CHAPTER - II

Eliot’s theory of poetry and role of autobiographical element in its practice!

Poem-wise analysis of personal theme in his early poetry

It is almost impossible for any writer to delineate his personality from his experience and no experience in itself can be objective in its truest existence. Eliot’s remark about impersonality in poetic art has purely been his critical need and in no case does his criticism relate his poetic creation. Mr. Draper is correct to approve Miss Gordon’s remark about Eliot that he was “obsessed by his private experience and determined to guard it.”¹ Her remark that “the ‘impersonal’ façade of his poetry – the multiple faces and voices-masks an often quite literal reworking of personal experience”² carries ample evidence to show that Eliot’s being impersonal in The Waste Land is doubtful.

The State of affairs in his poetry, instead, presents the happenings of his personal life, which Eliot has objectified with great skill and contrivance. Eliot was unhappy with his first marriage and its reflections in his life and poetry are not less significant. Eliot makes The Waste Land autobiographical, since the whole theory of poetic impersonality remains “the strain of personal unhappiness.”³ Eliot came to England in 1914 after his stay had become impossible in Germany. He met Vivienne haigh-wood and never came out of her. He was basically a puritan and so carried a strong consciousness with tough conscience. The morals of spiritual living had been grafted in his soil from the very beginning of his childhood. If Eliot once was committed to Vivienne, he would even sacrifice his
family, country and education for her sake. Eventually, he lived with his wife in
Bertrand Russell’s house, which perhaps made and spoilt Eliot’s career in many
ways. As it is clear from Bertrand Russell’s *Marriage and Morals*, he was a
philosopher of the first order and took marriage and sex as the order of nature.
Russell provided him every possible help but “Seduced Vivienne.”

Eliot could see and just tolerate the illicit relation of the two and never
spoke things to any one. He was internally broken and was depressed because
of the behaviour of his wife. He had married Vivienne with great hopes but he
marriage failed in to-to. This ontoward happening made Eliot psychic and seldom
could he bring out things in a gusty talk with others. He could neither tolerate nor
express his problem for a solution.

*The Waste* is autobiographical as “the personal suffering involved in Eliot’s
in Eliot’s relationship with his first wife provides much of the subject matter of this
poem”\(^5\) The experience of the poem is personal and the success, attained by the
poet, is not the philosophy as conveyed in the work but the intensive use of
imagery and the structure of the verse. The theme of *The Waste* is often,
elaborated as to “signal the dawn and the departure of evil spirit”\(^6\), born of the set
moral and the spiritual decay of the contemporaneity. It is just a guess work, as
often critics quote, to say that the poem describes the philosophical possibilities
of a solution to the dismay and the disintegration born of this generation and the
world succeeding the legacy of World War I. Even the theme of seeking solution
to the animalism, inherent in the age, is not correct altogether, at least, in view of the mood presented by the poet.

Eliot has drawn four parallels to justify his problem in the poem. The sources of the poem, and the borrowings in it, just intensify Eliot’s view of the moral and the spiritual loss whereas the essential source of the problem has every time been concealed. This fact is that Eliot suffered the lack of love from his wife and the neurotic impulse he wanted to share with others. The Waste Land is the result of that ghostly impulse, but, in view of hiding things from the world, and saving his image, he has presented the mood by keeping so many sources and borrowings around it.

If we make a comparative study of the sources used in making a personal mood and the experience as most universal, and the mood of the poet, as it exactly appears as the theme of the poem, the analysis of From Ritual to Romance, by Miss Jessie Weston,

The Golden Bough, by Frazer and Dansle Restaurant, by Dante, becomes significant. Miss Weston has supplied Eliot “the title, the plan and subsuming symbolism.” In her book, Miss Weston presents fisher as the maimed king who “restored magically” with the help of fertility rites. The vegetation myth extends the symbol by synchronizing the circle of season as the season of man’s growth itself. She is of the opinion that sex assumes religious significance and the
possibilities of fisher king's revival are evoked immediately. Eliot takes the title from Miss Weston, showing that the modern world is equivalent to fisher king's Waste Land in which animalism and misuse of sex have made the land a barren one. This carries disillusionment, gloom, dismay and imperfection because sex here has no tendency to develop to the state of dignity. The Golden Bough, by Frazer, has been used for fulfilling the lacks the Fisher king had suffered in his personality. The sacrificial mood of the Hanged God has better been used to supplicate solution to the weakness suffered by the Fisher King. Where D.E. Jones comments that “one trying to understand Eliot may find oneself reading anybody from heraclitus to Bradley in the realm of philosophy”\(^9\), it is noteworthy to see that Eliot’s approach has been to improve upon the possibilities one after the another. The fisher king makes The Waste and The Golden Bough carry modifications for it. The fisher to transcendent sex to higher love. The Hanged Good has been used by Eliot to establish that the transcendence is possible by showing sacrifice for the revival of The Waste.

Second, the course adopted by the protagonist in negative and so the result has been a fateless decay. The protagonist, at the close of the poem, does not recover irrespective of the thunder because it is too late to mend himself. The broken images symbolize the possibility but the protagonist has neither capacity nor chance for the revival.
In nutshell, it can be summarized that the theme of *The Waste Land* as popularly acknowledged by the world has been the moral and spiritual sterility without a chance for a recovery. In other words Eliot says that “man’s fate originates in sex”\(^{10}\) but does not find transcendence properly. The Fisher King is confined to the world of animalism since his fortune is death and not advancement further. The protagonist Like the Fisher king does not carry strength to grow from the state of animalism to the spiritual revival. The theme of *The Waste Land*, in this light, can be assessed as once aim to develop from the stage of the fisher king to that of the Hanged God. Eliot conveys that sex had to be transformed into love in which sex is not denied but has a higher purpose.

This all is the theme of *The Waste Land*, which any critic can decide upon his reading of the poem. But Eliot’s development as a poet, conveying a poetic mood, has been different. The poem is autobiographical and Eliot, though its image and situations, has conveyed the personal frustrations, full of envy and dejection. The causes and the situations, verifying this truth are many more. Eliot wrote manuscripts of *The Waste* between 1917 & 1919. The activity of Vivienne and Russell during this time were at their peak and Eliot needed a medium to express his situation. He was like a Hamlet and he has often said about Shakespeare’s weakness in his portrayal. The situation of Hamlet Eliot had personally felt and it is so because Vivienne’s enigma is no less cantankerous than Hamlet’s mother. Eliot has full knowledge of the surmounting tention of the situations in which one’s ego is hurt for the loss of honour to one’s menhood and
the self as well. When he writes that “Hamlet, like sonnets, is full of same stuff that the writer could not drag to sight, to contemplate or manipulate into art”\textsuperscript{11}, he justified with his own experience that Hamlet’s madness was the mistake of the author. It implies that Hamlet’s madness could be saved. The exact answer to the problem is that Eliot could save himself in the situation. The chances were that he would go mad, like Hamlet himself, but he rescues it by diverting the attention of the inner being to some other direction. Eliot does not go mad when Vivienne is seduced by Russell; he doesn’t express the outburst of emotion when Russell takes her on his foreign trips. The actual game of chess is in the bed of Russell where the reflection and the effects of the scene are set into \textit{The Waste} at his table. The essential experience in the poem is autobiographical as Eliot has every time remembered Russell because of some personal congruity. When he say that “the ‘mother’ was actually guilty in the play, he has reminiscence of his own wife”\textsuperscript{12} whom he bred as a guilty figure all his life.

The case of \textit{The Waste} being autobiographical is also approved from the correspondence with Mr. John Quinn regarding its publication. He wrote the manuscripts of \textit{The Waste Land} an “in its original from it was nearly twice as Long.”\textsuperscript{13} Ezra Pound” “reduced it to its present form and Eliot has praised his performance.”\textsuperscript{14} In his letter to John Quinn on July 19, 1922, Eliot wrote about \textit{The Waste Land}. “I only hope the printers are not allowed to bitch the punctuation and the spacing, as that is very important for the sense.”\textsuperscript{15} The printers were those of M/s Boni and Liveright and Eliot’s intention was not only the spacing but
also the text, which wanted to conceal form the view of the world. He text, which wanted to conceal from the view of the world. He first sent his manuscripts to Mr. Quinn and then requested him to return back these to him. The improvements by Ezra Pound were made after the manuscript had once been received back from the publisher. The truth is neither the form, nor it’s printing. Eliot sat at his table and in communicating the state of his inner being forgot as what really would be its repercussions. He was, infact, afraid of his personal like being disclosed to everyone.

He would burn himself within but never allow his conditions to let loose him a chance for personal blemish, either on himself or on Vivienne.

One more point of situation, making The Waste a personal poetry, is Eliot’s testament before his death. He expressed the view that the remaining portions of The Waste, which, had been lying in his almirah, neither be torn, nor published, nor sold to anyone. A great writer, one who changes form poetry to impersonal theory of art, could not confine himself to the world of unpublished manuscripts even after his death, unless these carried some personal mystery of the author himself. He knew the value of literature and also that the parts of the poem published in the form of The Waste Land won him a Nobel prize; he also knew that the unpublished part of the poem could do better than The Waste Land. But, explicit cause is that Eliot did not want to tarnish the name of his dead wife, whom he had loved and tolerated for more than a decade or so.
The theme of *The Waste Land* is purely personal and Eliot has conveyed his own repression by making the poem complicated with comprehensive situations among analogous situations in different writers and classics. This is also proved from the epigraph of *The Waste Land*. Eliot has summarized the crux of the poem from *Satyricon* by Petronius. In the original poem, Trimalchio, a wealthy tradesman speaks it. The translation of the epigraph runs as, “I saw the sibyl suspended in a glass bottle at Cumae, and when the boys said to her: ‘sibyl, what is the matter?’ She would always respond: I yearn to die”\(^{16}\). If Sibyl and her story is taken into consideration, it, becomes clear that the theme of *The Waste Land* has not been the spiritual barrenness of the contemporaneity, but the dreary note of his own life. Eliot, in doing the poem, had Sibyl in his mind consistently because the situation of Vivienne resembled her only. The fortune, as told by Eliot in the book, is his personal experience about Vivienne and her constraints. Sibyl is Vivienne and so she only carries around her the theme of the poem. Eliot has no solution, whether to kill Vivienne or himself. Perhaps Eliot describes in *The Waste Land* the effects of his wife’s behaviors throughout. Sibyl ‘yearns to die’ in the original book, and Eliot has confirmed that Vivienne dies in the form of a lunacy, instead of finding a possibility to mend her mistake. It is the craftsmanship of Eliot that the theme of the poem appears universal otherwise woman is at the root of his personal debacles, which, in either form, constitute the framework of the poem.
The Waste Land, thus, tells the sorry state of Eliot’s matrimonial, particularly, the sexual relations which affirm situations in history in several ways. Where the borrowings and the abbreviations of thus, tells the sorry state of Eliot’s matrimonial, particularly, the sexual relations, which affirm situations in history in several ways. Where the borrowings and the abbreviations of The Waste are the matter of the succeeding pages, it is useful to remark that Vivienne’s behaviour of lust and luxury has also been intensified from Dante’s Dans le Restaurant. Eliot’s techniques is not collect a source from Dante’s poem, but to make the atmosphere of the poem appear true and intense. In the original poem, ‘garcon’ becomes familiar with a diner and tells his experience. “A dirty, debilitated, old waiter” tells him about his sex experience when he was seven and she the younger. When it is rainy season and fine sunshine, his countrymen call it the wash-day of the beggars. The soaked and the budding willow give shelter in shower. A dog “romps and he had to stop midway.” The diner a bath. The diner tells that he too had an experience like him, but was cleansed after all.

Eliot has actually searched a possibility as how his wife would be cleansed. The experience, narrated by Dante, appeals him because the problems of sex have also disturbed him either way. If it forms the part of The Waste Land, Eliot has definitely tried to bring out his own sense of loss and frustration.
In *The Waste Land*, Eliot himself is the protagonist and, the land described as waste and barren, is his own life. The cause of barrenness is Vivienne, and Eliot, burning like Hamlet himself, does not see anything good but the projections of her (Vivienne’s) doings everywhere. He can be identified as another Fisher King who could never revive in his potentialities. In part first of the poem, ‘the Burial of the Dead’, Eliot describes his own fortunes and sulkness born of Vivienne and her impressions. There is perfect state of death and Eliot finds that the “Spring disturbs the dead land, stirring memory.”

The theme of this chapter is to show man’s fate originating in sex but not transcending divinely. Eliot feels, and is of the view, that sex must be elevated to divine love by making possibilities inherent in every vogue of human effort. ‘The Burial of the Dead’ is another advancement of J. Alfred Prufrock’s love song. Eliot feels dejected, rather old for Vivienne’s love and thus neglects it. The happiest April makes him worried as he no chance to bloom and laugh. His wife has cut him to slice and confined to seamy broodings. He does not want to be exposed to the happy seasons as the dark days of his life shall “sprout only dead bodies.”

As the *Fascimile and Tons* script of the original draft by Valerie Eliot presents, “Eliot’s fears” were not only for printers. The descriptions of the Marie and the German related Bertrand Russell and Vivienne in the sad seduction. Eliot remains a set of “broken images” since there is no hope for future happiness without Vivienne and her love.
In nutshell, Eliot has presented as death theme for himself, which relate the “affairs of his sex.” He himself is Tiresias, and Madame Sosostris is the examiner of the images and situations, which make him blind of anything other than the reflections of his wife’s misdemeanour. He broods over the fanciful images, which he has formed on real relations of Russell and Vivienne. The memories of the unfateful knowledge of Vivienne’s scandals make him a protagonist of Prufrock’s rank where Madame Sosostis is employed as a commentator of his illfated moments of sex and its failure. Eliot writes the epigraph, from Dante’s Inferno, as, “if I thought my answer were to one who could ever return to the world, this flame should shake no more; but, since none ever did return alive form this depth, if what I hear be true, without fear of infamy I answer thee.” In Inferno, the flame of Guido is asked to identify it self and the identification comes in the form of the statement. Eliot, in The Waste, is like Guido, the flame and naturally, his identification comes in the form of the protagonist.

The Fisher King is maimed and recovers in his potentials. Eliot compares his situation with the state of the Fisher king and depicts as how the type of neurosis, which has obsessed him badly with sex repressions, can be fought against. There are three different versions about Eliot’s obsessions regarding sex and love. Fisher king is maimed because of wildness in sexual behaviour and is recovered because he follows the path of the vegetation myth as a means of recovery. Eliot has his own Waste Land where repressions of sex, love and
copulation greatly effect his verse. If the protagonist is un-named, “the description of his sensibility strongly suggests that it is Eliot.” Eliot was essentially a Puritan and descended from a Unitarian background. But it is not all true that Eliot had aversions for sex and love. He could not adjust to the free sex atmosphere of England till the very last, but it was not that he did not believe in human nature of love and life. It is Bertrand Russell alone who develops aversions in Eliot for his wife Vivienne. He could never go beyond his repressions in *The Waste* and seemed that its story came as an “outset of his career, from personal experience, study and meditation.” In ‘The Burial of the Dead’, Eliot has described the personal experience of the rape of his wife like the relation of Marie and the German. Eliot, from the beginning to the last in *The Waste*, describes his repressions where there are as many as five rapes and woman has equally been responsible for it. He considers that sex is the instinct of the almighty, but its practice without love makes him a Waste Land. Unlike the Fisher King, Eliot does not get chance to recover because there has been no possibility of reconciling his conscience. If Vivienne wrote about her American husband that “he wanted to be everything at once”, it emplied that Eliot was more busy in his work than she herself. But, the statement is made by Vivienne who herself a party to Eliot’s experience in *The Waste*. His descriptions in ‘The Game of Chess’, ‘The Fire sermon and ‘Death by water’ describe his experiences of the sexual freeness, which often haunts him. The last part of the poem ‘What the Thunder Said’ describes Eliot’s stage where he has tried to “transmute his personal and private agonies into something universal and impersonal.”
could not find balance in his matrimonial life, he has thought upon the pressures in moulding a way to live in the form of this part.

The second reality which abounds Eliot’s personage in the drama of his personal life is his long career of weight and tolerance. Eliot is remarked as “homosexual”\textsuperscript{30}, passive in potential. T.S. Matthews, one of Eliot’s classmates, in his book, *Great Tom: Notes Towards the Definition of T.S. Eliot* discovers that Eliot, from the very beginning years of his life, was either “mesoginist of pensive”\textsuperscript{31} in his activities. In his biography, T.S. Matthews shows that Eliot did not leave the company of women frin his adolescence. He “parted his hair behind and looked like the hyacinth girl”\textsuperscript{32} He was carrying efficient qualities and never did exert himself as a stout contender of sexual potentialities. Mr.Matthews further investigates that Eliot was either negative in sex, or went for homoosex.

Mrs. Valerie Eliot has however greatly condemned Mr. Matthews’ view, but even then his case of being negative cannot be denied atleast with his reticence with Russell’s seduction of his wife. It is really funny that Eliot could tolerate a behaviour that no man on earth could have done at all. Eliot, on this account, could be either a perfect saint or scared sex because of his sexual debility. The case is interesting and Eliot’s fidelity being a homosex can be considered on different logics.
Eliot writes that “sex is sneeze of fire” and, again that “sex is death in life.” The reasons for calling Eliot a homosex is that he did abhor women, whether for his weakness, or for his personal causes. The case of homosexuality is put forward by placing before hand Eliot’s endeavorance of the happening which is otherwise impossible to a natural being. Mr. Matthews has misinterpreted Eliot’s stand. He considers Eliot in purely in English atmosphere, taking it for granted that sex is unavoidable and Eliot, like anybody, could have divorced Vivienne and got married again. His charge does not cover up Eliot’s conditions as an individual and fails the consider Eliot beyond English atmosphere. Among other things, Eliot’s Puritan nature and the impressions of his childhood life had not been taken into consideration.

The immediate proof presented in favour of Eliot’s being negative has been put as his long silence and loneliness ever without a female partner to feed his natural needs. In this reference it is important to note that Eliot came in touch with Vivienne in 1915 and since then the controversies regarding his negativity arise and lay hard in his career. It is really doubtful to see its perfection until his second marriage at the age of sixty-five. Eliot did not lead any serious company of the opposite sex. Right after his marriage, he wept for his loss and doing a lot of poetry, plays and critical work never exerted the need of sexual fulfillment. Even if he got married, in 1957, to his secretary, Valerie Fletcher, it was for several causes of property an inheritance. Eliot, by now, was a man of large fortunes and had no inheritors. He was American but had, by now, adopted
British citizenship. He was American but had, by now, adopted British citizenship. He could not pass on his property to any of his family members in the United States as per British Law. Naturally, there was immediate need for some inheritor because Eliot did not want to die without anybody to look after his estates. He had never wanted that his property be seized by the government and he would not get a chance even to bequath his property to someone who could keep his name alive. He had grown old and it was no logic of sexual fulfillment at a long age of sixty-five. Infact, his second marriage was political and sex had nothing to do with it. Any charge against Eliot being a homosex, or negative, is levied on such several grounds.

All the charges are refuted very easily on two main reasons. First, Eliot was neurotic and badly obsessed because of his religious conduct and sexual repressions. He had struggled very hard in compromising his Puritan nature with his sex needs, which perhaps, he could never do. He very much liked sexual company like the Prufrock but his conscious deceived him in coming out fully in the British tradition. His view of sex and love involves a conflict between the English and the American traditions. His family atmosphere embibed in him a silent nature of work and perfection whether in Unitarian or in the puritan gospel; sex was taken as a means of developing into love, seeking perfect unity of body, mind and soul. No Puritan does take sex just as a means of enjoyment. His sense of this value is to seek love of two souls through carnal union. As Eliot has established in his plays also, the aim of the human- being must be to seek
spiritual satisfaction by the advancement of sex to divine love. Eliot believes that the divine love, which is the perfect union of two souls, can be achieved only by perfecting the physical stage first. Thus, sex is the primary stage which works as a step towards the advancement to the spiritual union. No love can be perfect until and unless the union in sex has made it inevitable.

The critics, like Matthews, have never kept in view Eliot’s this position. In whole of The Waste Land, he condemns the sexual conduct, which is perfected for enjoyment and to the spiritual union. Whether it is ‘the Game of Chess’, or ‘The Fire Sermon’, Eliot finds the rule of animalism everywhere just because the citizen of The waste Land has been engrossed with sexual hunger. Eliot finds faults with the land because its inhabitants are confined to carnal relations without ever aiming at its advancement to the union of the spirits. The Waste Land carries the theme that sex without the possibility of its advancement to the theme that sex without the possibility of its advancement to the union of the spirit is meaningless. It carries the theme that sex without the possibility of its advancement to the spiritual order makes the land barren. The biggest tragedy with Eliot and his critic is that his American nature in British poetry has often been misunderstood. He does not deny sex, but at the same also believes that it should be taken as a responsibility. His line “Marie, Marie hold on tight” and “why you get married for if you don’t want children?” fully explain his point of view to sex and love.
‘The Fire Sermon and ‘death by Water’ intensify his opinion by showing that man’s engrossment in lust have finished the chances of advancing into a spiritual discipline through love. He quotes the Indian sages and advent of the origin of the river Ganges with the idea that the perfection for the spiritual disciple needs restrain which the English people lack. If Eliot could not make his own life perfect in this regard, as theme of The Waste Land, he has recalled the state of spiritual recovery out of our sexual behaviour. The critics often miss this point because they seldom step into Eliot’s world of the personal psychology.

The second, Eliot’s view of woman, plays a big role in his case of being a homosexual. Eliot describes The Waste Land as a story of woman character whom he has found guilty in every response. In The Waste Land for any situation of sexual excessiveness, woman is either way on the threshold of the activity. He sees a lot of things from the instance of the typist girl to the homosexual, Mr. Stetson, but finds that the conduct, both ways is negative to any human value. His Puritan conscious is unable to digest the state of affairs in ‘The Game of Chess’ and goes back to the classical days in exemplifying the womanhood in The Waste Land. One single instance of Philomela is enough to cause aversion to Eliot. He quotes that “Tereus the rapacious hawk, seduces his wife Procne’s sister and cuts her tongue” so that the forced seduction is not made public.

Both Procne and Philomela serve the flesh of his son as dinner to Tereus. As a result, Procne and Philomela are transformed into the swallow and the
nightingale respectively, and Tereus as the hawk. Eliot is convinced to say that the sex without love does not pay more vigorously, and, it is his fantasy for Mr. Russell, which he has developed for himself.

Eliot’s neurotic behaviour is explicitly explained in his efforts for finding a balance in the form of the spiritual revival possible on Hindu ways of Vedas. Eliot’s most optimistic when he quotes the “Himavant” and Brihadaranyaka Upanishad as solution to the decay of spiritual values in the west. Any sexually impotent person could not go for philosophizing a natural and beneficial way of living. The charge is fully refuted because he craves for love and wants a release of his wounds provided by Vivienne. He could be a saint and not a homosexual or an impotent because there is an intention of coming out of his personal dismay. He wanted to live with love and if not sex. It is another matter that he fails in winning himself this state. The frustrations, which developed hate for woman in him for long eight years, are tried by Eliot to recover by detaching himself from his situations if he could not compromise with these. The result is his chain of transformations from one reality to another.

Eliot, of course, wrote The Waste Land in the neurotic and realistic set of situations between 1919 and 1926. Including ‘The Hollow Men” and “Gerontion”, all his poetry during this period represents upheavals in his personal life. His conversion, from poetry to monologues, conveys much beyond his literary needs. One stage is that where Eliot cannot live without love of Vivienne. He writes, “I
am to make a living and write my poetry too; England may make me, America might break me for better or worse. I am committed to Vivienne and she will not live any where but in England.\textsuperscript{38} This is initial stage where Eliot considers Vivienne as the incarnation of his love and does adore his sexual liking. These are the years where Eliot describes upon his happiness with Vivienne’s company. But the years of his transformation tell more about the time of convulsions due to undeliable pressures and repressive tensions. Eliot at heart was essentially any American till the last, but presented himself in different forms in view of his personal needs. When his stay with Vivienne becomes inbearable due to sexual inigma, he wants to find a balance for himself by changing his situation. He had exhausted with poetry in making his personal experience a universal theme and had wanted to resolve on a different line of action. His change form poetry to dramatic monologues conveys his arrangements of relieving himself from the mishaps of his personal life.

All that Eliot had said about sex and its solution in \textit{The Waste} was enough, excepting the question “ without appending solutions to these."\textsuperscript{39} It is true that Eliot has raised more questions than giving solutions in \textit{The Waste}, but his own life had been a chain of questions in itself. Eliot, during the years of \textit{The Waste Land}, found himself in utter confusion, like Hamlet himself, but could not come out of it unless the impulse had been expressed in the form of the poem. His shift from poetry to dramatic monologues implies his sense of forgetting the dead past and, if possible, seeking solutions to these problems already raised in
his minor poetry. These efforts, among other things, show his intention to live happily without ever recalling his days of intense repression. It does not, in any case, evince his homosex a negativity. Instead, Eliot comes out as a haunting character, dispersing the ghost of his own illpast.

Eliot’s change of religion, from Protestantism to Anglo-Catholicism, primarily seemed a search for “perpetual living in paradise.”\(^40\) He preferred the Anglo-catholic church for “discipline and authority”,\(^41\) but that was not all that concerned Eliot in his conversion. He got his citizenship as well changed side by side with his religious conversion and things became pertinent in his personal life than a careerist in literature. It was possible that Eliot would go back to the States after Vivienne had fully adjusted to his household life, and that, he still remembered America very seriously. But, things worsened even before these had been germinated. His sudden conversion showed his hurried and abrupt decision as these represented something very important and personal. His idea of taking Vivienne to America was broken and his sentiments of return of the native had shattered down. “The idea of sexual or emotional failure”\(^42\) hunted him and in no case did he come up as a homosex, or negative.

His shift, likewise, from poetry to drama, does not approve his impotence and negativity. His style of presenting his personal experience has been cogent and vigorous. In *The Waste Land*, he is indirect to describe either himself or Vivienne as the protagonist and the female sex respectively, whereas his plays
present the situation of *The Waste* more directly in the form of different characters. The symbolism and the method of indirection have been developed into his mouth – pieces like Harry and Colby. If his plays are a solution to the problems raised in *The Waste Land*, Eliot never confirms himself as the admirer of homosex.

In *The Waste Land*, ‘A Game of Chess’ presents’ "death principle" more cogently, showing that “life as the sex game is sterile." The naked scene of the room and the sex game presents Eliot’s vitality and not impotence. What really matters is his objection to the sex without purpose. His introduction of Stetson, of course, throws it light on the practice of homosexuality, but always that Eliot condemns it. ‘The Fire Sermon’ is Eliot’s own search, affirming that the lust be burnt with all its passions than burning the body in sex game. The point is not that Eliot does not like sex, or does not need it. The fact is that he hates animalism. ‘Death by Water’ is the result of the fate that the “protagonist had anticipated.” The drowning actually is the dip into the lusticious life out of which only the devastated being can come out. ‘What the Thunder Said’ is his hope for spiritual revival. The course of the theme, this way, does not show Eliot as a Fisher king. However, it is true that Eliot describes more from his personal life.

T.S. Matthews had charged Eliot for several things, including the adolescence malpractices of sex. His comment is that Eliot was sexually hampered because of his “masterbations” this is not only filthy but also
abominable so far the personal and the poetic career of Eliot is concerned. First thing is that the whole adolescence life does not reflect in one’s youth and future career and secondly, that and, secondly, that Eliot’s case of sexual impotence does not relate childhood crimes. T.S. Matthews wants to say in the book that Eliot felt more pleasure in masterbation than the company of a female. It is untrue of The Waste Land in every respect. Eliot is basically a philosophical writer and he has, philosophized every human problem universally, whether it has been personal, or general. No author of his caliber can be called sick because of sexual mistakes. So far the plan and the contents of The Waste are concerned, Eliot has succeeded in presenting the philosophic situation so greatly. Eliot’s Waste Land is a result of the distortions of the images in his personal memory. The images, from among his personal life, haunt him like an apprition and constitute the tense situations of his poetry. Eliot relies upon history and believes that “one’s personal history or history in the larger sense, falls like a shadow between the desire in spasm,” he further believes that what “history teaches is death.” This has reference to both memory and death principle in The Waste Land. The past, present, and future make a continuity and rest in memory. The Waste Land is a long concentration of tagging the past experiences to the future of anything. The sense of death, whether the death of personal emotions, or philosophical death in The Waste Land, beyond the text of this thesis, relates both memory as well as history.
The complexity of this personal emotions and happening Eliot has conveyed through the symbols and the different sources in his *Waste Land.* Eliot needs an explanation of his personal experience being highlighted in the intensity of foreign symbols and imagery. The poem is as much the success of its presentation as much it is of its theme. From the beginning to the close of the poem Eliot personified his own situation symbolically, in part first of the poem the lines,

“My cousin’s, he took me out on a sled,
And I was frightened. He said Marie,
Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.
In the mountains, there you feel free.
I read, much of the night, and go south
in the winter.”

Presents the impulsive imbalance of his early English days. Marie is Vivienne and the German is Russell. The symbolic imagery can be justified on two principle grounds. One, Eliot understands symbolism as an “emotional-cum-intellectual suggestiveness of a poem”\(^{50}\). Which is used in “traditionally Christian or personal poetry”\(^{51}\). It emplies that Eliot’s techniques in *The Waste Land* is to sing of himself by means of comparisons to other great experiences. It verifies the metaphysical synthesis of the intellect and the emotion. The emotion in *The Waste* is personal and the intellect has been universalization of a personal forebearing. Madame Sosostris is borrowed from “Aldous Husley’s novel *Come*
Yellow” (1921), Chapter XVII. The fortune teller has been borrowed as “Madame Sosostris.” The name is derivative of Egyptian Sosostris, Sorceress Echatana. Eliot associates the name in connection with his buried self which is often elaborated as “emotional self hides.” This has a relation to Eliot’s early life and childhood fancies. The experience is one, which Eliot universalized, but, in-fact, it is his maid whom he very much recalls in memory but does not expose for a personal reason. Tiresias is a superb combination of the emotion and the intellect as she herself is the embodiment of Eliot’s self and thought. The Waste Land is Vivienne, Tiresias is England And Madame Sosostris, Bertrand Russell. These emotions have been presented as a love tale of Phoenician sailor, Belladonna. The Lady of the Rocks and the Hanged Man. The trio is not only in philosophy but as well in his personal life. Off and on, the biblical references ‘like the son of man’ intensify Eliot’s personal emotion for a universal meaning. Madame Sosostris cannot see either the Hanged Man, or the rock, because Eliot himself had lived a long life of blindness to the activities of his wife. In Part first of the poem the lines,

“Oh keep the Dog far hence, that’s friend to men,
‘Or with his nails he’ll dig it up again’”

Refer to Webster’s the White Devil, where the mad Ophelia appears “and includes a ghost with a flower-pot containing a dead man’s skull beneath the roots of flowers.” Ophelia’s madness is the main emotion in which he had tried to keep off Vivienne at a distance. The haunting impulses perpetuate Vivienne’s
madness in advance. Ophelia appears with a skull of a dead man and Vivienne does not less harm to Eliot after her madness.

In ‘A Game of chess’. The reference is of-course, toe Middletion’ **Woman Beware Woman**, but no less is the internal monologue within Eliot “powerful and precarious.” Vivienne has rightly been assessed by Eliot comparing her not only to the Egyptian Cleopatra and Phoenician Guido, but as “the lady of Situations” disturbing the peace of Eliot and herself. The easy reference of Philomela and carbamula makes his case immediate and effective. The memories of this personal life have well been channelized down the weight of his borrowings. Part third of poem, ‘The Fire Sermon’ refers to a “Spousall Verse” in Spenser’s *Prothalmiv*. The river of lust gets name in river Thames on whose banks the culling of pictorial romance takes place. The lemon, in this reference, refers to a lover through whom Eliot tells like Philomela his own tale of surprise and shock. The scene creates a sense of spiritual death on the bank as much did Eliot feel to die for the sake of his wife. The poem here is a master-piece perfection of bringing out tense impulses with an universal acknowledgement. The idea of death, like ‘The Burial of the Dead’, revives his personal losses which effect his present as well fore-shadow his illusive future. A lot of Shakespeare is together present in Arial’s dirge, since the scene of seduction on the riverbank appeals his experience. The full commentary of the protagonist verifies the actual waste land on the banks. The simple difference is that the waste on the banks has been less poignant than the waste in his heart. Eliot is emotionally bankrupt and so any
furvent is less exemplifying than his own music of silence. When Eliot writes, “I can connect nothing with nothing”, he revives the dullness of his life, devoid of hope for future. The actual Eliot is this nothing, for whom both present and future do not mean much. It is the life of inertness, inactivity and hopeless present. Eliot, after concentrating on several other possibilities of sexual happiness, realizes that he can but improve his personal sadness as a universal happiness by philosophizing this state of nothingness for the world. The dichotomy or the paradox inherent in the poem is that the subjective matter has been objectified on a superb technique. Helan Gardner, in his statement about ‘The Fire Sermon’, that the “doctrine of the Bhagwad Gita” is always present in this part, deserves more than he actually means by. He further writes that in Bhagwad Gita “Arjuna is concerned with the problem of inner sorrow fulness of human action, Krishna replies to his doubts by insisting on the necessity of disinterestedness.” Infact, the state of nothingness resemble Lord Krishna’s sermon in the Gita when he summarizes that the still point is the real human situation; the past and the future do not matter in respect of human action is more enough for getting him peace and satiety in life. The Waste Land is purely personal from part First to third, but, with his introduction of Buddhist Philosophy, universalization of personal emotions virtually begins. He objects mainly the action of the waste-landers and knows that it is negative. The positive action is either Buddhism or the way told by the Lord.
‘Death by Water’ presents the fate of the protagonist where he drowns in the sea of lust and never comes back. Only his bones are cleansed. The reference is made to Dante’s *Dans le Restaurant* and Virgil’s Eclogue VI. The Garcon and his experience, as already discussed, revives with the cause of death. Eliot refers to a similar cleansing. There is a “reminiscence here of the seadogs of Scylla and the whirlpool of Charybdis”, where the haunts of Scylla destroy the sailors. Eliot even in the reference of both foreign and national characters draws upon his own sense of loss and recovery. The Phoenician sailor reseembles Bertrand Russell to whom he had never referred to directly. The water symbol bears ample meanings, together representing lust and revival. Eliot knew that sex in life was necessary like was necessary like water, but its excess causes death. *The Waste Land* of his personal life became excessive since the fellow creatures around him do not restrict themselves to the proper use of it. His experience is one example and its commonness in Europe makes the land barren and sterile.

The last part of *The Waste Land* culminates in a unique perfection both in Eliot’s personal life and poetry. Mr. Helen Gardner writes, “*The Waste Land* ends with the truth of the human situation as the religious mind conceives it: the beginning of wisdom is fear.” The remark is well made so long Eliot has presented a queer sort of enlightenment, which has never been apprehended before. Prof. W.W.Rockson also
makes similar comments upon Eliot’s excellence in the last part of the Waste Land. He writes, “Eliot talks about poetry in a way that suggests this vaguely ‘religious’ dimension without attempting to give it any specifically doctrinal or dogmatic form.” Eliot makes many things clear about himself in The Waste Land in this part. After going through The Waste, protagonist and Eliot realize that recovery from sterility is possible but the possibilities have been changed. The poem bears the theme that revival is feasible on Hindu way of living as the thunder tells. Eliot summarizes that The Waste Land lacks religious purpose of Sex. It lacks either a religious or spiritual significance.

Very simply does he conclude, that the sermon of the three commands-da, da, da assures spiritual living and The Waste can be recovered of its maimedness with a Hindu discipline. The protagonist does not recover and feels the situation like Thomas Kyd’s Hieronymo, simply because the Phoenician sailor has been transformed into bones which are never to be cleansed. The protagonist does not know anything about the waste landers meaning and, naturally, there is no possibility of revival. The Waste Land ends up with a message that the protagonist dies with hope for spiritual rain and remains unrecovered but the world must know that a spiritual understanding of sex can improve that land and its citizens.

If the last part of the poem is taken as one of his personal happenings, both the references and the theme of the poem may tell something new about it.
The fact is known that Eliot had studied Sanskrit at Harvard and there was no doubt that he had loved Vedic doctrine as the principle of man on earth. The statement of George Williamson, that “the emotional significance of the poem at no point is independent of this framework, it is likewise not equivalent to the framework, even when it seems most congruent.” Mr. Williamson also means the same things that Eliot’s emotional attachment to Hinduism framework, it is likewise not equivalent to the framework, even when it seems most congruent. Mr. Williamson also means the same things that Eliot’s emotional attachment to Hinduism and the poem, being a personal experience, cannot be denied. In summarizing the theme of the poem. Eliot presents his realization that his exit from sinful life of Russell is possible by seeking refuge in the Vedas. It is true that in the notes to the waste land Eliot does not seem to know the exact source of “shanti”, as quoted at the end of the poem, but his appreciation and acceptance of the Vedic discipline cannot be denied. Eliot speaks, in this part of the poem, as a Hindu sage and wishes that he too could lead a similar life. In his introduction to Wilson knights The Wheel of Fire Eliot writes,

“I like a definite and dogmatic Philosophy, preferably a Christian and Catholic one, but alternately that of Epicurus or the forest philosophers of India.”

It verifies that Eliot has achieved the theme of the poem “in combining non abstract Vedic reason to abstract Christian happenings.” The beginning of
the poem, where both the situations as well as the characters have been
Christian, is English. The end is totally different with the solutions as well as the
plan of the poem. Eliot seems more a Hindu than a Christian. One more point
from The Great Tom varifies Eliot’s mental conversation to Hinduism. “Eliot had
expressed the will that his body be cremated, and ashes burried at East Coker,
Somerset.”

Eliot was, after all, cremated like a Hindu and not buried like a
Christian. This is the emotional attachment of the author where he loved and
liked Hindustan both as a philosophy and way of life. “What the Thunder said”
consists of several Vedic situations in making the idea of revival more
practical. Eliot, infact, had liked, neither Vivienne, not her England. In his old
age, it was that neither could he go away to America, nor live cordially in
England. His mental affection responded to the Vedic values. His lines,

“Ganga was sunken, and the limpleaves
waited for rain, whiler the blace clouds
Gathered far distant over Himavant.
The Jungle crouched, humped in Silence
Then spoke the thunder.”

and,

“Datta. Dayadhvan. Damyat
Shantih Shantih Shantih.”

make the Hindu principle a better solution than all the Christian and non-Christian
concepts. His idea of appending a spiritually Hindu myth to an intensely Christian
problem is not a need of technique and sensibility, but his embracement of
Hinduism as a discipline of life. The internal Eliot, the man, is more dominant throughout the poem than Eliot, the poet. Helen Gardner has squeezed the theme of the poem very correctly remarking that Eliot has found not only a personal solution of his personal problems as a poet, but a solution, which may greatly influence later writers, of the problem of the long poem.”

Like skepticism, mysticism for Eliot also had a historical and a biographical imperative. For the nineteenth century, science was the measure of intellectual truth. When the Bible was subjected to empirical inspection, its version of Creation was found to contradict material evidence provided by contemporary geological and biological discoveries, and the authenticity of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life and teaching was questioned through the textual analysis of the Higher Criticism. Without the absolute authority of Scripture, Protestant Christianity was left with two ways to verify its existence and practice. Religion could find a utilitarian. Justification by associating itself with the social welfare; the religious life would then consist of performing one's moral duty to the community of man. Or religion could establish itself in opposition to be the scientific scrutiny which opened it to doubt, and claim to be unrelated to material phenomena: religious experience would then consist of mystical illumination.

Both alternatives were observed in the Unitarian household in which Eliot was raised. The observance of moral duty through social action for the family by the novels of George Eliot and in life by Eliot's father, Henry Ware Eliot a
business executive and philanthropist, and by his imposing grandfather, William Greenleaf Eliot, who founded the First Congregational church of St. Louis, who helped found Washington University, and who bequeathed to his family the "Law of Public Service" (CC44). Although Eliot's mother was also a tireless social worker, and as such the pride of her family, her poetic and religious aspirations had perhaps a profounder effect upon Eliot. In his youth Eliot appears to have been acquainted with both, her poetry itself and the value she placed upon it. He recalls that at about seventeen years of age, when she praised a poem he had written as better than anything she herself had done, "I knew what her verse meant to her." Charlotte Eliot's poetry is religious in subject, whether lyric of dramatic, and the nature of the religion she portrays is primarily mystical. Her heroes and heroines are often saints propelled into action by private inspiration and mystical illumination; her self-reliant Savonarola is typical, as he prays make to me clearer the inward vision that when Thou art near Thy presence I may know.

Although Eliot referred to mystical experience as "the kind of unexplainable experience Which many of us have had, once or twice in our lives, and been unable to put into words," his poetry reveals a number of attempts to express mystical moments of varying intensity, clarity, and illumination, which he seems to have experienced certainly more than twice. That mystical feeling could be expressed in verse he had no doubt: "poetry is mystical when it intends to convey, and succeeds in conveying to the reader . . . the statement of a perfectly
definite experience which we call the mystical experience." Eliot's own mystical experiences are the 'still points' of Four Quartets, described in "The Dry Salvages" as "the moment in and out of time", less than a communion with God, but nonetheless "Hints followed by guesses", or feeling of the Divine.

A different type of theorising is 'the attempt to answer the question "what is poetry?"'. This, as we have seen, is one of the true ends of literary criticism, but it has its dangers, according to Eliot: 'There is a philosophic borderline, which you must not transgress too far or too often, if you wish to preserve your standing as a critic, and are not prepared to present yourself as a philosopher, metaphysician, sociologist, or psychologist instead.'

Perhaps Eliot is too cautious here, for aesthetics should surely be a branch of philosophy, and to some extent a branch of psychology if we are to discover the reasons and need for artistic activity. Recently Eliot has also found, fault with that sort of criticism which deals in tremendous detail with all possible meanings and sources of a work; a fashion which he says was partly set by Lowes's The Road to Xanadu and which, by dissecting the subject with scrupulous care, frequently leaves the reader with a dismembered corpse on his hands poetry (or art, one supposes) is, typically, a practical one, which has strict reservations.

While theories of poetry may be tested by their power of refining our sensibility by increasing our understanding, we must not ask that they serve even that purpose of adding to our enjoyment of poetry; any more than we ask of
ethical theory that it should have a direct influence upon human behaviour. Critical speculation, like philosophical speculation and scientific research, must be free to follow its own course; and cannot be called upon to show immediate results; and I believe that the pondering (in judicious moderation) of the questions which it raises will tend to enhance our enjoyment. The key words which relate to the method and aim of criticism are 'refining our sensibility by increasing our understanding', and they are the clearest expression of what Eliot means by 'elucidation'. Sensibility may be inherent and to some extent must be there is such a thing as natural good taste and understanding—but it must be 'refined', educated and directed; and this can be accomplished by theories of poetry as well as by critical writings on individual poems.

In considering the value of individual theories about poetry Eliot returns naturally to the idea of collective traditional standards. He is prepared to admit in this context that the personal element cannot be eradicated, because an individual's personal element cannot be eradicated, because an individual's personal knowledge, experience, understanding and liking for poetry can never comprehend all poetry, and so the theory built on this knowledge experience, understanding and liking must necessarily be limited added to this there are limitations of contemporary taste:

Each age demands different things from poetry... So our criticism, from age to age will reflect the things that the age demands; and the criticism of no
one man and of no one age can be expected to embrace the whole nature of poetry. 76

Amongst all these demands from poetry and the responses to it there is always some permanent element in common, just as there are standards of good and bad writing independent of what any one of us faults is Eliot's own essay on Hamlet 77 Finally, it can be based not on facts at all but on personal opinion and emotional reaction.

Destructive criticism is generally more popular than constructive because 'it is easier for readers to apprehend the destructive than the constructive side of an author's thought. 78 Eliot might have added this that there is a human appetite for scandal and defamation which is far from being excluded from the world of art and letters: let, one but cry 'Shakespeare was no genius but a charlatan!' and he will have an audience, whatever else he lacks. From this preference for the sensational comes the danger that destructive rather than constructive criticism may from time to time have both more adherents and more writers, and that hence we shall be left periodically in an atmosphere of ruined reputations and doubtful standards. For this reason destructive criticism should, be practiced with even greater care and restraint than constructive. By applying one standard or another to any work of art we can always find fault, and this brings us directly up against the main problem of criticism.
Criticism, at least in the meaning of the word, with which we are here concerned, deals with art, and art, as Eliot often implies, eludes a final satisfactory definition. Any definition of art, which may be universally applicable, will be so vague as to be almost useless for the criticism of any individual work. Aristotle in his *Poetics* calls art 'imitation' (*mimes*) and says that its pleasure is that of recognition: from this we can say that art is a representation of reality arranged in such a way as to give the reality represented a 'significant form'. This is of deep interest philosophically but it would not help us very much in criticising an individual work of art: one could say that James Joycc's *Ulysses* gave significant form to the complexity of everyday life, or that Eliot's *Waste Land* gave significant form to the problem of a world spiritually dead, and these statements would be true; but how much light would they throw on the works themselves? Joyce, whom we have just mentioned, called art in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 'the disposition of sensible matter in order to give aesthetic pleasure', and this gives us to understand that art is deliberate, that it imposes form on matter, and that its end is a pleasure in that form' imposed. Again, this throws much light on the nature of art, but cannot help us much in the examination of any individual work of art Maritain in *Art and Scholasticism* calls art an intellectual habit (habitus, the meaning of which is closer-to virtue than to habit as we mean it): 'the undeviating desire of making'. This throws light on the poet, but none on any poem.
Both poetry and prose combine to produce the impression of an extraordinarily conscientious writer, who is prepared to work out all the ideas, which form the background of his poetry, and risk applying this ideology to Church, politics and social life. He and Yeats are the first English poets of his century who seem to have realized that if the beliefs which govern a poet when he is writing, are hopelessly removed from the beliefs on which contemporary society and the law are based, then his poetry will seem remote from the life around him. The poet is driven either into an attitude of eccentric and defiant individualism, or else he must try and work out his ideas and relate them to society. Eliot has therefore explained his position very carefully, and criticism of that position is relevant to his poetry.

The very first essay in the Sacred Wood, on Tradition and the Individual Talent, might lead one to think that Eliot was to live contentedly among the apostles of “art’s for sake,” brought up to dated by bloomsbury, and called significant form. For he offers a neat formula to illustrate the creation of poetry: “Consider, as a suggestive analogy, the action which takes place when a bit of finely filiated platinum is introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide.”

The essay is in fact a vigorous attack on critics who maintain that poetry is the expression of personality, and at the same time it is a defence of tradition.
Although the essay is convincingly argued there is a certain doubt left as to its intention.

Firstly, it is rather difficult to understand why Eliot is so much on the defensive about tradition. For, if he is on the defensive, if his purpose is, like Henry James’s to hold up a continental example to the English he over-proves his case. Because he proves that, without tradition as an element in the chemical formula, poetry cannot exist. Therefore tradition is a sine quan non, and it is difficult to see how some poetry can be more traditional than other poetry, except in the sense that it is better or worse, which is, in fact, the sense in which Eliot uses the word traditional. But he does not seem quite happy at letting the reader know he is doing this. 80

In later essays, he endeavours always to trace the line of tradition in literature, and this of course, leads him eventually away from books, to the contemporary social environment of the writers whom he discussing, to morals, and lastly, to theology. A more critical and less analytic attitude to English literature is adopted. One of his exponents in the Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry even hints at the possibility that Shakespeare is not traditional enough, because of his lack of an ordered social background. ‘Restoration comedy is a comedy of social manners. It presupposes the existence of a society, therefore of social and moral laws… It laught at the members of society who transgress its laws. The
tragedy of Shakespeare goes deeper and yet it tells us only that weakness of character lead to disaster.

It is true that Eliot's early poems did express the feelings of a class which combined power with a sense of 'insecurity in the 'twenties. Nevertheless, their essential motive is intimately personal. The most outstanding, characteristic of these poems is the note of the poet turning upon himself- the note of note of doubt, tormented self-questioning and disgust for love and life on the human level. Both Prufrock and the hero of the Portrait of A Lady suffer-from the tormenting consciousness of their inability to establish a satisfying love-relationship. They have dared too little, lived too cautiously; with the result that their life has been starved of those great emotional experience that make human existence rich, exciting and beautiful. Their fear of vulgarity has inhibited elemental human feelings. While Eliot himself fears vulgarity, he betrays an obsession with it, and he frets at the limitations and hypocritical pretences of society. Like Santayana's Oliver, he too seems to have constantly debated things with his conscience. His profound moral earnestness seems to have compelled him to ask himself again and again" Are these ideas right or wrong?" But his inhibitions and fear of ridicule seem to have prevented his ever coming to the point of putting the question to himself.

Eliot's early poems such as Prufrock and portrait of a Lady betray are unresolved emotional tension similar to that noticed by Rahv in Henry James,
and they produce a like effect of “embarrassed passion and hinted meaning in excess of the narrated facts.” Hawthorne’s idea of ancestral sin also reappears in Eliot’s work. In the early poems, it manifests itself in the form of an exasperated revulsion against all kinds of crudity and vulgarity. It is explicitly touched upon in The Waste Land, and becomes the central theme in The Family Reunion.

But the swing from cosmopolitanism to zealous adherence to royalty, regionalism, caste and traditional dogma did not take place suddenly. In the first instance, he seems. Like James, to have suffered from vague anxieties and fears which compelled him to resort to circuitousness and the veils of ambiguity, and to avoid moments of emotional stress. Both ‘Prufrock’ and ‘Portrait of a lady’ show how he felt Discomfited, torn by endless conflicts and indecisions, and indecisions, and prematurely old. He felt desperate:

\[ \text{I should have been a pair of ragged claws} \]
\[ \text{Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.}^{82} \]

An air of emotional frustration and defeat hangs about the descriptive passage in ‘Prufrock’;

\[ \text{Certain half-deserted streets,} \]
\[ \text{The muttering retreats} \]
\[ \text{Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels} \]
\[ \text{And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells.} \]
In the ‘Portrait of a Lady,’ there is a similar feeling of regret and irresolution. Again, the man has been vanquished by something in himself and prevented from taking the decisive step:

Doubtful, for a while

Not knowing what to feel or if I understand

Or whether wise or foolish, tardy or too soon…………..

The melancholy and the disgust alternate with each other in a similar way in many other early poems, notably in ‘La Figlia Che Piange’:

She turned away, but with the autumn weather

Compelled my imagination many days,

Many days and many hours:

Her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers.

And I wonder how they should have been together!

I should have lost a gesture and a pose.

Sometimes these cogitations still amaze

The troubled midnight and the noon’s repose.

The opportunity of emotional fulfillment forgone and the subsequent sense of sterility and defeat- that is indeed the constant.
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78 op. cit. , Irving Babbit’, p. 471.

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81 T.S. Eliot , Portrait of lady , section II.82

82 "The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock.”