

The Human Psyche as Belief Revision: A Bayesian Study of Modern Poetry

Deepika I.

Research scholar, Department of English,

Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R&D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai.

Email: vtd1581@veltech.edu.in

Dr. Bairavi B.

Assistant professor, Department of English,

Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R&D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai.

Email: drbairavi@veltech.edu.in

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the representation of the human psyche in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T. S. Eliot and “Notes on the Reality of the Self” from *The End of Beauty* by Jorie Graham. This paper applies Bayesian cognitive theory to understand how both poems represent the self as unstable and constantly changing. Bayesian theory suggests that the human mind continuously updates its beliefs when it encounters new experiences. Using this idea, the paper argues that both Eliot and Graham portray the self as something that is not fixed, but repeatedly revised. In *Prufrock*, the speaker’s anxious self-questioning and fear of judgment show a mind trapped in uncertainty. His constant hesitation reflects a

failure to stabilize identity, presenting a modernist image of psychological fragmentation. Graham's poem presents the self as fluid and evolving. Through shifting perceptions and reflective questioning, she portrays identity as a process rather than a stable essence. By comparing these two poems, the study shows that modern and postmodern poetry can be read as dramatizing the mind's process of belief updating. The paper concludes that poetic fragmentation reflects the dynamics of human cognition, where the self is shaped by uncertainty, perception, and continuous reinterpretation.

Keywords: Human psyche, Bayesian theory, Fragmentation, Self-hood, Modern poetry.
