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A Critical Enquiry of Marco Malvestio's Eco-dystopia in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*

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Abstract

Anthropocene in current timeline has been the center of every ecological and environmental discourse and its representation in apocalyptic narratives stands as one of the most appealing and intriguing depiction of eco-dystopia. Italian scholar Marco Malvestio theorizes the concept of eco-dystopia which he collected from the frame of science-fictions. According to him these measures are apt yet limited since anthropocene is a complex matter and more than a mere apocalyptic event. Malvestio's measures of what eco-dystopia is or not and T.S. Eliot's Wasteland are blended in this paper to explore the knowledge pool of eco-dystopia.

Keywords: *Eco-dystopia, Anthropocene, catastrophe, climate, ecosphere, habitat, apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic*

The current geological epoch is termed as the Anthropocene era which is a human centric period that affects and influences every element in the ecosphere on a global scale. Anthropocene in current timeline has been the center of every ecological and environmental discourse. Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin in "Defining the Anthropocene" states that, "Human activity is now global and is the dominant cause of most contemporary environmental change" (171). They state that the current human centered actions which began affecting earth's ecosystem ages ago and its collateral impacts to the environment is equivalent to the events of meteor strike that occurred millions of years ago impacting earth's evolutionary change. Anthropocene has become a pertinent discourse of natural science, social science and humanities relating to its impact upon

the natural environment such as possible catastrophic events at present times and in the future. Channeling its concern, the School of Humanities has developed a sub-division known as Environmental Humanities to invite and promote various approaches of humanities to identify and debate about Anthropocene caused environmental issues.

“A Critical Enquiry of Marco Malvestio’s Eco-dystopia in T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*” aims to study the essay “Theorizing Eco-Dystopia: Science Fiction, the Anthropocene, and the Limits of Catastrophic Imagery” by Marco Malvestio where the Italian scholar theorizes the concept of eco-dystopia. He collects the frame of eco-dystopia as found in science-fictions which according to him are apt yet limited since Anthropocene is a complex matter. He puts forward that it would lack justice and be unwise to confine the consequence of Anthropocene to mere “climatic collapse” which is often the key climax of modern-day science-fiction. Malvestio’s theoretical frame of eco-dystopia could be categorized majorly under five tenets along with which he identifies six limitations of representing Anthropocene in science-fiction. These tenets are framed by Malvestio to study and analyze science-fictions of apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic and dystopian genres. However, this study shall employ the said theoretical concepts to analysis of T.S. Eliot’s atypical poem *The Wasteland* to:

1. Decipher the relevance of Malvestio’s perception of eco-dystopia beyond fiction to poetry
2. To break down the most striking modernist poem from the lens of ecologically driven theory in attempts to deduce an ecological discourse from the primary text which is often read as a criticism on the modern culture.

Apocalypse, post-apocalypse and dystopian settings are three representations often adopted in Fiction particularly Science-fiction to create an imaginary world deprived of all its natural resources due to excessive extractions, pollutions, population, destructions in the form of deforestation, extinction of animals and several other anthropocentric measures causing to reduce

the world to an exhausted shelter. Apocalypse in science-fiction is observed as an event of “great environmental disaster”, whereas post-apocalypse is the scene after apocalypse where the struggle of people or animals to exist without natural resources is the central issue. Dystopia according to Malvestio, “imagines a negative version of our world based on aspects that are indeed present in it, and is meant to serve as a warning against the realization of such a reality.” (27). Dystopia therefore is an imaginary and unpleasant representation of the world which may be post-apocalyptic by nature. Malvestio identifies that, “American science fiction has made extensive use of the tools and the tropes of dystopian and post-apocalyptic imagery in order to describe the Anthropocene in general and climate change in particular” (25).

He defines Anthropocene as “an age of disasters” which is represented by “mass extinctions, ocean acidification, extreme weather events, drastic changes in climate, and an increasing amount of land that will be rendered inhabitable.” (25). Eco-dystopia could be therefore understood as a possible consequence of the anthropocentric epoch in the form of the aforementioned immeasurable catastrophe. It is employed in popular fictions, popular media, science-fictions, modern and post-modern poetry where the protagonist is the barren and devastating landscape and human beings are simply surviving agents of the desiccating ecosystem.

“Theorizing Eco-Dystopia: Science Fiction, the Anthropocene, and the Limits of Catastrophic Imagery” by Marco Malvestio

Malvestio in this essay puts forward the problems he observed in many science-fictions that represents an Eco-dystopia. Since creative writing in the genre of science-fiction according to him could not potentially justify Anthropocene through their portrayal of a catastrophic world, he has attempts to find a ground or basis of employing eco-dystopia in sci-fiction that would not limit the larger concept of Anthropocene. Malvestio begins his essay by defining the massive

nature of Anthropocene, that it is “complex”, distant from “human comprehension” and it is “intrinsically weird” (25). He is observed to be an advocate of closely sketched Anthropocene through the employment of eco-dystopia in literary texts such as science-fictions. Malvestio therefore states that:

1. In the context of an ecological dystopia, every dystopian novel is also, at least partly, but inevitably, apocalyptic.
2. Eco-dystopia is a particular kind of dystopia that focuses on ecological elements and incorporates features of the post-apocalyptic genre.
3. Eco-dystopia qualifies as a hybrid genre, in which rumination on a catastrophic event (usually climate change) is not simply a narrative tool, but a way of reflecting on our present.
4. Eco-dystopia merges the narration of the catastrophe of the post-apocalyptic novel and the predictive speculations of dystopia...in accordance with an understanding of climate change not as a single phenomenon, but rather as a summation of phenomena too various and too wide to be clearly deciphered, not to mention stopped.
5. Eco-dystopias tend to indulge in the representation of the consequences of climate change, in other words, the known world reduced to a wasteland deprived of life and littered with the remnants of a past civilization (which is to say, our present civilization).
(27-29)

Having established a set of ideas that define and clarifies the meaning and purpose of eco-dystopia, Malvestio identifies that there is however, “a series of intrinsic problems, or intellectual flaws, in eco-dystopia and more generally in the adoption of the imagination of catastrophe to describe the Anthropocene.” Although not every eco-dystopia is flawed but he highlights that

many eco-dystopias rely on a simplistic understanding of catastrophe and risk, banalizing the very ecological concerns about which they aim to raise awareness.” (30)

Malvestio positions 6 (six) problems of “catastrophic imagination” in science fiction and they are:

1. Eco-dystopias are spectacular and sensationalistic, but the Anthropocene usually is not.
2. Eco-dystopia tends to represent the Anthropocene with an exclusive focus on climate change.
3. Eco-dystopia tends to promote a catastrophic understanding of the Anthropocene as a single event: A common feature of many eco-dystopias is a focus on a single catastrophic vent—a storm, a flood, a climatic collapse. The Anthropocene, however, is not an event; it is a series of interrelated phenomena.
4. The magnitude of the catastrophes portrayed in eco-dystopia inhibits actions to counter the effects of the Anthropocene.
5. Apocalyptic narratives are consolatory.
6. Eco-dystopias are ecophobic. (30-34)

He concludes his essay by supporting that “catastrophe is a powerful narrative tool” but it lacks an upgraded and relevant approach of representation or portrayal which can strongly withhold the ecological discourse of current times.

The Wasteland by Thomas Stearns Eliot

Twentieth Century or the Modern era is one of the most disturbed periods in human history with events of the two World Wars, one Cold War and its massive consequences. The culmination of colonialism and the beginning of post-colonial context, the second industrial revolution, the digital revolution, the challenges waged against regimes of politics and religion, the tension, skepticism, anxiety and doubts of modern people in a distorted context is what frames a

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fragmented yet thriving modern world. By twentieth century Anthropocene had already tied closely to the fabric of culture. Literature witnessed a distinct contrast of change and novel frame of thoughts and writings, having influenced by its restless context. T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound according to David Daiches led the modern literary canon with T.E. Hulme as a provider of “theoretical ammunition”. (Daiches, 1122).

The Nobel Prize Org. mentions in their page that T.S. Eliot won the Nobel Prize for literature in the year 1948 for his “outstanding, pioneer contribution to present-day poetry”. According to *Britannica*, Eliot was an “American-English poet, playwright, critic and an editor” who won “international reputation” with the publication of *The Wasteland* in 1922. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”, “The Hollow Men” and “Ash Wednesday” are also some of his notable contributions to the canon of modernist poetry along with his essay “Tradition and Individual Talent”. One of the major characteristics of Modern literature is its fragmented narratives or narration which was methodically experimented by modernist writers like Eliot to represent the fragmented world which although is in fragments yet each fragment is connected to the other, forming a scarred whole; an almost perfect representation of the modern context. *The Waste Land* embodies the frame of this unconventional narrative technique with one narrator who is omniscient and omnipresent, takes the readers to tour the geographical and cultural landscape of the wasteland. The narrator could also be observed as not one but many, appearing in different sections at irregular intervals who is also equal to the fragments found in the text; as if the poet has allotted each fragment of his narrative with a different narrator.

“*The Wasteland*, expresses with great power the disenchantment, disillusionment, and disgust of the period after World War I...it portrays a sterile world of panicky fears and barren lusts, and of human beings waiting for some sign or promise of redemption.” (Britannica, n.p.)

The poem is written in five sections with a title for each i.e., “The Burial of the Dead”, “A Game of Chess”, “The Fire Sermon”, “Death by Water” and “What the Thunder Said”. Each of this section stands as a modernist iconography of the new world. Eliot conjures a dystopic land that has become sterile, barren and degenerative, it is a place where nothing grows, a similar trait shared by people whom he places in all the five sections. *The Waste Land* was intended to mirror the desiccation of spirituality, losing morality, maddening ambitions of modern people, death of romance, disenchantment and disillusion, emotional disconnection, deception, pretensions, interruptions, inactivity of people owing to complacency and lethargy as spoiled by modern comforts. Although it is centrally a critique on the socio-political, emotional, moral and spiritual downfall of culture and has been analyzed in several perspectives and theoretical stances, this essay intends to move away from that centrality to venture into Eliot’s dystopic landscape of Wasteland for a novel study that can also substantiate the possibility of a plural interpretation in literature. The point of convergence between Eliot’s *Wasteland* and “Theorizing Eco-Dystopia: Science Fiction, the Anthropocene, and the Limits of Catastrophic Imagery” by Marco Malvestio is therefore intended to separate from the moral and spiritual downfall of modern culture as eccentrically sketched in the literary text and be purely eco critical in perspective.

Framing Malvestio’s Eco-Dystopian Theory in *The Waste Land* by T.S. Eliot

Although Malvestio’s key concepts of Eco-dystopia was descriptively knitted, it was carved out in this essay into five points to give a structural approach to those concepts. Keeping in mind the relatibility and similarity of those five concepts with one another, point two has been merged to form the first tenet for this study and point four has been merged with point five. Point three has been kept without modification and it now sits as point two. The compressed Eco-dystopian theoretical concepts of Marco Malvestio are mentioned below along with its analysis of *The Waste Land*:

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- 1. In the context of an ecological dystopia, every dystopian novel is also, at least partly, but inevitably, apocalyptic which also incorporates features of post-apocalyptic genre.**

The concept of dystopia in its broader sense whether ecological, social or political is often traced as displaying a post-apocalyptic frame or place where the plot of the novel takes place. Diane Cook's *Man V. Nature* and *The New Wilderness* for example represent a dystopic world which was habitable before has now become scarce in its resources and habitat. *The Wasteland* begins with a voice and words similar to the first creation as is mentioned in the *Holy Bible*, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1). The reference to the *Holy Bible*'s significance emanates from concordance that the genre of apocalypse in literature takes its primal resource from the concept of apocalyptic end days in the Book of Revelation. The poem begins with words from an omniscient voice stating:

"April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memories and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain." (line 1-3)

It introduces the voice as someone who is living in the post-apocalyptic world after a catastrophe has taken place in the past. As if people have become comfortable and has adapted to a rather disoriented living, finding dullness or discouragement in any signs of nature that gives pleasure or motivation. Apocalyptic genre engages in a prophetic dream or vision about the dystopic future often constructed through the narrator or through certain unusual characters or settings. In *The Wasteland*, the tone of the omniscient narrator changes from contentment in the first stanza to a commanding, authoritative voice as he/she is about to deliver an invitation to tour the wasteland in the poem or as if he is about to reveal a prophecy that he has seen about the unpleasant future.

(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),

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And I will show you something different from either

Your shadow at morning striding behind you

your shadow at evening rising to meet you;

I will show you fear in a handful of dust. (line 26-30)

Eliot conjures two “Unreal City” in the poem, first in the section “The Burial of the Dead” and second in the third section “Fires Sermon”. The first “Unreal City” has a grotesque appeal with a description of crowds of people “over London bridge” in the midst of “brown fog of a winter morning”. These people appear as if they have been raised from the dead to become like zombies who are in no control of their consciousness and has their eyes fixated to their feet, taking short and infrequent “sighs”. The “brown fog” in this “Unreal City” is a subtle yet a clear shot of comment on environmental pollution as fog commonly appear brown in colour due to air pollution such as smog caused by excessive industrial and agricultural smokes when in contact with naturally caused fog. The description of people on the other hand is tragic as they look irreparable and defeated. The narrator’s recognition of one among many in the crowd is significant to understand that the undesirable ecological suffering will be an experience not felt by some but by everyone, everywhere. The second “Unreal City” has various fragments of modern images weaved together, however a dominant comment on fresh water pollution and deforestation could be identified when he mentions,

“The river sweats

Oil and tar

...

The barges wash

Drifting logs

Down Greenwich reach

Past the Isle of Dogs.”

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The river is polluted with oil and tar which stands for anthropocentric pursuit of extracting, mining, spilling and thereby polluting it. In representing a scene of contaminated river Eliot also mentions “drifting logs” which is an anthropocentric practice conducted after cutting trees (deforestation). Logs of woods are sent down drifting downstream for easier transportation. These unreal cities are fragments that rightly fits under the larger picture of ecological dystopia.

The fifth section “What the Thunder Said” is one of the most enthralling sections with the most dystopic imageries which sums up Eliot’s prophetic future of the world turning into a wasteland with three divine speech “Datta”, “Dayadhvam” and “Damyata”.

He writes about a landscape of mountains filled with rocks and roads winding up to the mountains but without water. The element of water has been referred several times by Eliot in various context however what it primarily stands for is the dilemma of moral and spiritual purity and impurity. That which is pure has become impure or that which is impure must be purified with water similar to the Christian baptism ritual. Water in a habitable ecosphere is one of the most important elements which sustains the planet’s ecosystem for every organism. Fertility of a soil depends on the presence of its moisture, the absence of which renders the soil barren and dry. Eco-dystopia in wasteland is deprived of moisture or any signs of water, it is a land where even the thunders are sterile and the clouds bear no rain, a usual day in a post-apocalyptic world:

There is not even silence in the mountains
But dry sterile thunder without rain
There is not even solitude in the mountains
But red sullen faces sneer and snarl
From doors of mud cracked houses

The poet writes with a feeling of longingness for the sound of water which has been silenced by its absence and in its absence everything else could be heard loud and clear. The sound of cicada and dry grass rubbing each other only makes the absence of water more prominent arousing

more longingness for a gushing rainfall. Eliot's creative choices of diction, imageries, symbolism and intertextuality gives a dramatic appearance to the eco-dystopic wasteland which further kindles the terror of an ecological clock ticking, taking the world closer in reality to a possibility of the prophetic eco-dystopian future.

2. Eco-dystopia qualifies as a hybrid genre, in which rumination on a catastrophic event (usually climate change) is not simply a narrative tool, but a way of reflecting on our present.

One of Malvestio's notion of eco-dystopia is that in representing the catastrophic events in apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic frame the intention of the narrative is also to mirror the present reality of anthropocentric process of ecological distortion. A repetitive reference of the phrase "brown fog" and to various rivers in *The Wasteland* could be distinctly identified among many other references.

"Under the brown fog of a winter dawn" ("Unreal City" from "The Burial of the Dead")

"Under the brown fog of a winter noon" ("Unreal City" from "The Fire Sermon")

Eliot's "brown fog" in both the "Unreal City" as stated earlier is a representation of extreme air pollution. In contemporary times, usually during winter, Delhi in India experiences this extreme condition of air pollution due to smog.

According to the page of *World Atlas* Delhi has been reported to be the 4th most polluted city in the world as of 2022 and Bhiwadi, also in India as the most polluted city. From the reports of BBC News, in January 2022, every winter Delhi faces extreme air pollution due to smog that is caused by "fumes of burning fields" and by bursting millions of fire crackers during Diwali which is a popular festival of light. They add that, "Both of these play a large role in the spike in pollution" (BBC News). The present environmental state of Delhi therefore aligns with Eliot's

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“brown fog of a winter dawn” and “noon”, thereby reflecting “our present” as declared by Malvestio.

“The Fire Sermon” begins with a reference to river Thames in England and Lake Geneva mentioned as Leman. Eliot writes:

“...The nymphs are departed.
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.
The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed.
And their friends, the loitering heirs of City directors;
Departed, have left no addresses.
By the waters of Leman, I sat down and wept . . .
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song,
Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long.”

The speaker in these lines sounds melancholic and defeated. The lines are commonly interpreted as a reflection of spiritual and moral impurity that Eliot is painfully worried about. According to Malvestio’s eco-dystopian readings in addressing the pollution of human morality and spirituality, Eliot has projected a scene of river pollution by stating that the river “nymphs are departed” which indicates the actual absence of purity and freshness of the river. It could also mean the elimination and disappearance of aquatic animals from the river. Evidences such as of “empty bottles, sandwich papers, Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends and other testimonies of summer night” are litters that pollute the river and he mentions that “The river do not bear” them which interprets that the river is painfully contaminated because those are items of human waste which do not belong in the river. The line “the loitering heirs of City director; departed, have left no addresses” subtly hints the complacent attitudes of powerful people who

simply choose not to attend to the environmental pollutions around them. Eliot further writes, “By the water of Leman I sat down and wept...” implying the sorrow of the speaker in witnessing the degradation around him/her. Dr. Hannah Stockton the curator of *Royal Museums Greenwich* reports that complaints about the pollution of river Thames existed since the times as early as 13th century. She mentions that by mid-19th century, “With more factories and flushing toilets being widely adopted, the volume of domestic and industrial waste flowing straight into the river only increased.” In contemporary era BBC News highlights the reports of Environmental Agency on rivers that “untreated sewage, including human waste, wet wipes and condoms, was released into water ways” for millions of hours; that “During the whole of 2020, 3.5 billion litres of untreated sewage entered the Thames from Mogden - seven times as much as was dumped in 2016.” There are reports on Lake Leman too that there is a serious concern in present times of severe plastic pollution on Western Europe’s “biggest fresh water surface” i.e., Leman. (*Plastic Oceans*, n.p). Malvestio in his research rightly supports that eco-dystopic imageries are not there simply as narrative tools but they indeed are a way of “reflecting our present”. An intriguing fact is apparent in this analysis that between Eliot’s “present” and the present time of post-modern 21st Century, there is a wide gap of time, yet what Eliot mentioned in the text is factually a sad reality of today’s physical environmental health as it was during the poet’s time.

- 3. Eco-dystopia merges the narration of the catastrophe of the post-apocalyptic novel and the predictive speculations of dystopiain accordance with an understanding and representation of climate change not as a single phenomenon, but rather as a summation of phenomena too various and too wide to be clearly deciphered, not to mention stopped. (27-29)**

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Malvestio suggests that eco-dystopian plot simultaneously runs a “predictive speculation of dystopia” along with the frame of post-apocalyptic catastrophe. Eco-dystopia is therefore understood as speculation of the future if and when ecological catastrophes begin to commence at a largely noticeable rate. *The Wasteland* has an equivalent design of eco-dystopian idea as Eliot merges an imagined post-apocalyptic world of the future with a barren, polluted, sterile depiction of the land which is also signs of extreme climate change. In “What the Thunder Said” Eliot writes that the wasteland is a place where “thunders” are sterile and bears no rain and the barren land is depicted by the phrase “brown land” in “The Fire Sermon”. These functional and systemic change of the physical environment according to Malvestio is not a “single phenomenon but a summation” of many immeasurable phenomena which are often incomprehensible and without solution. Eliot’s creative choice in representing the “summation” of various phenomenon in the text is found in the five sections he carefully chose to club together. The section appears fragmented, cracked and different from each other with a constant shift in the omniscient narrator making it mysterious to decide if there is only one speaker or several. However, there is an apparent stitching of these images and sections into one whole, each section has a different picture to depict yet they all collage into the frame of one whole eco-dystopian wasteland.

The first section “Burial of the Dead” presents before the readers a depiction of “dead land”, “Dull roots”, dried tubers”, “stony rubbish”, “dead trees” that give “no shelter”, “the dry stones” over dried rivers and the haunting absence of sounds of water and finally the “Unreal City” that is covered in “brown fog”. The “Unreal City” has a representation of people in a freakish behaviour as if their bodies have adopted an unnatural way to function so as to adapt living in the post-apocalyptic environment.

Second section is titled “A Game of Chess” which paints a picture of a richly decorated interior of a room with luxurious decors which represent acquisition of modern comforts, a

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middle-class consciousness and dependence on materialism. The room is exquisite and lavish but what follows next is a significantly contrasting image of two individuals possibly a wife and a husband who are in the room engaged in an erratic conversation that represents modern anxiety of being dissatisfied despite materialistic accomplishments indicating that external glitters do not reflect or match the internal gloom. A second picture of conversation between two ladies runs next in this section which depicts the horrors of modern medicine's side effects. The pressure of keeping up with modernity's whether through material or science has side effects which seems to be adversely affecting humans. This section has lesser reference to the physical environment, yet man being a distinct part of nature, this section paints an entirely human centric discourse.

"Fire Sermon" is the title of the third section and as the title suggest the content of this section is the burning truth of a desiccating world. The section contains images of polluted river Thames, lake Lemman with human wastes, infestation of rats on the river and another "Unreal City" where Tiresias is introduced as a secret informer. Tiresias has a unique appearance, he is an, "Old man with wrinkled female breasts", blind yet sees during the "violet hours" of the day when the most unusual events take place in a day. Tiresias appears like a victim of lab experiments, although Eliot's intend behind this character is to guide the readers to another redundant, dying human relationship. The section further mentions more about river pollution with industrial waste and extractive practices in nature such as mining and logging.

"Dead by Water" is the fourth section and it is the shortest with only ten lines. This section is however the most crucial in the text since it represent a cleansing ritual that is needed to save humanity and the world from an actual episode of *The Wasteland* occurring in real times in the future. The eco-dystopian reading however is concerned with the dead body of Phlebas floating in the sea. It represents another image of pollution possibly caused by an accidental death or a planned murder of an individual. In a prophetic tone the speaker addresses the readers,

"Gentile or Jew

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O you who turn the wheel and look to windward,
Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you.”

These lines come as a warning that the earth, humans pollute in the Anthropocene may be the same reasons of suffering ecological disasters. Same as Phlebas, readers are part of the culture that powers the Anthropocene and therefore a warning of drowning in the same water polluted by themselves could be read from Malvestio’s eco-dystopian lens.

The Wasteland culminates with the fifth section, “What the Thunder Said”. Phrases such as, “frosty silence in the garden”, “agony in stony places”, “no water”, “rock without water”, “dead mountain”, “dry sterile thunder without rain”, “exhausted wells” are the key notes of these section. The last section is where the wasteland attains its utmost dystopic state with the “upside down” hanged towers and bats similar to the “hanged man” in section one where Madam Sosostri’s says she cannot find “The Hanged Man” while reading tarot cards. Tarot readings are predictions of clairvoyants, therefore Sosostri’s saying that she could not find it means that a possible wreckage of everything that is natural is lurking in the future. That similar to “the Hanged Man” natural orders in the world may turn upside down beyond the comprehension and solutions of man can find.

Thus, all five sections of the poem appear intentionally distorted to represent the ecological distortion of Anthropocene which is not just a single event but a convergence of many different events occurring in different places, in different times, affecting different people mostly according to economic status. Eliot in all the five section sketches varying frames of eco-dystopia which are merged together to give a bird eye view of the degenerating world. The poem is richly embedded with multiple layers of meaning as mentioned by Malvestio, “too various and too wide to be clearly deciphered”, yet the fracture in the structure of the poem is intended to point out the cracks that is slowly widening in the environment.

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Malvestio's conception of Eco-dystopia is a bold move to underline literary creative writings especially fiction's lack of a realistic representation of the Anthropocene. He mentioned six inadequacies found in the current climate and eco-dystopian narratives that:

- i. Anthropocene often takes a back seat while engaging the readers in the sensational and spectacular scenes of eco-dystopia
- ii. Anthropocene is represented with exclusive focus on climate change.
- iii. Eco-dystopian Catastrophe is often treated as a singular event.
- iv. Often the narrative offers solutions or counter actions for Anthropocene
- v. Narrative tends to be consolatory
- vi. Eco-dystopian narratives have a tone of ecophobia

These inadequacies are as he found in dystopian or eco-dystopian fictions; Eliot's *The Wasteland* is a narrative poem which lacks the frame of fiction yet in its distinct poetical stances, the poem is a masterpiece and has done justice to the frame of eco-dystopia which many fictional works struggle to accomplish. Anthropocene is richly the reason why the land is barren and infertile. Not only climate change but a reframed bizarre way of living is depicted in the poem which is haunting because that is the "new normal" and people in the wasteland seems to have adapted and become comfortable with it. Catastrophe in the poem is not a "singular event" but it is reflected as various events collaged together which leaves minimal chance to the reader looking for a discourse on Anthropocene. The text not only gives importance to climate related events but it also reflects the retarded way of life that people have become accustomed to in the modern anthropocentric world. The last three points of defect as observed by Malvestio is concerningly what concludes *The Wasteland*, as the poem ends with Eliot's divine speech, "Datta", "Dayadhvam" and "Damyata" these divine speech acts like a key to reverse the curse of the wasteland or to prevent people from that dreadful prophetic future; thereby, consoling readers that there is a way to be saved from the much-feared ecological obliteration. Malvestio's frame

of eco-dystopia has been relevant to *The Wasteland* both in its depiction of what an eco-dystopia is and what it is not. However, in course of the interrogation it has also served a purpose of unearthing the masterpiece of modern poetry that is *The Wasteland* as a pool of ecologically powered text.

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