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**Fragments of Meaning: Modernist Eliotian Echoes in Selected  
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**To my Family...**

**To my number one supporter BOUAZIZ Syla...**

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## **Declaration**

*By this statement I declare that the theme of this dissertation analyzes songs from Algerian Kabyle literature, more specifically works for which no translations or verified academic sources could be found. Due to the lack of accessible translations and reliable material online or in physical form, I have personally attempted to translate the selected songs and conduct the study based on my own linguistic understanding and analytical skills. All interpretations related to the selected Kabyle songs are original and stem from a first-hand engagement with the primary texts.*

## Abstract

The following research paper entitled *Fragments of Meaning: Modernist Eliotian Echoes in Selected Kabyle Songs* has explored the modernist techniques and intertextual dynamics in Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (translated to "The Valley of Winds") and *Bu Lehmum* (2013) ("The Wretched One," my translation,) and Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977) (translated to "Ali and Ouali.) Despite emerging from distinct cultural and historical contexts, the texts converge on themes of identity, myth, and post-war existential crisis. In order to achieve this objective, I have borrowed Julia Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality* as articulated on her work *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980), alongside Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art and Nihilism* in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). Kristeva's theory demonstrates how these modernist texts form an interrelated dialogue; rather than isolated works, forming a web of connected cultural memory rooted in allusions and mythical references. Add to that, Nietzsche's philosophy, in turn, illuminates how artistic creation functions as a redemptive power within a chaotic modern world. Moreover, this dissertation consists of two major chapters, the first chapter entitled 'Modernist techniques in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* and *Bu Lehmum*,' establishes the theoretical approach in a detailed interpretation, and offers a comparative analysis of modernist tools such as fragmentation, myth, and spiritual desolation. The second chapter, 'Modernist techniques in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli*,' extends the comparative lens, by examining how Menguellet reinterprets the modernist vision through a postcolonial lens, emphasizing on the artist's role in spiritual rebirth and cultural resistance. Ultimately, this deep analysis arrives at two major conclusions. First, despite the different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, Eliot's poem and the selected Kabyle texts share a modernist and philosophical outlook that intertwines fragmentation with renewal. Second, through the perspectives of both Kristeva and Nietzsche, the study demonstrates that these works transform despair into creative expression, using art as a means of redemption and renewal within a fragmented modern landscape.

**Keywords:** Modernist techniques, Intertextuality, Fragmentation, Spiritual decay, Moral decay, Myth, Cultural memory.

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## I. General Introduction

Until recently, I often regarded poetry as complex, distant and irrelevant to contemporary life. However, this changed unexpectedly last year when I was asked to prepare a presentation on T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922). This interest sparked the idea to explore Eliot's work, and draw connections with poems of Algerian Kabyle artists such as Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* (2013)(translated to "*The Valley of Winds*") and *Bu Lehmum* (2013) ("*The Wretched One*,"translation mine,) and Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977) (translated to "*Ali and Ouali*.) Although these works emerge from different cultural backgrounds, they all reflect serious modernist issues such as cultural and spiritual decay, and fragmentation, using similar modernist techniques. This dissertation seeks to analyze the shared modernist tools between these works, as well as to shed the light on the marginalized richness of the Kabyle literature as it deserves more recognition and the same value given to Western modernist literature.

To approach this study effectively, it is important to understand Modernism as a literary and cultural movement. Modernism in literature was not born out of peace and clarity, but due to the modernist world's state of chaos. It emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries-a period often described by historians as one of radical discontinuity- in Europe and North America, as a global cultural response to the rapid social, political and technological changes of the modern world such as industrialization, urbanization, world wars, the alienation of individuals in mass society, and the decline of religious authority. Peter Childs argues in his work *Modernism* (2000) that: "*Modernism is a response to a sense of the radically new, an awareness of the familiar norms and a questioning of inherited forms of knowledge.*" Moreover, it is crucial to know that the 19<sup>th</sup> century world was a stable society, thanks to the Enlightenment, Christian morality, and imperial majesty, however this stability deteriorated rapidly after World War I, as disillusionment and loss of spirituality were widespread due to the collapse of all of the stable and reliable systems of knowledge and certainty that shaped

Victorian and Classical traditions. Thus, this movement arose from the ruins of this old world, confronting a new reality of fragmentation and alienation. In this context, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane state in their introduction to the critical

Anthology *Modernism: A Guide to the Critical Literature* (1890-1930):

Modernism is the art consequent on the disestablishment of communal reality and conventional notions of unity. It arises out of a mood of crisis, a loss of faith in the old assurance of religion, politics, and social order. (p.27)

As a result, writers and artists of that time felt that traditional forms of narrative and verse were no longer useful to illustrate the complexities and the fragmentation of the modern world that has lost its meaning and coherence. Instead, modernist writers such as T.S Eliot, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf developed new techniques that redefined literature. These modernist techniques included fragmentation as a new form of breaking the old traditional narrative or poetic into disjointed parts as in James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) where the writer used fractured perspectives and stream of consciousness narration to illustrate the modern world's consciousness. There is also the use of multiplicity of voices and points of view, where writers believed that truth exists through various points of views and not through a single voice as seen in William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), a story that tells the same truth through four conflicting perspectives. Add to that allusion and intertextuality, by making reference to classical and religious texts, like how T.S Eliot borrowed from Dante, Shakespeare and the Hindu scriptures in his poem *The Waste Land*. Lastly, one of the most commonly used techniques is the mythical method, which was in fact theorized by Eliot himself in order to structure modern narratives. As he states in *Ulysses, Order, and Myth* (1923): "*the mythical method I a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy.*" These techniques were not merely aesthetic, but they helped capture the real psychological issues and cultural anxieties that the modernist world went through after World War I. In this context, Ezra Pound

demands to “*Make it new,*” which was exactly done by contemporary writers as they felt the need to come up with new forms to follow the changes of the modern society, and to be able to portray it well.

In this literary revolution, T.S Eliot rose as an elite figure in modernist literature, with his work *The Waste Land* (1922), which was later on edited by Ezra Pound. The poem was immediately regarded as one of the foundational works and a landmark of modernist poetry. Furthermore, Eliot’s elitism was something constructed for himself only. He believed that poetry should not be easily accessible for the reader, but rather requires intellectual effort from the reader. In his 1919 essay *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, Eliot argues that “*the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates.*” The poet sees poetry and literature not as emotional self-expression but rather as a “*depersonalization*” of feelings and emotions into artistic form. Later, various critics like F.R Leavis and Cleanth Brooks would describe Eliot as a canonical representation of modernism, and his poem *The Waste Land* as a groundwork for academic literary study. The poem was written in the aftermath of World War I, portraying a modernist empty world, lacking cultural and spiritual aspects. Its opening line: “*April is the cruelest month*” catches immediately the readers’ attention as it introduces a world marked by psychological despair and cultural decay. And its closing lines: “*These fragments I have shored against my ruins,*” summarize the modernist goal, which is to construct meaning from cultural collapse.

Similarly, while modernism emerged in Western Europe and North America, its techniques and fragmentation echoed globally. In Algeria, specifically among the Kabyle community, poets such as Ali Amran and Lounis Aït Menguellet seem to adopt comparable techniques, to express their country’s postcolonial despair, disillusionment, cultural fragmentation, and the collapse of traditional identity. Their works involve lyrics that make reference to cultural myths, symbolic landscapes, and many modernist issues, using linguistic

layering to express the existential crises in postcolonial Algeria. However, it is important to mention that these techniques are not imitation of Western modernism, but parallels rooted in oral traditions, and socio-political collective trauma. For instance, in Ali Amran's song *Bu Lehmun* ("The Wretched One," translation mine) the speaker seems to be burdened by the weight of personal and collective memory, in a barren landscape. Similarly, in *Tizi N Leryah* ("The Valley of Winds," translation mine) is filled with disillusionment and a sense of being lost and alienated in one's own land. Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (translated to "Ali and Ouali,") also uses modernist techniques such as fragmentation, symbolism, and non-linear narrative to illustrate the disintegration of collective identity and the search for meaning in a world marked by conflict, consumerism, and cultural decay.

To break down these parallels, this study draws upon Julia Kristeva's concept of *Intertextuality*. In her work *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980), Kristeva writes: "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another." Her theory is central to our study as it allows us to unfold the interconnection between the works. It is known that Eliot's work is intertextual, as the poet makes reference to the Bible, Shakespeare, Ovid, and Dante. Likewise, Amrane and Aït Menguellet's songs reference Amazigh oral literature, political discourse and religious imagery suggesting an ideological dialogue across time and culture.

Additionally, the work borrows Friedrich Nietzsche's theory of *Art* and *Nihilism*. In his work *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), the theorist asserts that: "It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified." According to this statement, Nietzsche argues that the meaningless and fragmented life can only be justified through art. Moreover, what Nietzsche describes as "the pathos of distance" is reflected through the works of Eliot, Amran, and Aït Menguellet by warning the readers from the loss of meaning in the modern world.

## Review of Literature

T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) is undoubtedly one of the most widely known and discussed poem in modernist literature, for its complex and fragmented structure. It has received big attention from scholars, critics and even readers since its publication, which made the poem a seminal work in the modernist era. However, the work's critical conception has been sharply divided into two categories, some consider it as modernist masterpiece, while others have criticized its obscurity and questioned its fragmented structure.

First, one of the prominent critics that have recognized the significance of Eliot's *The Waste Land* is Edmund Wilson. The scholar acknowledges in his 1922 *Dial* review that some critics might consider the work as "a puzzle rather than a poem," yet, he states just after that despite its obscurity, it remains a sort of a confused masterpiece, in his words:

[...]It became evident that Mr. Eliot...is one of our only authentic poets. For this new poem...it sounds for the first time in all their intensity, untampered by irony or disguise, the hunger for beauty and the anguish at living which lie at the bottom of all his work.  
(Wilson, 1922, December)

The critic acknowledges the brilliance and power of *The Waste Land*, as well as its difficulty upon readers, and fragmented structure, emphasizing on the importance of having the required literary knowledge to fully appreciate the meaning of the work. Furthermore, the critic also includes in his review how the themes discussed by Eliot illustrate contemporary society, arguing that the poem pictures its cultural and spiritual decay. He states that Eliot speaks about personal distress along with "the starvation of a whole civilization." (Wilson. 1922)

In addition, when we speak about the most foundational critical works in English literary studies on T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), we must include F.R. Leavis's work entitled *New Bearings in English Poetry* (1932), where he publically elevates Eliot and Ezra Pound over the Georgian and Victorian lyric tradition. He emphasizes on the Eliot's great ability to

portray the fragmented, disillusioned and spiritually sterile state of the post-World War I European world. He notes that: “The Waste Land is the first poem to draw together and crystallize the atmosphere of the modern age with real force. It altered the whole climate of poetry.” (Leavis. 1932) In addition, the critic acknowledges the poem as a radical shift from traditional narratives to a new complex style of poetry. He believes that Eliot’s use of various perspectives, allusions and the “*mythical method*” serves as a powerful reorientation of what modernist literature is ought to discuss in the light of the chaos of the modern world.

While the previous critics have celebrated *The Waste Land* as a foundational work, Charles Powell offers a harsh critique of the work. He argues in his review entitled *The Manchester Guardian* (1923) that the poem’s structure is overly fragmented and complex. He also criticizes the poet’s exaggerated use of symbolism and mythological references arguing that they can serve as a barrier to the poem’s clarity. Furthermore, he expresses his opinion on the language choice that Eliot uses, declaring that he prefers if the work was written in demotic English, for it to be accessible for all the readers, because according to him the language used in *The Waste Land* is overly intellectual and obscure making it challenging for the average readers to understand. He sharply argues that the poem is: “A mad medley...if Mr. Eliot had been pleased to write in demotic (everyday) English, *The Waste Land* might not have been, as it just is to all but anthropologists and literati, so much waste paper.”(Powell. 1923)

Similarly, F.L Lucas shares the same opinion as Charles Powell regarding the structure of Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, by questioning the work’s elitist complexity. In the *New Statesman* (1923), Lucas also describes the poem as a “*mad medley*.” He writes:

The thing is mad medley. It has a plan... but meaning, plan, and intention alike are massed behind a smoke-screen of anthropological and literary erudition, and only the pundit, the pedant, or the clairvoyant will be in the least aware of them.

In addition to that, the critic expresses his skepticism towards the poem's alleged depth asserting that it risks to making the work empty. He argues that: "As for 'profundity,' it is not uncommonly found also in dry wells; which may likewise contain little but obscurity and rubbish." (Lucas. 1923)

While T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) has long been regarded as the groundwork of modernist literature, Modernism however is not confined to Western literature. It is important to consider how other poetic traditions, specifically Algerian Kabyle ones have coped with similar cultural traumas, and how they used shared modernist tools to overcome it through art and poetry. Within Kabyle literature studies, it is known that the works of Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (translated to "*The Valley of Winds*,") *Bu Lehmum* (2013) ("*The Wretched One*," translation mine,) and Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977) (translated to "*Ali and Ouali*"), rely on many intertextual techniques manifested in the use of oral Kabyle traditions, myth, and proverbs. Fadila and Nora Achili, in their peer-reviewed academic article titled *intertextuality in the contemporary Kabyle novel: The state-of-the-art* (2023) they highlight the use of intertextual strategies in Kabyle literature: "Kabyle novelists employ diverse approaches to incorporate proverbs...popular tales...narrative anachronism...references to legendary figures...traditional symbolism." This insight resonates deeply with both Ali Amran and Aït Menguellet as their works combine between oral tradition and modern literary techniques to build a coherent meaningful structure. Their inclusion of old traditional voices, myth, and symbolic motifs shows their desire to preserve their country's cultural memory with slight adjustments to resonate with modern issues.

In addition, according to a review on Tamazgha.fr that offers high acknowledgments for Ali Amran's songs *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (translated to "*The Valley of Winds*,") *Bu Lehmum* (2013) ("*The Wretched One*," translation mine,) describing them as: "*un travail poétique méticuleu, fait de mains d'orfèvre... des textes d'une justesse et d'une beauté poétique à*

couper le souffle.” (para. 1) This can be translated as: “The work is meticulous and poetic, crafted with the hands of a goldsmith...texts of a great precision and breathtaking poetic beauty.” Moreover, in a review on **Vitamedz** of *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) written by “presse-algerie,” the structure’s cohesion of the song is described as: “une ritournelle du mal-être et des infortunes des mauvais jours...un sentiment de désenchantement et de pessimisme face aux vicissitudes du temps et de l’existence,” which can be translated to: “ a recurring motif of inner turmoil and the misfortunes of bad days...a feeling of disillusionment and pessimism in the face of life’s and time’s vicissitudes.” This review was released shortly after the release of the album, and despite it originating from a journalistic source; it contributes heavily in the discussion about the Kabyle literature and thematic unity.

Likewise, Aït Menguellet’s *Eli d Weeli* (1977) is also celebrated for blending between modernist techniques and oral tradition. A retrospective feature published by *Le Matin d’Algérie* in 2017 refers to the poet as ‘*Amghar azemni*’:

Sans en avoir l’air...notre ‘Amghar azemni’ se fera tour à tour historien, philosophe, sociologue, lanceur d’alerte... un procédé de transformation critique de la pensée dominante...une démarche réflexive rationnelle et juste.

This insight could be translated as:

Without appearing to be, our ‘Amghar azemni’ [wise elder] becomes by turns a historian, philosopher, sociologist, and whistleblower...a process of a transformative critic of a dominant thought... a rational and just reflexive approach.

[Translation mine]

Moreover, the rich language used by Lounis Aït Menguellet, and his ability of turning pain into beauty is praised in another review in *Algerie360* in an article titled *Lounis Aït Menguellet: 50ans de chefs- d’œuvre!* (2017). The work states that: “Les combinaisons

verbales... font jaillir des sentiments... remuent des champs émotionnels... puis... redescend féconder les roseraies.” This can be translated to: “The verbal combination... spark emotions... stir emotional fields... then... descend again to fertilize the rose gardens.” (Translation mine)

Moreover, a journalist from the same review celebrates the poet as “a cultural conscience... historian, sociologist, philosophical alert, and initiator of collective reflection,” which makes his work *Éli d Weéli* (1977) (translated to “*Ali and Ouali*”,) an intersection of art and civic engagement. Add to that, the political impact of Menguélet’s work is also notable.

According to some of the same Algerian360 reviews, the lyrics of the song: “*unleash repressed sentiments...fertilize the roses again,*” (originally written as: “Les combinaisons verbales...font jaillir des sentiments... remuent des champs émotionnels...puis...redéscend féconder les roseraies.”) This review admires the way Menguélet effectively turns sorrow into aesthetic rebirth.

### **Issue and working hypothesis**

Though the abovementioned literary works reviews have explored and have shed light, in one way or another the way poets have used literature and poetry as a powerful means of portraying the traumas and the anxieties of the modern disjointed world, and how they could resist it through blending modernist techniques with cultural tradition to critique the postcolonial and post-war disillusionment, their interpretations, somehow, have not compared the works of T.S Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922) with Ali Amran’s *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (translated to “*The Valley of Winds*”) and *Bu Lehmun* (2013) (“*The Wretched One,*” translation mine,) and Aït Menguélet’s *Éli d Weéli* (1977) (translated to “*Ali and Ouali.*”). This is why I attempt to analyze the works altogether relying on the theory of *Intertextuality* and the conception of *Art and Nihilism*. Moreover, many theorists have spoken about

intertextuality in these works, and the role of the artist as a redeemer, providing many explanations through articles and other different ways. However, to my best knowledge, no study has so far gathered all of the three works together in one comparative study to discuss the similar modernist techniques used by the artists. In the articles mentioned above, the authors have focused each one work only, giving more attention to Eliot's poem, leaving the other Algerian Kabyle works somehow marginalized. We could notice that even Ali Amran and Aït Menguellet's songs were not the center discussion of many articles, but rather, the focus was on the artist itself as a whole. Furthermore, no accessible interpretations, or translations could be found online or in physical form. Thus, I aim to add my personal interpretation to the field which I believe will contribute to and offer more information to the academic world of Kabyle literature. I am persuaded that these Kabyle works are of a high importance to that of *The Waste Land's* because of their genius approach to the portrayal of the cultural and identity crises, along with the traumas that followed the colonial era in Algeria.

In this dissertation, my aim is to first break down Ali Amran's songs *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) and *Bu Lehmum* (2013), along with Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977), then attempt to provide a translation that could help other cultures understand them better. By doing so, I intend to bring the voice of Kabyle songs into the global discourse of literary modernism. I ought to use throughout my study Julia Kristeva's theory of *Intertextuality* in her work *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) along with Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art* and *Nihilism* in his work *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). I have chosen these two theories specifically because they provide a clear understanding of the way these three texts are interconnected, and how the role of the artist as a redeemer is considered as the hope for rebirth from a fragmented landscape. I have also chosen these theories for their cohesion with the literary material under analysis, and also because they

provide key concepts to draw the shared line between the works and the poets despite emerging from different historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as to prove that modernist techniques are not limited to Western literature.

### **Methodological outline**

As far as the methodological outline is concerned, the study of this dissertation has followed the IMRAD outline format. I have divided my research paper into four parts. The first part is devoted to a general introduction of the main themes of intertextuality, the role of the artist, and the parallel modernist techniques used in the chosen material. In the review of literature part, I have cited some of the major previous critics, scholars, and journalists who have contributed with their own opinion. Next, in issue and hypothesis, I have included the issue of the exploration of intertextual connections and modernist techniques that link between T.S Eliot's, Ali Amran's, and Lounis Aït Menguellet's works which is the research gap I intend to fulfil and the methodology. The second part will include methods and materials; it will contain Julia Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality* and Nietzsche's approach of *Art* and *Nihilism* on which our work is relying. It includes also the summaries of the primary sources. The third part will consist of the results or the conclusions of our research paper. The last part will include the discussion and the analysis of our findings around the comparative study between Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Amran's and Menguellet's works. It will be divided into two main chapters which deal with Intertextuality and the power of the redemption of Art in the works. The first chapter will be devoted first to the breakdown of the modernist techniques used by T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) as groundwork for this analysis. Then it shifts to a comparative study between the similar modernist tools used by Eliot and Ali Amran in his songs *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) and *Bu Lehmum* (2013). On the other hand, the second chapter will move to a continuous comparative study between the modernist literary devices employed by Eliot with Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977), and

exploring how each poet expresses socio-political issues, and the influential role of the artist in turning sorrow into pain. Ultimately, a general conclusion will be as a restatement of our findings and an opening door for new interpretations.

## **II. Methods and Materials**

### **1. Methods**

This part of our research explores the theory of Julia Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality* developed in her work *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) along with Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art* and *Nihilism* in his work *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) to discuss the intertextual parallels between Eliot's work with those of Ali Amran and Aït Menguellet, and to analyze the role of the artist as a redeemer in a fragmented modernist landscape.

#### **a. Julia Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality***

Julia Kristeva is a Bulgarian-French philosopher, literary critic and psychoanalyst. She first introduced her theory of intertextuality in the 1960s. This theory emerged as a result of a deep influence by the work of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism. Kristeva constructed her theory upon Bakhtin's statement that language is inherently social and dialogic, which refers to the fact that each utterance is built by previous discourse. In her foundational work *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980), Kristeva states that: "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another." (p.66) This statement means that no text exists in isolation, but is a web of multiple voices, truths and histories.

Furthermore, Kristeva's theory notes that meaning is always produced through a network of previous texts, in fact, she challenges the notion that texts is a personal object containing one single autonomous subject. She writes: "The notion of intertextuality replaces the notion of subjectivity, or that of originality." (p.37)

One of the main focuses of Kristeva's intertextuality is shifting the focus from the author to the reader, suggesting that it is up to the reader to construct the meaning through an intellectual effort. The theorist further challenges Ferdinand de Saussure's static model of language. Intertextuality then includes direct quotations, thematic parallels, symbolism and cultural codes in which she argues that: "the text is [...] a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash." (Desire in Language, p. 36) In literature, this theory helps provide richer interpretations, as used by T.S Eliot in his poem *The Waste Land* (1922) which is widely known as highly intertextual poem, referencing from myth, scripture and classic literature to achieve a good portrayal of the disjointed modern world.

Julia Kristeva's intertextuality is not only stylistic, but also political and philosophical. Through redefining how texts are read, written and understood, meaning becomes constructed through dialogue with the past with the interplay of voices.

#### **b. Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art* and *Nihilism***

Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the most influential philosophers of modern thought. He developed a deep understanding of *nihilism*-when religious and spiritual systems lose their power to give life meaning. According to Nietzsche, after the "*Death of God*," modern society faced a decay of spirituality and morality. In *The Will to Power* (1900s) he defines nihilism as: "the radical repudiation of value, meaning, and desirability." (para. I)

However, unlike other theorists who consider nihilism a destructive force, Nietzsche analyzes how art could overcome this power. According to him, art is an affirmation of life in a disjointed world. He declares in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) that: "It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified." (para. 5) Through this declaration, we understand that for Nietzsche art has a redemptive power to turn suffering into beauty. It does not escape the traumas, but rather transforms chaos into expression. He further

argues that tragic art found in Greek tragedy, embraces the harsh reality of life. He notes: “The tragic artist does not deny the existence of the terrible and the questionable character of existence...he is Dionysian.” (para. 24)

Thus, the concept of the Dionysian artist as the redeemer, or the one who sees suffering with his eyes, challenges the old narrative of nihilism and the moral relief of religion. This point aligns with Eliot’s post-World WAR I along with Amran and Ait Menguellet’s postcolonial Algeria’s modernist issues such as disillusionment, and fragmentation. Nietzsche then believes that in the middle of all of this chaos, the artist is the one who must answer through art to reconstruct coherence from the ruins, as he writes in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1978): “One must still have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star.” (para.5)

### **3. Materials**

#### **a. A summary of T.S Eliot’s *The Waste Land***

*The Waste Land* is a five section poem written by T.S Eliot, published in 1922. Each section portrays the modern world’s crisis, and the search for renewal and redemption.

The opening section, *The Burial of the Dead*, introduces the waste land as a spiritual desert, where Eliot states that spring is the season of rebirth by declaring: “*April is the cruellest month,*” by which he means that change and revival can be a painful process in a meaningless world. This section weaves personal memories, myth, and prophetic voices, from elements of the Bible to tarot symbolism, all to depict the cultural fragmentation and the loss of faith.

In *A Game of Chess*, Eliot discusses the domestic and erotic realms to show the emotional despair and the loss of human connection. The title of this section evokes Thomas Middleton’s play. It begins with a woman, surrounded by artificial beauty, lamenting a failed

relationship. Then it moves to a pub conversation between working-class women, marked by disillusionment. The juxtaposition mirrors the emotional and sexual disconnection across class and gender lines.

*The Fire Sermon* is the third longest section of the poem. It discusses Christian and Buddhist themes in order to critique lust, alienation, and modernity's moral decay. Tiresias, the androgynous, mythological seer, becomes the narrative center, to represent the collapse of fixed identity and gender binaries. Eliot observes the sexual encounter between a typist and a clerk symbolizing the mechanical, passionless relations of modern life. He contrasts the polluted River Thames with its earlier poetic representations, as a symbol of cultural decline. Through the inclusion of the Buddha and St. Augustine, the poet suggests that redemption lies in spiritual discipline.

Last but not least, the fourth section, *Death by Water*, is brief compared to the other sections, but it holds a heavy thematic significance. It narrates the drowning of Phlebas the Phoenician, a cautionary figure whose fate represents the futility of worldly ambition, and the inevitability of death. In this section, for Eliot water is not a source of rebirth, but rather a force of dissolution. In addition, he focuses on themes spiritual void and the heart of modern existence.

Lastly, the poem concludes with *What the Thunder Said*, where Eliot expresses an apocalyptic vision that traverses wastelands, mountains, and ruined cities. The tone becomes very urgent, invoking the Passion of Christ, Eastern scriptures, and post-war imagery. This part climaxes in the pronouncement of three Sanskrit words from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad-“*Datta*” (Give), “*Dayadhvam*” (Sympathize), and “*Damyata*” (Control)-which offer moral obligations for renewal. The poem ends with the mantra “*Shantih shantih shantih*,” meaning “*the peace which passeth understanding*,” in which the poet suggests a final gesture towards spiritual elevation amid fragmentation.

**b. A summary of Ali Amrane's *Tizi N Leryah***

Ali Amrane's *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (*The Valley of Winds*) expresses deep existential crisis and social alienation, portraying the modern human condition in a culturally and spiritually dead land. It sparks themes of disillusionment and loneliness, and the death of collective solidarity, as each individual is consumed by their own lives and problems, leaving the speaker in a sense of wander, searching for relief and meaning. The song's imagery of sleepless cold nights and fading dreams reflect a harsh world where imperialism has replaced emotional connection. Towards the end of the song, the poet is left like a nocturnal bird, singing in solitude, emphasizing the role of the artist to witness collective pain, and be able to voice it and turn it into something beautiful.

**c. A summary of Ali Amrane's *Bu Lehmum***

Ali Amran's *Bu Lehmum* (2013) (*The Wretched One*) laments the lost hope and failed rebirth, illustrating the poet as a redemptive figure who cultivates beauty only for it to be destroyed by the harsh truth of the postcolonial society. The poet uses an imagery of sowing and sterility as symbols of a wasted effort in a spiritually lost world. In addition, the metaphor of the dreams vanishing once reality hits is a strong reference to existential crisis and disillusionment, resulting in the fragility of human motivation. The song then portrays a sense of betrayal, grief, and disintegration.

**d. A summary of Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli***

Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977) is a poetic allegory that tells the story of four friends- Eli "Ali", Weeli "Ouali", Mohand, and M'hend- reunited first by knowledge, but then follow different paths in life, resulting in their division by the pursuit of trade, war, inquisition and art. The poem explores a heavy modernist issue manifested in social alienation, the decay of communal bonds, and postcolonial trauma. Mohand falls victim of

materialism, Ali turns into a terrorizing man consumed by violence; Ouali delves into a failed journey of looking for meaning in chaos. The only person who could redeem this suffering is Mhend, the poet through his creativity and art, referencing Nietzsche's beliefs that art is the justification of existence. Moreover, Menguellet employs modernist techniques to illustrate the collapse of cultural systems like irony, fragmentation, and symbolism.

### III. Results

In order to effectively shed the light on the modernist parallels between T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) and Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) and *Bu Lehmum* (2013) with Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Éli d Weéli* (1977) and the role of the artist as the redeemer, we have borrowed Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality developed in her work *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) along with Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art* and *Nihilism* in his work *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). In our analysis, we have tried to explore and establish a comparative study. In the aim of answering our issue, we have compared the main themes sustaining this research paper.

The outcome of this study has revealed two major results. First, we have examined the works in relation to Kristeva's intertextuality. We have deduced from this analysis that the three poems despite emerging from different historical and cultural backgrounds, they are proven to be interconnected with one another through their similar use of rich allusions to myth, history and collective memory, a way of using past voices to express modern issues. For instance, Eliot's reference to the Grail myth and Eastern scripture, to illustrate a cultural decay, manifests also in Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* where the singer uses laments a lost homeland, while *Bu Lehmum* echoes communal grief. *Éli d Weéli* also includes a sacred book descending from the sky referencing a religious book. In all four works, mythic allusions serve as a reconstruction of the present chaos through past voices transformed into modern meaning.

Second, we have analyzed Nietzsche's conception of *Art* and *Nihilism*. We have concluded that in a fragmented world, characterized by moral, spiritual, and cultural decay, only the artist could transform this collective suffering into something beautiful, offering

healing, rebirth and redemption through creation. Eliot's Tiersias, Amran's narrator, and Meneguillet's M'hend have all witnessed suffering with their eyes, but have succeeded to turn it into aesthetic form, as a form of resistance. And after deeply analyzing the works, even the writers of these poems themselves are considered to be redemptive artists, because they have seen the collective traumas of their post-World War I and postcolonial worlds, yet they dared to speak about it, offering a light of hope to the empty souls.

## **Chapter One: Modernist Techniques in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Ali Amrane's *Tizi N Leryah***

The focus of this chapter is to explore the shared modernist techniques found in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) and Ali Amran's songs *Tizi N Leryah* ("The Valley of Winds") and *Bu Lehmum* ("The Wretched One"). It focuses on themes of fragmentation, spiritual crisis and the mythical method as tools to mirror modernity crises. Through in depth analysis, it also emphasizes on how both authors construct meaning through intertextual references and symbolic landscapes. By deploying Julia Kristeva's *intertextuality*, and Nietzsche's concept of *Art*, the chapter reveals how these works illustrate a global modernity trauma, and the role of art to confront it. Ultimately, it argues for the equal artistic and intellectual value Kabyle poetry within modernist discourse.

To explain, Nietzsche's concept of *Art* was first developed in his book *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), published in 1872. In it, he argues that art is not simply a form of beauty or expression, but rather a crucial aspect of human life and culture. In his book, he notes that true art arises from the tension and fusion of two forces: *Apollonian* which represents order and reason, and the *Dionysian* symbolizing chaos and emotion, each mirroring the beauty and the

trauma of humanity. Furthermore, Nietzsche believes that art contributes to human's confrontation of the harshness of reality through allusions, he states that art is *an aesthetic phenomenon*, and that it is "...a vital force that helps us cope with existence by turning suffering into beauty and meaning." (p.52) In other words, it means that art is a means of redemption, transforming human's sufferings into something meaningful full of hope. In his later works, Nietzsche develops the concept of the artist such as in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, defining him as a creator of values. He praises the artist and the artistic spirit, and denounces what he calls "*slave morality*" of traditional religion and philosophy. In short, for the theorist, art is an expression of *the will to power*, not restricted only to paintings, music or literature, but it is a lifestyle, that embraces suffering, adding meaning to a purposeless world.

In fact, Nietzsche's concept of *Art* in our case goes hand in hand with Julia Kristeva's *Intertextuality* (1980). During the 1960s, the term *intertextuality* was first introduced by Julia Kristeva in her essay *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1966) published in the journal critique. The concept became widely adopted and influential in literary and cultural theory. Many scholars from various fields incorporated intertextuality into their analyses of texts and culture. Ronald Barthes says in *The Death of the Author* (1967) in this regard: "*A text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture.*" In other words, Eco discusses the way texts are built out of a complex system of references, and how it is up to the reader to interpret the meaning based on their knowledge from previous texts.

Furthermore, Julia Kristeva states (1980):

The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text; to try to find the 'sources'; the 'influences' of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet already read: they are quotations without inverted commas. (Desire in language. 1980. Pp. 66. 67)

This strengthens the idea that; in reality texts are part of a big connected web of meaning, made of many other texts, where there's a shifting emphasis from the interplay of meanings between texts and the reader's interpretations.

### **Section One: Fragmentation and Symbolic Structure in The Waste Land:**

Since for our analysis, we have chosen T.S Eliot's poem *The Waste Land* as a base material to study the modernist techniques used in the Algerian Kabyle works selected: Ali Amran's "*The Valley of Wind*," originally entitled *Tizi N Leryah* and *Bu Lehmum* ("*The Wretched One*") and compare them to those of the Western Literature, it is crucial to first introduce and break down some of the methods that Eliot himself has used in his work. Thus, this section will discuss the modernist techniques used in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), which will be further be used in the rest of our analysis.

Through the study of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, we notice the poet's mashup of the reliance on intertextuality, mythical structure, and symbolic fragmentation that mirror the intellectual, cultural, and social anxieties of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The poem does not only reflect the despair of the post first world war, but it also serves as a response to the modern world's spiritual void, cultural and social despair, and the overall loss of meaning of life. In addition, Eliot's reliance on classical, religious, and ritualistic myths illustrates Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality*, where meaning is constructed from a text's dynamic relationship with other texts. At the same time, Eliot also relies on Nietzsche's concept of *Art*, so as to emphasize on the way art and poetry is a redemptive force in a meaningless world.

#### **a. Fragmentation: The Fractured Mirror of Modernism:**

Eliot's poetic method in *The Waste Land* is deliberately fragmented. From the opening lines of the work, it is clear how the five sections-*The Burial of the Dead*, *A Game of Chess*, *The Fire Sermon*, and *What the Thunder Said*- are constructed as a fragmented, non-

linear sequence of voices and images. Each section of the poem is considered to be a fragment in its self, and they do not follow a specific clear narrative progression. Fragmentation here for Eliot becomes a metaphysical stance, to really illustrate, or bring to life the collapse of unity of voices and meaning in the modern world, where coherent narratives and stable identities have broken down.

To exemplify, in the first section of the poem *The Burial of the Dead*, Eliot begins with presenting a series of scattered images, such as the most well-known lines:

*“April is the cruelest month”*

(I.1)

Here, the poet challenges the notion of spring being the season of renewal. Immediately, when reading these opening lines of the poem, we feel a sense of rupture with tradition, where the natural cycle is a symbol of reminder of death and decay. The use of the juxtaposed concepts of cold, sterile winter, with the hope that spring brings, unsettles the traditional expectations and sets the tone for the poem’s fragmented, scattered vision of the world.

Moreover, the poem lacks a singular narrative voice, which contributes heavily in its fragmented nature. Eliot uses multiple voices, both human and non-human, to recount different perspectives, points of views, and experiences. To demonstrate, in the third part of the poem *The Fire of Sermon*, we detect a shift from the voice of *Tiresias* to that of typist and clerk engaged in a mechanical sexual act. This sudden shift between different voices emphasizes on Eliot’s use of fragmented subjectivity and the decay of coherent identity.

Julia Kristeva’s theory of *Intertextuality* is particularly useful in unfolding the modernist technique of shifting voices in *The Waste Land*, as it gives us readers a clear understanding of the connection between those voices, as they are not isolated from one

another, but rather interconnected through a large cultural and historical discourse. The poem's constant switching in speaker, tone, and register mirrors perfectly the fragmented unconnected nature of modern existence. Kristeva provides a critical framework about this matter, where she argues in her collection of essays *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) that texts do not exist in isolation but are interconnected with other texts and cultural discourses. She states: "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another" (p.66)

In this light, the change in narrative of speakers in *The Waste Land* from mythological figures to contemporary speakers does not indicate a narrative coherence but rather a manifestation of what Kristeva defines as a text's dialogic nature. She further claims: "The notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double." (p.68)

Also, Eliot's technique of shifting voices is drawn from Dante, Shakespeare and overall cotemporary London street life, which shows how modernist texts serve as a web of intersection for various cultural, historical and literary voices; a way for the poet to illustrate the anxiety of the modern world. Kristeva's theory contributes to clarifying how these voices are parts of a larger textual and cultural dialogue which captures the interconnectivity that lies at the core of modernist poetry.

To exemplify, Eliot writes in the first section of the poem:

*A heap of broken images, where the sun beats*

*And the dead tree gives no shelter*

*the cricket no relief*

These lines mirror the brokenness of the modern world, as well as the structural fragmentation of the poem itself. It is important to note that Eliot does not impose his ideas about order, but he is just aiming at illustrating the disordered world in the best way possible. In fact, through his illustrations, he reflects what Ezra Pound likes to call “*the image of truth.*” We could also look at the poem’s fragmentation through a cubist aesthetics lens, as it aligns with it, by assembling various angles to show multiple perspectives, which is widely known as a multiplicity of voices, truths and meanings. There is another angle to this point, which is the fact that Eliot envisions the post-war landscape as a *cultural ruin*. Regarding this, Walter Benjamin says in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (1940): “*There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism.*” This concept relates to Eliot’s poem, as it is viewed as a cultural palimpsest—a poem composed from the debris of Western tradition. The poet, like Benjamin shows the way the modern world’s culture is built upon the wreckage of past meaning, where redemption is not guaranteed. Furthermore, Benjamin’s work argues that: “*To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it ‘the way it really was.’ It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at moment of danger,*” in which he calls for recognizing rupture and loss rather than supporting its continuity. In this sense, Eliot portrays culture as the after image of the post first world war crisis, not its transcendence.

Additionally, the theme of fragmentation is reinforced through the lack of temporal progression throughout *The Waste Land*. It is clear that this poem does not follow a linear structure but rather fluctuates from past, present, and future, leaving the readers in a sense of disorientation. This temporal fragmentation portrays the breakdown of traditional concepts of time and history, corresponding to Nietzsche’s idea of the “*eternal recurrence*” in which he argues that time is of modernity cyclical rather than linear, collapsing under the weight of the modern world. And as mentioned before, Nietzsche argues in his *The Birth of Tragedy*

(1872), that art emerges from the tension between *Apollonian* order and *Dionysian chaos*. Likewise, Eliot's poem breaks down the collapse of Apollonian rationality, creating a big void and despair where Dionysian excess -sex and violence-surfaces in sharp, distorted, and lyrical flashes, appearing in his lines from "*A Game of Chess*:" "*Twit twit twit/Jug jug jug jug jug jug/ So rudely forc'd.*" This disturbing chant represents the Philomela's assault that alludes for Dionysian irrationality, trauma, and authentic emotions.

**a. Polyphony and the Crisis of the Subject:**

Another worth mentioning tool that appears strongly in Eliot's *The Waste Land* is its polyphonic structure, where multiple voices, languages and cultural references coexist, along with the crisis of the coherent subject. The speaker along the five sections is never unified, nor clearly defined. Each section is dominated by different speakers, for instance we have the countess Marie, the drowned Phoenician sailor *Phlebas*, and others. Their voices appear in the work suddenly, by interrupting one another. This lack of narrative perspective stability reflects in a sense the psychological fragmentation of the modern world, and the modern self, which we have found, that it aligns with Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of *heteroglossia*, which he describes as "*the plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousness,*"(1984). This concept is clearly shown in these *The Waste Land's* lines:

*I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives,*

*Old man with wrinkled dugs*

(Section III)

*Tiresias* here stands in an in-between state of awareness, embodying both genders, while linking between classical myth and modern, or contemporary era. And Bakhtin's *heteroglossia* in the poem is not a means of celebration, but rather an illustration of a

disintegrated self, hinting at Theodor Adorno's analysis of modern culture, which he visualizes as a mixture between *individual alienation and mass standardization*.

Challenging the old poetic monologues, we notice that in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, within each section, there is a lack of the use of the lyric "I". This confuses readers, as for example in the first section of *The Burial of the Dead*, the narrative moves from childhood memories in Germany, to a prophetic voice, to a woman reading tarot cards, all this without a warning or smooth transitions. This destabilization of voices hints at a deep, and serious crisis of the subject, where the individual self is not autonomous but rather fractures, dispersed across history and linguistic fields.

In short, the polyphonic structure used in the poem, sparks the notion that in modernity, the individual is not constructed through a stable inner essence, but rather through external discourses: religious, mythological, and literary.

#### **b. Mythical Method:**

Indeed, across the five sections of *The Waste Land*, it is undeniable that the work is saturated with mythological references. Ranging from Grail legends and fertility rites to Greco-Roman tragedies, these myths were not used to idealize the past, but to push the readers to question the cultural and spiritual decay of the modern world. To reach his objectives, Eliot uses what he calls a "text of texts", which aligns with Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality*, and Nietzsche's concept *Art* as a Dionysian answer to existential crisis and fragmentation.

Influenced by Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), Eliot emphasizes heavily on the myth of *the Fisher King*, which links between fertility rituals and the wasteland concept. The poem basically tells a story of a sterile land, and the reason for its sterility is because its king is wounded, which a symbolic reference for the tragedies of the post-first

world war Europe. This myth turns the poem's fragmented narrative into a spiritual quest. We can mention some lines where the character of the Fisher King appears:

*I sat upon the shore*

*Fishing, with the arid plain behind me*

(V.423-424)

These lines suggest both futility and the hope for renewal, as a means of mirroring the decay of spirituality.

Another key myth is the transformation of *Philomela*, inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Her story is about her being raped, then after that, her tongue is cut, then she turns into a nightingale-and her trauma becomes a chant. Eliot references this in:

*The change of Philomel, by the barbarous king*

*So rudely forced*

(II. 99-100)

Then he followed it by the nightingale's cry "*Jug Jug.*" In the poem, this song, or cry becomes a symbol for a haunting, disjointed expression of trauma, which also references Nietzsche's Dionysian aesthetic, in which he defines that suffering is reflected through art that turns it into something bearable and beautiful.

Eliot also references the myth of *Tiresias*, the blind prophet who embodied a dual-gendered identity-as both man and woman. This myth appears in part III "*The Fire Sermon*" of the poem, and hits at liminal consciousness-the fact of having no gender, in a timeless world, and able to witness the emptiness of modern life

*I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives*

*Old man with wrinkled dugs*

(III. 218-219)

This character reflects *intertextual multiplicity*, i.e. one subject collapsing many points of view, and it aligns with Kristeva's concept of the intertextual subject, who does not stand alone but within a web of old utterances, texts and histories.

Additionally, it is worth to mention the myth of *The Sibyl*, a prophetess granted immortality but not eternal youth, which is mentioned in the poem's epigraph, taken from Petronius' *Satyricon*. When she was asked what she wanted, she answered: "*I want to die.*" This haunting illustration sets the tone for the poem as a reflection on what life becomes when meaning is lost, and cultural survival continues without true renewal. The Sibyl's paralyzed state symbolizes the truth of the modern existence.

And this myth brings us back to Walter Benjamin's vision of history. In his work *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, he describes the Angel of History, who visualizes the past as "*one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage.*" Although Eliot did not explicitly state that he was influenced by Benjamin's work, the myth of Sybil and the poem's imagery of ruins corresponds to his vision of historical consciousness, where myth is used as both to recognize the past and get over it, by seeking rebirth.

Having examined the core modernist techniques employed in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land*, particularly the use of fragmented structure, shifting voices, and intertextuality, it becomes clear that Eliot's poem serves as a canonical example of modernist experimentation. However, these techniques are not confined to Western literary modernism. In the following section, the discussion will expand beyond Eliot to explore how similar techniques from *The Waste Land* appear also in Ali Amran's songs *Tizi N Leryah* (translated to "*The Valley of Winds*") and *Bu Lehmum* (translated to "*The Wretched One.*") This comparison shows how modernist techniques exceed national and cultural boundaries, appearing in diverse artistic expressions around the world.

## **Section Two: Intertextual and Cultural dialogues between Eliot's *The Waste Land* , Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* and *Bu Lehmum***

Throughout Ali Amran's album *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (translated to "*The Valley of Winds*,"") we come to see how the artist blends beautifully between traditional cultural Kabyle sounds with modernist tools. In our study, we have chosen his two songs *Tizi N Leryah* (translated into *The Valley of Winds*), and *Bu Lehmum* (translated into *The Wretched One*), which illustrate this combination. The artist has used many modernist techniques to highlight the complexities of postcolonial identity, cultural hybridity, and existential crisis, in relation to Julia Kristeva's *intertextuality* and Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art* as a response to existential disintegration.

### **1. The Waste Land and Tizi N Leryah**

To begin with, in *Tizi N Leryah*, which I translated to "*the Valley of Winds*," is a title that Ali Amran uses as a metaphor to highlight the agitated journey of life, followed by disillusionment, wandering, isolation, and identity crisis that people of the modern world have gone through, more specifically, artists. It stands as a profound illustration of the way modernist aesthetics penetrate non-Western musical traditions, especially in the expression of postcolonial and existential crisis. The lyrics of this song particularly align heavily with the modernist techniques seen in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century literature, and more specifically with T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

#### **a. Disillusionment and Remorse: The Modernist Subject**

The song begins with a sense of existential malaise and lamenting which mirrors the disillusionment found in *The Waste Land*:

*A yul-iw yebyan tigi*

*Oh heart that has desired such things*

*Wali ziy anda nebbed*

*Look at where we are now*

Here, the artist is using the personification method of the heart, blaming it for its wrong decisions and misguided desires as if it was a real person, which resonates with the modernist issues of agency. Similarly in the *Waste Land*, the poem also opens with a same tone in the lines:

*April is the cruelest month, breeding*

*Lilacs out of the dead land*

Both works illustrate a profound crisis of desire and memory, in which the hopes of many have been shattered and left to decay. In T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, the poet illustrates a world marked by spiritual emptiness, cultural decay, and a collapse of coherent memory and meaning. The voices in the poem are fragmented and lost, echoing the sense of personal and collective disillusionment. Similarly, Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* (translated to "*The Valley of Winds*") conveys this psychological landscape through music, expressing a heavy lack of connection to place, tradition, and identity. Amrane, who studied English language at the University of Mouloud Mammeri of Tizi Ouzou, draws on these literary themes, blending them with postcolonial and regional grief. His songs reflect a modernist ethos, disjointed melodies, and nostalgic lyrics that mourn what has been lost, while resisting any clear resolution or direction. In all these works cited, pain becomes a source of pain rather than comfort, and rather than leading to satisfaction, desire perpetuates a state of incompleteness and a constant reminder of loss and emptiness.

Although there are no direct signs that Amran was influenced by Eliot, we can notice that he has used the same speaker position, as he portrays him as someone who blames the self for making wrong decision. This shows that these two figures' art goes beyond national limits, as they have both explored the same modernist anxieties and crises, proving also that

people of the modern world undergo the same difficulties of life even if they are not from different countries and cultures.

Furthermore, in this case, Kristeva's *intertextuality* is shown as a fundamental truth, where despair and fragmented subjectivity are no longer considered to be a unique personal experience, but rather shared cultural texts, which keep influencing people through repeating it, modifying it, or translating it into other languages, as Amran did with his songs.

### **b. Fragmentation of Time, Space, and Emotional Landscape**

In his song, it is clear that Amran has used a non-linear narrative style. While reading the work, we can sense that there is a very rapid shift in emotions, between feelings of regret, wandering, and critique:

*Wiss ma yeğ-a-ay lawan*

*Ney uread i d-iħewes*

*Has time left us behind*

*Or has it yet to seek us out*

[Translation mine]

Likewise, Eliot writes in part I:

*I had not thought death had undone so many*

The above lyrics show that both works treat time not as a linear or coherent progression, but as a fragmented and disjointed construct. For the two artists, time is no longer a means to organize human experience or to provide continuity; they visualize it as unstable and chaotic, highlighted by sudden shifts, temporal dislocations, and the decay of chronological order. Their vision towards this temporal fragmentation holds a deep reflection of a broader modernist perspective that challenges the old narratives, rejecting the notion of stability and coherence. Furthermore, time in this context is a disordered concept, where past, present, and future are intermixed, without clear limits or boundaries, mirroring perfectly the existential

crisis, and psychological disorientation of the modern world. In this way, one can say that both Ali Amran and Eliot have broken down the temporal structure, turning it into a symbol of modern fragmentation itself, destroying the past narratives, and subject's perception of reality.

### c. Exile and Homelessness

As mentioned before in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, he describes modern humanity as spiritually lost, wandering through a sterile and alienating land. This sense of alienation is captured in his line in the first part of the poem:

*Here is no water but only rock*

In ancient traditions, water is known to be a strong symbol of rebirth, purity and spirituality, and its absence effects heavily modern existence on so many levels. The poem's imagery of a lifeless desert full of rocks stands as a metaphor to illustrate the emptiness and moral decay of the post-war modern life.

Amran in turn expresses a similarly alienated situation in his song Tizi N Leryah, "*The Valley of Wind*." He does not exactly speak about a lifeless rock, but he illustrates the reality of his speaker and his people through an imagery of wandering in isolation. He sings:

*A netcali deg berdan*

*We wander the lonely streets*

*Awer yelli hed d amwanes*

*Without companionship*

*Di Tizi N Leryah*

*Amidst the windswept valley*

[Translation mine]

The signer portrays the valley not as a simple geographic reality or physical setting, but as an existential landscape. Like Eliot's desert, he captures the valley as a symbol for the emotional sterility and fragmentation experienced by the speaker and his people. From our own

understanding, we can interpret these narratives as someone who is lost in a modern world, with shattered hopes and dreams, alone, with no one to count on. Moreover, the valley for Kabyle people is such a sacred place; it is a source of life. It is where our ancestors have built great civilizations, taking advantage of its benefits for their own survival, their plants, and their animals. To this day, valleys continue to hold a great place in Kabyle people's hearts, they have taught the new generation that this hollow is a symbol of their belonging and home, a place of refuge and spirituality. In Amran's song, this sanctuary becomes swept by wind, a force that has scattered and dispersed people, leaving them spiritually lost, vulnerable and marginalized, wandering around streets with an empty soul.

Analyzing further, this use of heavy symbolic metaphors of Eliot's sterile modernist London, and Amran's Kabyle valleys, shows that the modern condition is not only tied to European literature, but it is a worldwide human experience. We could really see now how themes of exile, alienation, fragmentation and the search for lost meaning is a transnational; it crosses national boundaries and appears in many cultural forms. Although Eliot's work emphasizes on the density of the intertextual web of Western myth, philosophy and literature, and Amran describes his people's sensibility through his profound imagery of the modern Kabyle condition. Both poets meet at the same conclusion: the self is fragmented in the modernist world, misplaced, far from tradition and culture, and confronted by the void and the decay of the human innocence.

In addition, drawing on Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality*, we can state that it helps us immensely to clarify Amran's lyrics. In fact, his words do not simply align with Eliot's *The Waste Land*'s themes, but it contributes more to the modernist literature, by expanding it, and adding perspectives of several cultures that go through the same crises. This allows artists to share the suffering of their people to the world, showing that it is not a dedicated European reality, but rather a sense of collective trauma that echoes across cultures in the aftermath of

historical catastrophes that created the problems of the new modernist world. Add to that, according to Kristeva: “Any text is the absorption and transformation of another,” *Tizi N Leryah* then is not an imitation of *The Waste Land*, but a global modernist work, that captures a universal depression. It is a kind of response to the traumas of modern existence, marked by the history of postcolonial Algeria that resonates with the uneasiness of the European world articulated by the canonical work *The Waste Land*.

Moreover, Nietzsche argues in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) that in the face of a traumatic worldview, art becomes the only redemptive force that allows people to confront chaos. This is the case of the two artists T.S Eliot and Ali Amran, as they have employed aesthetic fragmentation, lyrical ambiguity, and myths as artistic techniques to resist the trauma.

**a. Social Alienation and Critique of Materialism:**

Another powerful thematic parallel between Ali Amran’s *Tizi N Leryah* and T.S Eliot’s *The Waste Land* is their shared critique of social decay, especially through individual alienation and the negative influence of materialism. In *Tizi N Leryah*, Amran says:

<i>Yal wa yesea dunit-is</i>	<i>Each to their own</i>
<i>Dunit yerħa-tt chi</i>	<i>But it is wealth that reigns over life</i>
<i>Yal wa yelha d chyel-is</i>	<i>Each tends to their own concerns</i>
<i>A yettef amkan-is di tyernith</i>	<i>And seeks to isolate themselves from other</i>

[Translation mine]

Here, we notice that the speaker is mourning the loss of communal bonds and overall camaraderie, stating also that the modern world is overtaken by economic self-interest, and thus values of empathy and solidarity have decayed. This imagery of the detachment from collective identity is also mentioned in Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, where he portrays the European urban life:

*Unreal City*

*Under the brown fog of a winter dawn*

*A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,*

*I had not thought death had undone so many*

(I.60-63)

For Eliot, the *Unreal City* symbolizes a mechanical vision of London, which is populated by spiritually empty figures, moving without any purpose or connection, just like Amran's speaker, they are isolated and alienated from one another despite being physically close. This theme shows how the death of culture, religion, and philosophy can affect modern humanity in a negative aspect, forcing them to drift away from each other.

Despite arising from very different cultural contexts, the two works achieve to interconnect with one another in their depiction of the modern world. In Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* case, the betrayal that the speaker is talking about could be due to the false post-independence promises, since there has been a shift toward capitalist materialism, which in turn has destroyed and completely omitted traditional values, constructing then a lifeless society filled by empty lonely people. Likewise, in Eliot's modernist London, the First World War gave birth to a sterile land both culturally and spiritually.

In fact, the parallel between the two works is not coincidental based on Kristeva's intertextuality. According to her, all texts are interrelated to previous texts, and meaning is constantly rewritten through new cultures. As we have noticed, Eliot speaks a lot about themes of isolation, disillusionment, and the dominance of wealth, which Ali Amran also mentions in his song *Tizi N Leryah* many years after. This is proof that this is not a means of imitation, but a mutual engagement and contribution to the modernist literary and thematic patterns. Both works have their aesthetics, speak in their own idioms based on their own

cultural background, and linguistic knowledge, yet they serve practically the same objective which is to speak out the modernist world's anxieties and traumas.

### **b. The Mythical Method**

The last core modernist method shared by the two artists Eliot and Amrane is their similar use of myth, not to bring back the past, but to emphasize on the consequences it had on the modern world from disillusionment, to the collapse of tradition, culture and human innocence.

As mentioned before, Eliot's use of myth like *The Fisher King*, *the Sibyl of Cumae*, and fragments from *the Metamorphoses* and the *Upanishads* are part of a bigger web of cultural exhaustion. For him, these myths are sacred, but now, they appear to be unable to provide the world with coherence or redemption as they once did, so Eliot calls people to go back to them to regain their innocence and heal. In his words, he writes:

*I will show you fear in a handful of dust*

(I.30)

This line summarizes the poem's bleak message, where the search for spiritual meaning and fulfillment ends not in transcendence or enlightenment but in disillusionment, emptiness and decay. Myth, in this context no longer serves as a source of hope or guidance as it did in the past, it becomes rather a residual trace of past beliefs and order, a fragment meaning that emphasizes on the absence of cohesive cultural or spiritual narratives that can recover the modern world.

Amrane's *Tizi N Leryah*, or "*The Valley of winds*" uses similar myths through themes of exile and wandering. The speaker in the song is portrayed as an Odyssean figure, traversing windswept valleys, highlighted by burdens, disillusionment and lowliness. The artist mentions

a metaphor of a dream that vanishes, hinting at a mythic atmosphere where time and meaning do not exist:

*Tirga yettcabin lexyal*

*Your dreams are like shadows*

*Imi thebbeḡ ahyat akin*

*Fading away as we draw near*

[Translation mine]

In addition, Amran highlights this loss by a refrain:

*Amek ara ḡ-dyas nadam*

*How shall we reclaim the embrace of sleep*

[Translation mine]

In his song, he mentions this line twice, and uses *sleep* which is a symbol of peace, belonging and spirituality, as a metaphor that becomes impossible to reach. Similarly to the character of Marie in the first section of Eliot's *The Waste Land* entitled "*The Burial of The Dead*" where she says: "*I read much of the night*" This line, though appears to be quiet, is in fact heavy with spiritual exhaustion and psychological alienation, which is a central issue in the modernist literature. The act of "*reading much of the night*" is not only a metaphor for insomnia but it also refers to a consciousness unable to find rest, coherence or meaning in postwar cultural landscape lacking sense. Furthermore, this insomnia is symbolic where the speaker is trapped in a cycle of compulsive reading, unable to reach order in a disjointed world. Thus, the act of reading becomes a technique of a coping mechanism, and a response to an internal breakdown which was a modernist issue in the contemporary landscape. In this regard, Julia Kristeva argues in *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (1989) that texts often become "*monuments to melancholia,*" and that "*Depression is the hidden face of culture,*" which in this sense; the speaker's insomnia and failed attempts to find order and meaning reflect a depressive state, and a disconnection with cultural and spiritual structures. Both of Eliot's line "*I read much of the night,*" and Amrane' "*How shall we sleep?*" indicate a strong similarity in the use of modernist techniques, as they capture the modernist state of

mental breakdown which was the case of the modern world, and the subject's alienation from community as a whole, as well as from history and purpose. In both texts, night does not offer rest but instead, it becomes a site where cultural and psychological breakdown unfolds, or in other words, it becomes a symbol for modernity's darkness.

From a Nietzschean perspective, both works reflect the consequences of the "death of God" which refers to the collapse of moral certainty and the rise of nihilism in the modern age. It is also worth to mention Nietzsche's theory of art, where he distinguishes between two types of artistic expression: the Apollonian representing rationality and order, and the Dionysian which stands for chaos and emotions. After analyzing Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and Amrane's *Tizi N Leryah*, we can argue that they both use a more of a Dionysian confrontation with despair, which they seek to transmit it through art rather than resolving it.

In Amran's work where he sings about a night bird who sings while others are asleep is deeply Nietzschean that shows how artistic expression suffers in a nonchalant world:

<i>Tuyaleđ am ufrux n yiđ</i>	<i>Like a nocturnal bird</i>
<i>Tcenouđ imdanen řsen</i>	<i>You sing while others slumber</i>
<i>Ma d kecc yenyak usemmiđ</i>	<i>As for you, shivering in the cold</i>
<i>Nithni di tlata enhen</i>	<i>They are nestled in the warmth of their blankets</i>

[Translation mine]

Correspondingly, Eliot makes reference to Philomela, the nightingale who transforms after rape, becoming a symbol of endurance art amid trauma:

*The change of Philomela, by the barbarous king*  
*So rudely forced; yet there the nightingale*  
*Filled all the desert with inviolable voice*

(I.99-102)

We can only say that for both poets, myth is not a refuge, but it is used as a way of mourning, to reveal the depth and the level of loss.

## 2. Myth, Disillusionment, and Poetic Modernity in *The Waste Land* and *Bu Lehmum*

*Bu Lehmum* (translated into *The Wretched One*) is another song from Ali Amran's album *Tizi N Leryah* that we will compare its modernist techniques with those of Eliot's in *The Waste Land*. Like the previously analyzed song *Tizi N Leryah* (translated into "The Valley of Winds"), *Bu Lehmum* is a response to the modern's world's crises, in the Kabyle landscape.

### a. The collapse of meaning and spirituality

Amran's song *Bu Lehmum* (translated into *The Wretched One*) strongly depicts a barren landscape marked by despair:

<i>Ay tefrened deg eeqayen</i>	<i>You have sifted through countless seeds</i>
<i>Wid kan I meenen</i>	<i>Selecting only the finest</i>
<i>A yakerfa tezwid-t s ifri</i>	<i>And separated them from the tares</i>
<i>Tzerædh urti d yehriqen</i>	<i>You have sown the orchard and the scrub</i>
<i>Limer i y-uyen</i>	<i>Had they reaped</i>
<i>Tili lxir ad yer tili</i>	<i>The harvest would have been plentiful</i>
<i>Ma ulac imyi i d-yestuţcen</i>	<i>Alas no sprout has emerged</i>
<i>D tamurt i ieiqren</i>	<i>The earth has turned barren</i>
<i>Kullec ad yuyal d asuki</i>	<i>All must remain fallow</i>

[Translation mine]

It is important to note that for the Kabyle people, agriculture and harvest season have a deep significance that goes beyond simple economic necessity. They are a way of sustaining a lifestyle, and social bonds. It symbolizes resistance and self-sufficiency, in order to preserve

Kabyle autonomy and traditions. In *Bu Lehmum*'s context, Amran shows an image of a failed cultivation, despite the speaker's careful sowing, symbolizing not just agricultural failure, but a much deeper spiritual and societal infertility. And because there is no cultivation, there is no fruit, thus purpose and vitality are not achieved. This also means that no matter how sincere the cultivation is, which symbolizes faith, no fruit is born.

Comparably, Eliot envisions the erosion of spiritual certainty in the lines:

*What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow*

*Out of this stony rubbish?*

(I.19-20)

This image transmits the impossibility of renewal in a spiritually barren landscape. According to Eliot, the *roots* and *branches* which are both symbols of life and growth seem to be impossible to emerge from stony *rubbish*, capturing a modern world that lacks religion and culture, thus they can no longer guide and save human life.

Both works employ the concept of a barren land to symbolize a sterile world, where culture and religion no longer exist, resulting in deep existential problems. This theme resonates with Nietzsche's concept of the "death of God." In *The Gay Science* (1882), Nietzsche writes: "God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!" (p.90) In other words, the theorist argues that the Enlightenment and the birth of scientific nationalism had destroyed the credibility of traditional religious beliefs. The "death of God" does not stand for its literal meaning, but refers to the collapse of the once reliable values and moral frameworks that had provided meaning and guidance to human existence in the past. Nietzsche further elaborates regarding this loss:

What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has hitherto possessed has bled to death under our knife- who will wipe this blood off us? With what water could we cleanse ourselves? (p.18)

Here Nietzsche emphasizes on the profound consequences of the loss of the moral values that leads humans to be obligated to create new values in the absence of a great divine authority. Both works then illustrate the existential crisis that emerge when traditional sources of meaning collapse. The barren landscapes serve as powerful metaphors that mirror the spiritual desolation and moral ambiguity of the modern world, as stated by Nietzsche.

**b. Fragmentation of Narratives**

One of the crucial features of modernist literature is the lack of coherent linear narratives in face of fragmented, multi-voiced and disjointed forms, which mirrors the psychological and societal breakdowns of the modern societies. In Amrane's *Bu Lehmun* (translated into '*The Wretched One*'), he writes:

*Ay tefrened deg eeqayen*

*You have sifted through countless seeds*

*Wid kan I meenen*

*Selecting only the finest*

[Translation mine]

The artist here expresses fragmentation through thematic juxtaposition. In these lines, he shows a world of agricultural continuity and human care, yet this suddenly shifts into despair:

*Ma ulac imyi i d-yestuŕcen*

*Alas no sprout has emerged*

*D tamurt i ieiqren*

*The earth has turned barren*

[Translation mine]

This shift from a careful cultivation to an image of agricultural failure reflects a nonlinear structure, marked by a collapse of meaning and continuity. And this disconnection does not appear to be solved, but followed by another shift, where the speaker breaks down into emotional intensity, preventing the listener from settling into one singular emotional arc:

*A bu lehmum*

*Oh wretched one*

*Tiqit kan ad ifaq wemdun*

*A single tear can shatter the stillness of the sea*

[Translation mine]

Also, we can sense that each stanza feels like a separated cry, expressed through a vast cultural void. This aligns with Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality* where she states that: "*text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text.*" (*Desire in Language*, 1980) By taking this perspective into consideration, we can say that Amran's song can be seen as a dialogue with the Algerian Kabyle oral tradition, and even with global traditions of lament and spiritual fragmentation.

Equally, *The Waste Land* expresses this fragmentation more radically. First, the poem does not accept one speaker, instead it offers various perspectives that shift from ancient myth to contemporary lament, and from classical languages to urban slang. For instance, the poem starts with a paradox: "*April is the cruelest month,*" then continues with a variety of intertextual references, from Chaucer, Shakespeare, and the Upanishads to nursery rhymes and Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. Each fragment refers to a broader cultural memory, but altogether they form a mosaic of cultural breakdown rather than coherence.

Moreover, in Kristeva's essay *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1966), she argues that: "*any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another.*" *Bu Lehmum* (translated to "*The Wretched One*") mixes between imagery, lamentation, the metaphor of the barren land, and mythic suffering that resonates with past, present, and future settings. Towards the end of the poem, the speaker expresses not only a personal grievance, but also mirrors ancient wisdom literature and modern existential despair, making the song a world-spanning modernist dialogue:

*Ziy tirga d ayuru*

*In the end dream is but an allusion*

*Mi thesled as a k-delqen-t*

*Forsaking you when the trap has closed*

[Translation mine]

Furthermore, according to Kristeva, both *Bu Lehmum* (translated to “*The Wretched One*”) and *The Waste Land* are not separated cultural products, but interrelate within a broader international discourse. Amran’s song, although rooting in Kabyle experience, it carries various key thematic and symbolic resonances that reflect Western modernist texts, not because it imitates them but because it discusses a very similar condition. As mentioned before, the fragmentation of self, language, and tradition is not European exclusive after the Great War; but it is also part of many broader cultural legacies, among them the Algerian Kabyle one of the post-independence period, where fake promises have resulted in social and spiritual exhaustion.

Nietzsche’s concept of *Art* as crucial to confront chaos is also fundamental here. The theorist argues that true art arises from the dynamic interplay between order and chaos, which are both interpreted by Eliot and Amran, leaning more towards chaos and disintegration, where order does not exist, and truth emerges through suffering. Nietzsche argues that: “*It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified.*” Additionally, he states that this is the age “*active nihilism,*” where artists don’t seek to mourn the past, but to out the consequences of the absence of moral values, and to create new ones.

Another example from *Bu Lehmum* (translated into “*The Wretched One*”) that reinforces this point is when Amran says:

*Deg ol-ik thebren testent*

*To your great sorrow*

*S kra din yeddem-it wadu*

*All was claimed by the wind*

[Translation mine]

We can notice that the speaker here hints that the world is governed by arbitrary forces, lacking moral order, just like in Eliot's lines:

*A heap of broken images, where the sun beats*

(I.22)

This imagery illustrates how meaning no longer exists, resulting in fragments and disillusionments. Also after reading both works, we it has come to our attention that neither of the works have a narrative closure, only some hints that fragmentation became the only honest form of expression a shattered world.

Fragmentation is not a mere aesthetic choice for both Amran and Eliot. It is a philosophical and existential necessity, in order to mirror and portray how the modern world's religious certainty, national identity, and cultural continuity have collapsed. By employing a non-linear structure and fragmented perspectives, the artists achieve to exactly capture the society's breakdown.

### **c. The Illusion of Renewal and Ephemeral Realities**

In *Bu Lehmum*, "The Wretched One" Amran employs a metaphor of the act of nurturing roses in anticipating of spring's healing, only to witness then premature death, to depict the disillusionment followed by an anticipation of rebirth:

*Tesweđ lwerd ad yefsu*

*You have watered the roses*

*Tafsut ad tehlu*

*That spring may heal*

*Tihdayin ad cmumhen-t*

*And the maidens regain their joy*

[Translation mine]

Spring was also mentioned in Eliot's poem *The Waste Land* as an indicator of false hope:

*April is the cruelest month, breeding*

*Lilacs out of the dead land*

From the above words, we come to notice that both writers critique the notion of cyclical renewal, expressing their own perspective that what was once a symbol of renewal and rebirth have lost its restorative force in the modern sterile world. And this point brings us back again to Nietzsche's "*the death of God,*" as the works' main themes revolve around spiritual and cultural decay. Both artists have portrayed a world where renewal is almost impossible to reach, and remains an illusion.

Moreover, in the concluding lines of *Bu Lehmun*, (translated to "*The Wretched One,*") Amran expresses the temporariness of dreams, and the inevitability of disillusionment:

*S kra din yeddem-it waḍu*

*All was claimed by the wind*

*Ziy tirga d ayuru*

*In the end dream is but an illusion*

*Mi theṣleḍ ad ak ḍelqen-t*

*Forsaking you when the trap has closed*

[Translation mine]

Also in *The Waste Land*, Eliot portrays the same thing, indicating a useless attempt in finding meaning and coherence in a disjointed world:

*These fragments I have shored against my ruins*

It is clear that both works deal with lack of meaning and coherent narratives. The fragmented shifting voices and the disjointed imagery and themes, mirror the instability of meaning, and the difficulty to construct a unified narrative, as well as the ephemeral nature of dreams, and the fake truth of renewal.

As far as meaning is concerned, Kristeva argues that it is in fact not inherent but constructed through the interplay of texts and cultural codes. Like the works of "*The Wretched One*" originally *Bu Lehmun* and *The Waste Land*, which both discuss themes

regarding fragmentation, disillusionment, and moral decay; they become interconnected, relying on cultural references to depict the complexities of the modern world's condition.

All things considered, we may conclude that T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and Ali Amran's songs *Tizi N Leryah* (translated into "The Valley of Winds") and *Bu Lehmun* (translated into "The Wretched One") contribute as a shared response to the different crises of modernity. Both artists in these works have explored spiritual and cultural decay, social fragmentation and the loss of meaning through the use of very rich symbolism, and mythical references. Relying on Frederic Nietzsche's conception of *Art* and Julia Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality*, we have come to a closure that Kabyle poetry is not irrelevant or minor, but is fully aware of broader modernist discourses and engages with it. We may say that Amran's work is intellectually rich, and it has successfully achieved to match the Western modernist literature in both depth and complexity. This challenges dominant literary standards and affirms Kabyle art as equally nuanced, complex, and elegant.

## **Chapter two: Modernist Tools in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli***

The present chapter discusses a comparative analysis of T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) and Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977) ("*Ali and Ouali*," translation mine.) It is undeniable that both works emerge from widely different cultural and historical backgrounds, as Aït Menguellet's song relates to the postcolonial Algerian era, and Eliot's poem is about post-world war I Europe. However; this does not prevent us as readers from reading them as modernist texts that rely on fragmentation, symbolism and intertextual resonance to mirror the harsh reality of the modern world. This analysis relies on Julia Kristeva's theory of *intertextuality*, and Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of *Art* as a

redemptive response to pain and trauma. By shedding light on the relationship between the two works by Eliot and Aït Menguellet, their use of modernist tools to portray the spiritual and emotional emptiness of the modern society, and their open discussion about the tension between knowledge and destruction, special attention will be given to the modernist poetic techniques used to convey these themes. This analysis will highlight how both Eliot and Aït Menguellet use their works as a response to the cultural decay and chaos, not through passive despair, but with creative intervention. Furthermore, we will attempt to situate each work within its socio-political background where Eliot's *The Waste Land* stands as a reflection of the European society's collapse after World War I, and Aït Menguellet's *Éli d Weeli* ("Ali and Ouali," my translation,) as a political response to the ethical trauma of the Algerian civil unrest and postcolonial challenges.

At last, this chapter aims to show that *Éli d Weeli* ("Ali and Ouali," translation mine) does not only share thematic and complex similarities with *The Waste Land*, but also deserves the same recognition within the world of modernist literature. Despite stemming from indigenous and postcolonial perspectives on knowledge, Aït Menguellet proves that modernist literature is universal, and has great power to heal a fragmented world through the redemptive role of art.

#### **a. Historical and Political Context: From Post-War Europe to Postcolonial Algeria:**

To effectively situate the modernist techniques in T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Aït Menguellet's *Éli d Weeli* ("Ali and Ouali," translation mine,) we must first understand the historical and political contexts that shaped both texts. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) was written in the aftermath of World War I, where Europe was suffering from cultural, spiritual and political anxieties. The war had caused trauma to the Europeans, leaving them with a sense of alienation and disillusionment. The institutions that were once reliable such as religion, monarchy and imperialism have lost their legitimacy. Thus, Eliot's use of

fragmentation, literary allusions, and mythical references was to capture this deep chaos and disorder. The poet Stephen Spender states in *The Struggle of the Modern* (1963) that: “*The Waste Land is not a poem of despair but of the break-up of a civilization.*”

In contrast, *Eli d Weeli* (“*Ali and Ouali*,” translation mine) is a song written during the aftershocks of the French colonialism in Algeria, characterized by economic instability, scars of colonialism, and identity crises. The song’s lyrics portray a sociopolitical landscape left with violence, political failure, and collective trauma. Mouloud Mammeri consistently emphasizes on the importance for Amazigh communities to defend themselves and reclaim their heritage, as he states in *La Société berbère* (1938): “*L’histoire maintenant touche a sa fin: les Berbères n’auront plus bien longtemps quelque chose à defender,*” (Amyra, 2017, para. 4) (translated to: “*History is now coming to an end: The Berbers will not have something to defend for much longer,*” my translation.)

Therefore, both works serve as cultural testimonies of periods highlighted by the collapse of traditional systems, where the role of art and the artist to mirror the realities and the traumas of a hopeless society.

#### **a. Fragmentation as Modernist Form and Political Statement:**

Fragmentation is crucial to modernist form. In *The Waste Land* (1922), Eliot uses this technique of fragmentation not only to reflect the shattered chaotic condition of the modern world but also to express an epistemological stance, for a better understanding of the world, because for the poet, truth comes in scattered paradoxical pieces. In addition, this disjointed form of the poem that Ezra Pound helped shape during his editing, is shown through the sudden shifts of voices and languages from English to German, Italian, French, and Sanskrit, and through the collapse of time. In his famous essay “*Tradition and the Individual Talent,*” (1919) Eliot writes: “*The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual*

*extinction of personality.*” He further argues against the Romantic notion of poetry as self-expression:

Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things. (Eliot, 1919, p.p. 48-59).

In other words, Eliot argues that the poet must be impersonal, instead of focusing on self-expression; they should rather act as a means of turning tradition, voices, and culture into a new poetic form. Julia Kristeva’s theory supports and reinforces this point, as she states in her *Desire in Language* (1980): “*Every text builds itself as a mosaic of quotations*” (p.66) So, according to the two figures, poems become a site where cultural memory is both preserved and lamented.

Like Eliot, Aït Menguellet himself rejects linear storytelling, he relies on fragmentation in his song *Eli d Weeli* (1977) (“*Ali and Ouali,*” translation mine). As previously discussed, each figure in the song takes a unique personal path, and each path represents a certain cultural archetype: Muhend the merchant represents materialism; Ali the soldier violence, Wali the inquisitor symbolizes dogma, and M’hend the poet resistance and redemption. In clearer terms, the characters in the narrative exist in parallel, or independently rather than as parts of a cohesive story, which emphasizes on the modernist belief that truth is not singular but multiple, challenging the readers to construct meaning from disjointed parts. This structure is much similar to that of *The Waste Land*’s. The absence of a clear unified narrative reflects the disturbing point in cultural continuity that characterizes postcolonial literature. In addition, by emphasizing on the identity crisis and historical events shaped by colonial experiences, this technique is widely used by postcolonial writers in order to critique imperial ideologies, and depict resistance that

seeks to reclaim the lost cultural heritage: a way that challenges the old traditional ways of storytelling.

Moreover, fragmentation appears also in the shift of *The Waste Land* from “The Burial of the Dead” to “What the Thunder Said,” to other parts, which is also the case in *Éli d Weeli* (“*Ali and Ouali*,” my translation) where Menguellet moves from shared discovery to isolated individual destinies, mirroring the fractured collective identity in the modern world. Linda Hutcheon’s theory of postmodern intertextuality is particularly relevant in this context as she emphasizes on the way fragmentation does not merely indicate loss but opens the door for critical engagement with cultural memory. In her work *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), Hutcheon argues that postmodern texts often engage in dialogues with the past through irony, parody, and intertextual references. Additionally, she views fragmentation as an opportunity to reinterpret the past rather than mourn it.

#### **b. Spiritual Sterility and Despair**

In Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, the poem starts with a well-known iconic bleak line: “*April is the cruelest month...*” (I.1), which contrasts the belief that spring, is the seasonal symbol of rebirth, instead the poet here is setting up the tone for a spiritually and culturally sterile world, where life is painful, and spring is scary because it threatens to awaken past memories. Moreover, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the poem is full of imagery, and a variety of fragmented voices to depict the crisis that people have lived upon the post-war European civilization era. The sterile landscape of Eliot’s wasteland filled with “*stony rubbish*,” “*dead land*” and “*a heap of broken images*,” (I.19-22) mirrors the psychological and identity crises of people.

Similarly, Aït Menguellet opens his song *Éli d Weeli* (translated to “*Ali and Ouali*,”) with the image of four friends, which mirrors the fragmented landscape in Eliot’s work:

*Akken i d-ukkulen*

*Walked together, step for step*

*Akken di rebea kemlen*

*Four figures, continued with their path*

[Translation mine]

The four characters here are portrayed in a brief moment of unity, when they were very close friends, always together, then were suddenly separated by ideological and existential impediments. Each one of them then diverges later into their own paths-Muhend followed commerce, Ali; war, Wali took inquisition, and M'hend poetry-. Their fates mirror the shattered identity of postcolonial people under the weight of capitalism, militarization and cultural decay, as Raymond Williams argues that modernism emerges from “*a structure of feeling*,” which means that people’s experiences which are not yet expressed are articulated through art. The theme of divergence here serves as a symbol of the fractured society’s cohesion.

For both Eliot and Aït Menguellet, the landscape serves as a psychic mirror. The “*stony rubbish*” (I.20) of *The Waste Land* symbolizes the decay of meaning, belief and narrative unity, Also in *Ali d Wali*, Aït Menguellet’s writes:

*Yelli-d igenni yef sin*

*The sky cracked open in two*

*Dwan-t tyaltin*

*Light upon the hills, sudden, blinding,*

*Teyli-d tektabt gar-asen*

*and a book fell between them*

[Translation mine]

Here the poet describes a shared moment of illumination and knowledge that ultimately diverges the path of the four figures into different destinies. Regarding this point, Kristeva argues that “*meaning is always intertextual*,” which in the case of the two works, landscapes are depicted as spaces where personal, historical and literary discourses intersect and collapse.

### c. Intertextuality: Cultural Memory and Myth

One of the most famous modernist techniques used in *The Waste Land* is the use of intertextuality and what Eliot describes as the “*Mythical Method*”. These references to the Holy Grail, the Upanishads, and Shakespeare are not to glorify the past but to state its effects on the modern world, which resulted in its alienation from the spiritual and ethical frameworks. To illustrate, the poet narrates a myth about *The Fisher King*, a figure from Arthurian legend who suffers from an injury that turns his land sterile, and only through compassion and knowledge that he and his land can both heal. This myth summarizes the state of the modern world’s moral and spiritual decay, hinting that like *The Fisher King*, people need healing urgently. Eliot writes:

*While I was fishing in the dull canal*  
*On a winter evening round behind the gashouse*  
*Musing upon the king my brother’s wreck*  
*And on the king my father’s death before him*

(189-192)

The image of the act of fishing in an industrial setting depicts the injured Fisher King. And the speaker’s words on the “*king my brother’s wreck*” and “*the king my father’s death*” symbolize the cyclical nature of decay and the need for rebirth. In short, Eliot uses the Fisher King as a symbol of the shattered contemporary human condition and the strong desire for renewal.

Similarly, in *Eli d Weeli* (“*Ali and Ouali*,” my translation), Aït Menguellet expresses myth through oral memory, indigenous mythologies, and Islamic ethical teachings. The part where: *Teyli-d tektabt gar-asen* (“*a book fell between them*” translation mine) is purely

mythic, as Menguellet portrays knowledge as a gift that leads to divergent faiths, a similar reference to that of Eliot's *The Holy Grail*, which is a symbol of both loss and preservation. Additionally, Ali's fate of war and violence is similar to famous mythic archetypes such as Achilles or Oedipus. In addition, Mhend who "weaves poetry about what has happened/though sorrow consumes him," translated from "Yessefray yef ayen idran/ yas ččan-t urfan," represents Eliot's Tiresias, as they both witness and suffer from the traumas of world. His role as a poet mirrors Nietzsche's concept of the artist as the one who confronts chaos through artistic and aesthetic form.

In this context, Kristeva's *intertextuality* helps us understand the way texts conserve cultural and ideological stances. Aït Menguellet's work *Eli d Weeli* ("Ali and Ouali," my translation) illustrates this by relying on Berber oral traditions, mythology and the consequences of colonialism. His characters serve as intertextual agents who represent the tension between postcolonial memory, colonial violence, and the postcolonial desire for renewal. The poetic form then becomes a space where these discourses collide, mirroring the complex interaction of historical and cultural narratives.

Additionally, Ronald Barthes' concept of the "Death of the Author" can also assist us here. The multiplicity of voices and their sudden shift, as well as the various references used in both works suggest that meaning is constructed through interplay between the text and the reader, rather than the authorial aim. The poet then becomes a medium of collective trauma and memory.

#### **d. War, Commerce, and Knowledge as Powers of Ruin and Rebirth:**

One of the most important and interesting aspects of Aït Menguellet's *Eli d weeli* is its illustration of societal roles through the different paths each friend had taken: Mohand

commerce, Ali war, Wali knowledge, and M'hend poetry. Each character symbolized a critical domain of a certain organization, challenging the moral and existential failures of modern societies.

War in *Éli d weéli* is presented by Aït Menguellet as a personal and collective trauma that wipes out continuity:

*Éli d lgirra i-yehfed*

*Ali learned the ways of war*

*Di tmura I ferred*

*Purging the lands*

*Yettağa lmut di later- is*

*With death lingering in his path*

[Translation mine]

Éli (“Ali”) becomes a terrorizing symbol of military nihilism. His violence, which according to him is a justification of protection and revolution, resulting in the death of innocents, orphaned children and a general degradation of a society shown in the lines : “*Gujlen warrac/“Muten mera”* (“*children orphaned*”/“*All perished*” my translation.) This aligns with Eliot’s implicit critique of the brutality of the First World War. Moreover, the part where Aït Menguellet says: “*Yenya win ara yebnun/ Win ara ihudden yella*” (“*He murdered those who built/ Leaving the ones who tear down to remain,*” my translation) captures the state of the modern disordered world, which also aligns with Eliot’s landscape in the lines:

*A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many*

*I had not thought death had undone so many*

(I.62-63)

Also, though trade used to be associated with civilization and interconnection, here; it is personified by Mohand the trader, which in this case; symbolizes the exploitation of life: “*Yewwi-d ayla-s ula seg ublad,*” “*He claimed his share/Even from barren rock*” my

translation.) This line captures how capitalism consumes all even what is barren. Add to that the lyrics where Mohand is: “*Yeshfed -asen tjara i wiyad*” (“*teaching others the art of exchange,*” my translation,) shows that trade is stripped of any ethical grounding. Like Menguellet, Eliot critiques the mechanical and soulless way of existing that prioritizes profit over human compassion, as Fredric Jameson describes it “*the waning of affect,*” which refers to the way postmodern culture has lost its capacity for deep emotional resonance, instead, it is replaced with irony.

Last but not least, Weeli (translated to “*Ouali*”) who’s portrayed as the scholar symbolizes a marginalized knowledge. In the song, Ait Menguellet speaks of this sacred inquisition as a forgotten truth:

*Anida-ten*

*Where have they gone*

*Wid-nni ileqmen tamusni*

Those who sharpen the edge of knowledge

*Wid i-sefden allen I lyaci*

*Those who brush the dust from the eyes of the lost?*

[Translation mine]

However, even though knowledge is crucial, Eliot warns that it is not enough to reconstruct what has been shattered and lost, people should have a will to meaning, and a desire to return to innocence or else, wisdom becomes fragmented.

Lastly, M’hend; the poet serves as the redeemer. While everyone else is consumed by their domains, M’hend : “*Yessefray yef ayen yedran/ yas cčan-t wurfan,*” (“*Weaves poetry about what has happened/ Though sorrow consumes him,*” my translation) which is a manifestation of Nietzsche’s concept of the artist as the redeemer. Moreover, like Tiresias, M’hend has the ability to see the full truth of human suffering, and turn it into beauty through art:

*S wallen izer yis ussan*

*Through his eyes, he witnesses the darkest of time*

*Yettara-ten lhan*

*He transforms it into something beautiful*

[Translation mine]

In addition, Ait Menguellet reclaims moral and spiritual authorities that the other domains have lost, calling for resilience, not through war, trade or inquisition but through art and poetry, to reconstruct a world where commerce and war shatter and knowledge is marginalized, the artist requires patience because he remains the last vessel of hope, in the poet's lines:

Şver a mmi ma telluzed

Endure my son for when hunger comes

Yiwen was levyi-k a t-awded

You will reach your purpose

[Translation mine]

#### **a. Nietzschean Redemptive Power of Art**

In the modernist landscape, the figure of the artist is not merely an observer, but a redeemer of chaos and incoherence. Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of Nihilism discussed in his *The Will to Power* and *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) argues that: "*the highest values devalue themselves.*" In other words, religion, morality and rationalism have lost their power in a meaningless world. Moreover, he asserts that: "*It is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified,*" (Nietzsche, 1872, p.52) which according to him, art is the ultimate means by which the disjointed modernist world may find its meaning and coherence.

Add to that, Nietzsche warns about the modernist world's emptiness, arguing that it can lead to despair. And he links this despair with ancient Greek drama where Dionysian chaos of human suffering was transformed into meaningful form through art. The artist then becomes

an intermediate between nihilism and life, confronting trauma and turning it into something beautiful. About this notion, Martin Heidegger states in his 1935 lecture “*The Origin of the Work of Art*” (Originally: *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*) that art reveals a “clearing” (*Lichtung*) where the nature of Being (*Sein*) is revealed, allowing truth to emerge through art.

This concept helps us to understand both *The Waste Land* and *Éli d Weéli* (“Ali and Ouali,” my translation). To clarify, Eliot’s poem acts as a poetic form of resistance against emptiness and meaninglessness. The act of attempting to join fragmented voices into a coherent poetic structure and the use of literary allusions is redemptive in itself. Also, Eliot here becomes an archeologist of meaning, gathering fragments: “*These fragments I have shored against my ruins,*” to reconstruct cultural identity. Also, in his poem, Eliot uses the myth of Tiresias, the blind prophet who has “fore suffered all,” symbolizing the artist as someone who has the power to see beyond things, into the deeper truths. Towards the end of the work, Eliot writes “*Shantih shantih shantih,*” taken from the Upanishads, not as a means of wishing for peace but to signal toward a spiritual resolution and peace after fragmentation.

In parallel, Aït Menguellet’s *Éli d Weéli* (“Ali and Ouali,”) serves the same function. The character of M’hend the artist is described as a figure who lives in postcolonial Algerian era, highlighted by political betrayal, cultural decay and personal grief. In the song, he responds not with violence as Ali does, or through being utilitarian like Mohand, but with poetic creation. Although he is “consumed by sorrow” translated from “*ččan-t urfan,*” he writes as an act of resistance and not escapism. Certainly, his poetry does not erase or stop trauma; but it turns it into something that can be commonly shared, witnessed and maybe understood. This affirms Nietzsche’s claim that the artist transforms pain into beauty, which ultimately justifies existence.

To add, the figure of M'hend is similar to Tiresias, a witness and a sufferer. He takes the collective trauma of his society and re-expresses it through his songs. His role as a healer aligns with what Nietzsche believes to be the most important task of an artist, arguing that they must not escape suffering, but to take it as a muse or inspiration to give from it. He argues in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) that the tragic artist is “*a yea-sayer to life*” including its sufferings, chaos and decay. This aligns with Deleuze and Guattari statement in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1975) that art specifically “*minor literature*” is an inherently spiritual and political act of resistance which in the case of M'hend, resistance is both aesthetic and existential.

Importantly, both *The Waste Land* and *Éli d Weéli* do not promise redemption, but they rather present the brokenness of the cotemporary world, and suggest art as the only means that cannot really fix it but restore through it coherence, meaning, and identity. As in *Éli d Weéli* this artistic resistance is culturally specific, rooting from collective Kabyle memory and oral tradition, serving as a renewal voice. The poet's lyrics portray cultural affirmations from Amazigh identity as a means of restoring communal coherence:

*Şver a mmi ma telluẓeḍ*

*Endure my son for when hunger comes*

*Yiwen was levyi-k a t-awḍeḍ*

*You will reach your purpose*

[Translation mine]

Despite the song being written a long time ago, it still relates to the modern world, as it keeps alive a whole historical heritage and identity under threat of disappearance with many people's testimony.

Overall, one can say that after analyzing both T.S Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Lounis Aït Menguellet's *Éli d Weéli* through Kristeva's *intertextuality* and Nietzsche's Art lenses, we come to learn that they are works that turn fragmentation into dialogue and trauma into art.

We understand that Eliot's post-war spiritual decay finds a powerful link in Menguellat's portrayal of moral sterility, war and disillusionment. And through the symbolic roles of Ali, Wali, Mohend and M'hend, the song mirrors Eliot's vision of a world that is in desperate need for coherence and meaning. And despite their emergence from different cultures and eras, both poets have succeeded in turning pain into art to confront it and not to escape it. Edward Said asserts: "*All cultures are involved in one another,*" so in this light, this chapter has shown that *Eli d Weeli* demonstrates an equal complexity to that of *The Waste Land's* without deviating from indigenous Kabyle poetic, therefore it must not be dismissed as a merely regional artifact, but as an expansion of the poetic expression in the Amazigh language, serving as a conversation with global literary modernism that deserves to be recognized and studied with same critical reverence as Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

## VI. General Conclusion

This master's dissertation entitled *Fragments of Meaning: Modernist Eliotian Echoes in Selected Kabyle Songs* has attempted to explore the shared thematic and modernist techniques between Ali Amran's *Tizi N Leryah* (2013) (translated to "The Valley of Winds") and *Bu Lehmum* (2013) ("The Wretched One," translation mine,) and Aït Menguellet's *Eli d Weeli* (1977) (translated to "Ali and Ouali.") Despite their different cultural and historical backgrounds, these works are linked together by their use of modernist strategies such as fragmentation, allusions, and symbolic landscapes, to capture the harsh disjointed, cultural loss and spiritual decay of their societies.

Drawing upon Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, this research paper has shed the light on the way texts are not isolated objects but rather mosaics of previous texts. Moreover, Eliot's *The Waste Land* serves as a foundational work in modernist literature for its fragmented structure and its use of multiple voices. In parallel, the Algerian Kabyle songs analyzed in this dissertation draw upon oral traditions, and cultural memory, constructing an equally fascinating work. In all the poems, the past is not used for nostalgic but it is reshaped to serve as a response to modernist problems.

In addition, this study borrows from Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of Art and nihilism, and the redemptive power of art. Both Eliot and the Kabyle poets depict landscapes where values, morals, and spirituality decayed, whether in post-World War I Europe, or postcolonial Algeria. Here, comes the role of the artist as a redeemer, in the midst of this chaos as a form of resistance. Eliot's poetic voice though fragmented, yet persistent to find coherence or meaning. Likewise, Aït Menguellet's M'hend, the poetic character transforms trauma into songs, healing both himself and his society. Ali Amran's *Bu Lehmum* and *Tizi N Leryah* also

describe the poet as a witness of chaos, yet the only one who can reconstruct meaning from ruins.

A central claim of this analysis is that modernist techniques are not limited to the Western literary field only. Though *The Waste Land* is often regarded as the groundwork of Anglo-American-modernism, the songs of Menguellet and Amran reflect a culturally specific modernism, not through imitation but through the experience of a parallel historical trauma rooted in war, materialism and the death of traditional systems. These harsh conditions have pushed artists from both traditions to express what they have witnessed through imagery and symbolism. The landscapes presented by each of the poets are not merely physical but also psychological.

Overall, this dissertation has sought to challenge or break, in a sense the boundaries of what is referred to by “modernist literature.” It has argued that modernism must be regarded as a universal response to shared traumatic experiences and pain. It should not be restricted to a certain geographical place or language. By comparing *The Waste Land* with Kabyle songs that has never been studied from this angle, this study has contributed to fulfilling a critical gap in postcolonial modernist literature. It has opened the door to the recognition of the often marginalized Kabyle voices, to be reconsidered as complex genius works, on the level of worldwide literary and academic discourse.

To conclude, *Fragments of Meaning: Modernist Eliotian Echoes in Selected Kabyle Songs* has not only brought new contributions to Eliot’s modernism, but has also provided a platform for the Kabyle literature. These poetic geniuses deserve to be heard, understood, and praised by the wider global cultural spheres. Through this comparative study, we learn that even in the dark, art becomes a light.

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