosa vuoi?” lei rispondeva: “Voglio morire!”. The intelligent reader understand from the title, the quotation and the title of the first part, that the first section of the poem deals with death. This poem, with juxtaposed scenes, deals with the changes of the occidental culture and sensibility, also with the difficulties of find the sense of life. There is a necessity of regenerate the spirit and get out of this death world.

**THE BURIAL OF THE DEATH**

**ANALYSES:** Usually April is not cruel, is a good spring month but the author considered April the cruellest month; he’s changes the traditional in something new 🡪 it is a paradoxes use of language. In the prologue of Canterbury Tale, Chaucer said that April is a positive month, the sweetest. So Eliot returns to Chaucer because he is the first to use English in poetry. The traditional meaning of April is the reborn of nature but T.S Eliot can’t call it sweet because in modern age there isn’t any promise, people are spiritually devastated, lost, isolated so April can’t bring a reborn because people lost the sense of life and hope. Eliot said that April “breeds” Lilac: flowers used in the funeral/cemetery because the land is death. April mixes in people minds memories and expectations, it is a new concept of time that is simultaneous. Eliot said that winter keeps us cold because it covered the word with *“forgetful”* snow (personification/metaphorical language) that protects people 🡪 the outside world seems menacing, so the people remains in their house to protect themselves from the outside. In winter heart only give us dry tubers and our life is said to be a little life (alliteration that underlines the difficult condition of people, they suffer spiritually because they don’t seems to find any realistic sense of life) 🡪 Eliot extern the concept of sterility.

Eliot with this poem try to make the people regenerate on the emotional, physical and spiritual level so he searched a myth that connect all these themes. He choose the text rite of vegetation, especially “The Fisher King”, a figure that usually appears in fertility stories 🡪 the king can’t have children for a genital illness and also for his age. He can get out from this situation only if a stranger answer to certain ritual question.

After winter he starts to speaks about summer. The speaking voices use the subject “we” and says that summer “surprise us”. He speaks when he and his consciousness are near a lake, he refers to a lake near Munich: “Stambergersee” where the mad king Ludvic the second had died in a ship break, inside water. The first reference will give the name to a section of the waist land: “ Death by water”. After that he characters are in a park in Munich and starts to rain so he and someone else where compelled to stop under the colonnade. When the rains stop they went on in the sunlight. After that they have coffee and talk for an hour. T.S. Eliot choose the lake and Munich because he use a kind of poetry innovative, because he use an unusual stretcher 🡪 he use disconnected scenes that are linked between the atmosphere and the **myth**.

Eliot use “**objective correlative**” 🡪 poets use object to create connection with something else. Correlative means put something in relation with something else: for example Eliot creates a connection between object (snow, dry tubers) and the idea of **sterility2** that is the icon of the modern word. People in this period, because of the war, are living a life in death because they haven’t any value, man have no desires. 🡪 the most important are water and rocks. The objective correlative makes the readers fell the emotions of the author: *“the only way to express the emotion is through the objective correlative”* cit. Eliot.

**UNREAL CITY**

Commuters are going to work, the setting is London and precisely Westminster: the financial/business district of London. People are leaving the underground, the city appears unreal. Eliot conveys the idea of this unreal city 🡪 the scene is set in dawn and it is foggy, so people can’t see properly. The fog besides been an atmospherically event is a metaphor to express the situation of confusion. Each identity his lost, people are a crowd, there is a sense of missing 🡪 they are so many people that the poet use the verb “flows”, a verb usually used for rivers. He use also a quotation from Dante when he speaks about people who are going to hell “si lunga tratta di gente che io non avrei creduto…” 🡪 so he creates a connection between middle age and modern society. Then he seems to recognize someone between the people, Eliot screams to the man quoting the Battle of Milazzo 🡪 *It is a paradox that want to express that human are the same during centuries 🡪* Instead the narrative method, Eliot use the mythic method that connect different times and places.