Symbolism is as old as humanity. Before man had the alphabet, and
developed civilization, he had symbols. The ability to respond
symbolically is a distinctive feature of humanity. Symbols which were
universal among men and found in all literatures are very numerous in
the scriptures. In poetry symbols are extensively used by the creative
minds tried to define and understand the term "Symbol" or "Symbolism".
In the history of literature there was fully developed modernist
movement in France which dated back to the nineties and ultimately
converged into some independent movement like 'Imagism' from the the
esthetic of Edgar Allan Poe, and another movement was known as
"Symbolist movement." In our time the term is used in a rather
special sense to denote the characteristic method and theories of the
nineteenth century French Symbolists. This movement has had a marked
influence on the modern poets. Baudelaire, Verlaine, Mallarme and
others sought to create a verse which would arise through scent,
colours, and sound to raptures of the spirit. The essence of this
movement is its insistence on a world of ideal beauty and its
conviction that this can be realized through art. The ecstasies
which religion claims for the devout through prayer and contemplation
are claimed by the symbolists for the poet through the exercise of
his craft. Intensity, concentrated richness, musical suggestiveness,
evocativeness are essential qualities essentially valued of the
symbolists and of those whom they intensely influenced. For them, any
image, any figure of speech, any literary or mythological or
historical allusion, any turn of speech may be used for a mystical expressive realization beyond this relative world. Accordingly to Denys Thompson, "the use of symbols in poetry is an extension of a specifically human capacity, the ability to understand signs and shapes from traffic signals upwards that stands for things or state or activities."¹ People derive their symbols from their experience and their environment. "Symbolizing is the basis of all talents."² Symbolism has been called, to borrow the expression of Denys Thompson, "the glue which holds together the societies and cultures."³ Symbols that were originally flashes of perception, illuminating what had not been apprehended before, pass into a language as metaphors. They serve variety of purpose—"providing useful definitions, the means of stressing a particular aspect of a subject, of focusing attention, of catching a fleeting experience, of introducing a synonym that tells us something of the user's feeling and intention".⁴ Hence symbols have a significant role to play as a vehicle for meaningful communication of the user's inner feeling; so is the symbolists-movement.

"SYMBOLIST MOVEMENT"

The symbolists movement is very significant in English literature and worth of brief consideration since major poetry of the twentieth century derives from it and it is acclaimed convicing undeniable and unquestionable fact that the great poets of the century are inspired by the symbolists-movement immensely by the French symbolists. The influence of the French symbolists was immediate and wide. ⁵⁶ J.A.
Priestley says, "Without this French-movement there would have been no modern poetry as we know it today." The symbolists held the poets to be uniquely equipped to convey to others the truth of ideas - a world of transcendent reality symbolized in the more immediately accessible world of natural objects. This is so because if the poets sensibility and because words have magical properties which make possible their use as symbols, rather than dictionary equivalent. For the symbolist therefore the naturalist failed to recognize the potential power of languages and concentrated in his subject matter - on appearance rather than reality.

There is an important group of modern poets who may be called symbolists. The term "symbolists" was appropriated by a comparatively small school of French writers of whom Mallarme was "The conclusion and crown of symbolism." Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud, Mallarme, Paul Valery, and Laforgue are the important French symbolists:

Baudelaire

Baudelaire (1821-67) belong to no group. "He did not look back to the past like the Parnassians or profess the cult of plastic, impossible beauty." He deliberately wanted to be modern and to elicit and convey the poetry of urban life. A very original section of his Les Fleurs du Mal. To borrow the words of Cleanth Brooks, "The title of Baudelaire's collected poems Les Fleurs du Mal stands as a brief symbols for the aesthetic devotion the belief in beauty despite evil
in beauty through evil."\textsuperscript{8} His poems in prose curiously entitled Le Spleen do Paris and brilliant aesthetic essays in his Curiosities Esthetiques (1868) are a plea for modernity in art and letters.

The double symbolist concept that "reality is no more than a facade, concealing either a world of ideas and emotions within the poet, or an ideal world towards which he aspires, is associated in the case of Baudelaire."\textsuperscript{9}

This poet passed in the eyes of some of his contemporaries for the poet of the flesh and the sense, but in fact he is the one who seeks stubbornly to raise the material toward the level of the spiritual, to wed Substantives to adjectives carrying moral value: mystical, spiritual, "Love for woman is love for her soul."\textsuperscript{11} Baudelaire best succeeds in laying a bridge between the material and the spiritual, in uniting the abstract and the concrete, the celestial and the informal. He wrote in the third and last of his Salon, in 1959. "All the visible universe is but a storehouse of images and signs to which the imagination will give relative place and value."\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{center}
Paul Verlaine
\end{center}

Paul Verlaine born in 1842 a generation after Baudelaire began his career just as a poet, when the poet Baudelaire was at the highest of his fame. In his life and work there is a constant swaying to and fro from the darkest despair to the most radiant optimism, from the
darkest despair to the most radiant optimism, from the sadness to joy and confidence. Verlaine understood that free verse nor "the biblical verse nor the poem-in-prose suited him and that objective poetry was not in itself superior to other." He remained faithful to poetry and to a rather elevated idea of art.

In the area of language and style, "it is through his metrics that the poet showed himself to be" a sometime innovator and a very great master." With a daring Verlaine took delight in composing poems made up of odd-syllable lines: five syllable, of seven or nine syllables, even eleven syllable line and also thirteen syllable.

Arthur Rimbaud

Rimbaud had a brief and meteoric career. As a poet he began his meteoric career in 1870 before he was sixteen and over by; 1875 he was twenty one. He turned his back on poetry by the age of twenty and died after ten years in Abyssinia as trade explorer and gun-runner. Yet in the space of these few short years he leapt from being almost as conventional poet as Verlaine had been. "His poetry like his life was a countinuing attack on most forms of convention." He condemned the whole of French poetry as mere rhymed prose, what he wanted was new forms of poetry that would give free reign to the poets genius. Rimbaud is regarded and the fountain-head of the movement which developed in the early part of the twentieth century called sur realism. He broke the cruel bond of versification.
Like his symbolist contemporaries Rimbaud strove in his works to capture the reality which is absent from the familiar world. Characteristically he chose extreme means having asserted that the poet must be seer. Rimbaud walked alone to the utmost frontier of symbolism. Having found that the language could not capture his vision he renounced his poetry. He achieves his poetic effects by picturing brilliant and unexpected images and by creating changing rhymic pattern that abbs and flows with the movement of the passage.

Rimbaud never analyses in his poetry the nature of his ideal world but simply conveys it to the reader. "Like Baudelaire's world of memory, his world of imagination was more real than reality itself." 16

**Stephane Mallarme** (1842 - 98).

Life of Stephane Mallarme was the opposite of Rimbaud's or Verlaine's in its respectable uneventfulness. As a literary ascetic and master craftsman pursued the absent reality of the idea through the intellect rather than the sense and wrote poems that are beautifully finished and highly enigmatic verbal structures. In the second half of the twentieth century, "Mallarme's glory has risen to a peak from which its brilliance shines more ardently than that of Baudelaire or of any other French poet." 17 He is "incomprehensible and unpathomable poet." 18 Since 1870 he has come to be "perhaps the most universal of poets." 19
Obscurity in Mallarme's sometimes source of beauty. The poet aspires to somekind of chemical purity through elimination and condensation. "During the 1870's and 1880's, Mallarme came to be regarded as the saint and sage of the symbolist movement," as Cleanth Brooks says.

Paul Valery (1871 - 1945)

Paul Valery also shared the sense of dissatisfaction with reality common to all the symbolist poets. Due to the encouragement of Gide and Pierre Louys he moved to Paris from his native Midi in the early 1890s. It brought him into direct contact with Mallarme. Mallarme exercised a potent influence on Valery's work and his early poems later collected in *Album des Vers Anciens* (1920) which displays "the intricate verbal melody and severe intellectuality of symbolism." Despite some early success, Valery was dissatisfied both with his own poetry and with literature in general. Partly, however, through the belief Mallarme had gone as far as possible along the road towards creating an ideal poetry, and partly because his own verse tended to be an emotional rather than an intellectual nature. Valery virtually abandoned poetry in 1892 at the age of twenty and turned his attention instead of other ways of exploring the world of ideas. He was particularly fascinated by philosophy, mathematics, and physics, although he never acquired the highly specialized knowledge in these subjects. Even he attempted to unify all human knowledge by means of mathematics. He possessed formidable intellectual caste.
As far as the form of his work is concerned he is very much a descendant of Baudelaire and Mallarme. Like Earlier symbolists he often leaves the meaning of his images implicit rather than explicit. He leaves his symbols virtually unexplained. He is considered to be one of the most musical poets. As regard to versification Valery is in fact a fundamentally conventional poet. He made less attempt to break "its cruel bonds than any of his predecessors."

Jules Laforgue

Never before, no doubt, had no one spoken so much of illness, boredom with life, and universal decadence than in the last quarter of the nineteenth century in France. The small group of those who around 1885-90, are called decadents. Associated with them was a poet who died young in 1887. This young genius is Jules Laforgue, who promised to be the most origional talent of the generation that followed that of the great poets of symbolism. Born in 1860, he came twenty or so years after Mallarme, Verlaine and the impressionist painters. Huysmans in 1891 declared Laforgue "the most gifted of the symbolists."

To the poetry of symbolist era, Laforgue brought a new note: irony-disillusioned irony but never mean, a generous irony that rather resembles humor, for it is at himself that the poet laughs above all. "Anglo-American poetry found in Laforgue the one who would lead it pitilessly to examine itself and to join together lyricism and intellectualism."
THE INFLUENCE OF THE FRENCH SYMBOLISTS ON T.S. ELIOT

In 1908 Eliot discovered Arthur Symon's book *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899), and was introduced to the works of Gautier, Baudelaire, Mallarme, Laforgue and several other French poets, and this introduction to work of these French symbolisits was of great significance. The symbolist movement left deep mark on Eliot's work even though "Eliot was never a symbolist in the full sense like Mallarme but certain symbolists tendencies and sometimes passages recur throughout his work mingled with more discursive and referential elements," to borrow the words of Martin Scofield. It could become possible for young Eliot because what Arthur Symon's book did in molding the artistic mind and attracting towards the symbolist movement.

T.S. Eliot owes great debt to Arthur Symons for having read his book *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. What Eliot writes in this regard is worth quoting. He says:

I myself owe Mr. Symons a great debt; but for having read his book, I should not, in the year 1908, have heard of Laforgue and Rimbaud; I should probably not have began to read Verlaine; and but for reading Verlaine, I should not have heard of Corbiere. So Symons' book is one of those which have affected the course of my life.  

This book has affected the course of his life. His reading of the book gave rise to a sense of deep passion and interests for the French
Symbolists. His work shows deep marks of the French symbolists. He was attracted towards the French Symbolists Movement for its quality.

Matthiessen pretty well says:

The Principal quality which drew Eliot to the symbolists is one that they possess in common with the metaphysicals, the same essential if transmitting ideas into sensations, of transforming an observation into a state of mind. 28

In the symbolists "there is an increased allusiveness and indirection, a flexibility in their verse designed to catch every nuance of their feelings." 29 Such technical capability fascinated Eliot. Cleanth Brooks and William K. Wimsatt put rightly:

For Eliot as for Pound, the essence of poetry is metaphor, but the special insights that he brings to metaphor come not from Chinese Picture Writing, but from the French Symbolist poets of the 19th Century and from the English "metaphysical" poets of the 17th. 30

Eliot discerned in some of the French symbolist poets "a method curiously similar to that of the Metaphysical poets... Jules Laforgue and Tristan Corbiere in many of his poems are nearer to the 'School of Donne' than any modern English poet." 31 Eliot's doctrine of 'Objective Co-relative' is derived from the theory and practice of the French Symbolists. As Cleanth Brooks and William K. Wimsatt state:

... the doctrine of the objective co-relative is a kind of summation of what Eliot... derived from the theory and practice of the French Symbolists. 32
"The symbolists had argued that poetry cannot express emotion directly; emotion can only be evoked," to borrow the words of Cleanth Brooks and William K. Wimsatt. Eliot writes:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative", in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of their particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in the sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.

(Selected Essays, pp.124-125)

The repetitive schemes governing Eliot's imagery represent an extension of the methods of French Symbolism. In the French symbolist poem this pattern is often found so in Eliot's poetry. In repetition of images in Eliot's poetry their meanings are elaborated and modified. For example, in "Portrait of a Lady," the image of the 'bowl of lilacs' is repeated. This is for the decoration the lady's room, but later it symbolic and symptomatic of her being nervous and agitated, when she twists the 'lilac stalk's', T.S. Eliot writes:

Now that lilacs are in bloom
She has a bowl in her room
And twists one in her fingers while she talks.
"Ah, my friend, you do not know, you do not know
What is life, you hold it in your hands?"

(C.P.P., p.9)

By fusing the influences of French Symbolist and the dramatic blank verse of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists, Eliot produced
poetry that was symbolic, indirect, and ironic, conversational and dramatic. Even his characters are symbols. The moral and spiritual decay of modern life is portrayed sharply by Eliot in symbolic manner through his symbolic characters. Prufrock, Gerontion, Madame Sosostris, etc., all are symbolic characters personifying the cultural, religious and moral decay and perversion. Even the situations are symbolic, they all are symbolic of "a dying civilization or an age in process of dissolution," to borrow the words of Elizabeth Drew. So the influence of the French symbolists has molded Eliot's literary style. Even the search for a literary doctrine of time and timeless leads back to French Symbolism.

**Laforgue's Influence on T.S. Eliot**

Laforgue has immensely influenced T.S. Eliot. He became first to teach how to speak, to teach him the poetic possibilities of his own idiom of speech. Martin Scofield rightly put:  

> It was in Laforgue, however, that Eliot was to find the most immediate source of stimulation for his poetry... What Eliot found in Laforgue was a way of combining his loftier aspirations with his sense of irony, his romantic and even heroic feelings with his satiric perception of absurdity and pretension.  

"Reading Laforgue acted as a catalyst for Eliot's own writing."  

Referring to the influence of Laforgue on young Eliot, Evik Svarny writes:
Eliot's youthful encounter with the work of French poet (Laforgue) whose primary career as a writer was cut short by his death from tuberculosis at the age of twenty-seven, 1887 may be said to have stimulated the twenty-year-old student and amateur poet into becoming a poet of potentially major stature. 36

"Laforgue's central theme of facture of communications between the sexes" 37 is also expressed in Eliot's poetry and dramas. *Conversation Glante* is an "urbane exploitation" 38 of the Laforguien theme of a failure of communication between the sexes. Eliot learned from Laforgue how to introduce conversation and conversational qualities in poetry.

The *Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* strongly reflects Laforguian tone and techniques. The mastery of conversational idioms, the next turn of wit, the smart cliches and imagery drawn from both the street and drawing room with all of its orchestrated into a lively succession of rhythmical phrases - these devices are reminiscent of the techniques of Laforgue. "Eliot learnt how to employe Vers Libre through studying Laforgue." 39

Eliot described Laforguien irony as a means "to express a doubling of the personality against which the subject struggles." 40 Eliot saw in Laforgue an artistic temperament and sensibility rather closely allied with his own. In this connection what Grover Smith Jr. remarks is worth quoting. He says:
Laforgue's own temperament was romantic, but his manner was cynical. He had a disposition to be clownishly at sentiments. This habit, though it shaded his poems with a subtle pathos, brightens them with a tinsel novelty all the more bizarre because of their slang. Splitting or doubling himself into languid sufferer and satiric commentator, he wrote poems deriding in one passage the tenderness of another. Eliot accommodated this idiosyncrasy to his own needs; it helped him veil personal agonies with impersonal irony. 41

In Laforgue, Eliot saw the possibilities for using self-parody as a means for veiling personal feelings, but Eliot goes, beyond Laforgue in adding images with symbolism and investing them with complex moral and spiritual meanings. And his images seem highly realistic.

Baudelaire's Influence on T.S. Eliot.

All of the French Symbolists, Charles Baudelaire, the father of the symbolist movement in France, had the deepest influence on the difficult poet. As with Laforgue so also with Baudelaire, Eliot was impressed. The moral substance of Baudelaire's work impressed Eliot. He was fascinated by Baudelaire's concern for the evil nature within man. Eliot found within himself and others the presence of evil. His deeper interest in Baudelaire was purely moral and spiritual. From his he learnt the concept of good and evil. Baudelaire provided Eliot ethical matter for his poetry. T.S. Eliot wrote of Baudelaire that "in the middle nineteenth century—an age of bustle, programmes, platforms, scientific progress, humanitarianism and revolutions which
improved nothing, an age of progressive degradation, Baudelaire perceived that what matter is Sin and Redemption.  

What Eliot wrote of Baudelaire is applicable to Eliot himself. Like this master, he was also convinced that "the recognition of the reality of Sin is a new life; and the possibility of damnation itself is so immense a relief in a world of electoral reform, plebiscities, sex reform and dress reform, that damnation itself is an immediate form of salvation - of salvation from the ennui of modern life, because it atleast gives some significance to living." As Baudelaire was "endowed with Original Sin", so was T.S. Eliot. For Eliot Baudelaire is "a great landmark in poetry. Baudelaire is the greatest exemplar in modern poetry in any language, for his verse and language is the nearest thing to a complete renovation."

Eliot was especially impressed by Baudelaire's feeling for his age. What Wallace Fowlie writes is worth quoting in this context. Wallace writes:

Baudelaire's art represented an awareness of man's situation in the modern world. Baudelaire's example taught Eliot that it was necessary to find a new language, a language adequate to transmit the feelings of modern man. The poet's first obligation is to create a language that is his, in order not to lose his identity as a poet.

Eliot followed the footsteps of his spiritual master. For Eliot, Baudelaire was much more than a poet. "He was the inventor of a
significant attitude, an outlook on the disorder he saw everywhere. He was also the inventor of a way of feeling, a way of understanding disorder. He was perhaps especially for Eliot—the believer in moral values."

Baudelairean dandyism is also visible in Eliot's personality. Baudelaire and Eliot realized that the poet and the critic are one.

Baudelaire taught him ways "to renew the poetic art by borrowing from the daily life of a large metropolis." He also taught him the way "to translate ideas into sensations." Eliot saw in Baudelaire the example of a writer for whom criticism and poetry are "converging aspects of the same literary process." Each of these poets has "sung the aridity of contemporary life, and each one also has sung of the same aspiration toward purity, the same search for humility." 51

THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLICAL SYMBOLS ON T.S. ELIOT

As it has been pointed out that symbols are as old as humanity, and symbols which are universal among men and found in all literature are numerous, but it is in the Biblical revelation that they attain their highest level. Symbols in the Holy Bible are in much abundance. The Bible has not only maintained its celebrated identity as the master piece of the world literature, it has greatly influenced English literature. Its influence could be obviously recognised in the later works of the highly celebrated of the modern poets. The primitive oriental imagery of the Holy Bible, suggesting truth in pictures, has
often been taken as literal, scientific description of spiritual truth—which can never be humanly described except in symbols. As a matter of fact the only way to talk about the spiritual life is in poetical and picturesque language. Artistic living pictures and poetic images talk to us by suggestion, rather than by definition and bewildering to the reader. The Biblical symbols have greatly influenced him. His symbols are parallel to the Biblical symbols. These symbols makes him more obscure and difficult.

On the most celebrated poet of our age, T.S. Eliot, the influence of the Biblical symbols can be seen from the images and symbols he has elaborately used from the Bible, and no discussion of the symbolism of the poem or the work of T.S. Eliot which does not take into account the symbols contributed to by the Holy Bible can be justified or considered as complete or satisfactory. Many images and phrases have been scholarly used by T.S. Eliot elaborately and fittingly.

There are two stages of poetic growth in T.S. Eliot. The first stage in which he poetically celebrated ugliness, sordidness, and helplessness of his time in all possible ludicrous poetic images and dimensions. This stage continues more or less upto the time of publication of *The Waste Land*. While his main purpose remains here as a manner of possing "a problem in the purpose of life and begin faintly to formulate a solution," this formula faintly formulating a solution always remains a sort of philosophical passion with T.S. Eliot in his later work also. In doing so he had always been
questing, in the words of Prof. Narsingh Srivastava, "for unifying and abiding values of culture and the redeeming truths of religion, both being interrelated to each other." This interrelation of the values of life and truths of religion is particularly important in formulating his conviction concerning values of culture. F.H. Bradley's Absolute idealism which always distinguishes reality as something opposite to appearance is the main source. But the central unity of his life-work exactly lies in growth and development of a serious and questing personality, which is essentially religious. Eliot's ultimate emphasis on the final validity of religious faith is not a matter of dogma. It is not even a matter of sudden acceptance through conversion as it might appear in his conversion to New Anglicanism. While Eliot generally accepts that sort of religious faith in any popular religions of our time, his conscience always remained that the Christian religious properties as propounded by the Holy Bible are the best possible means of solution for his quest. This kind of impression emerges as a profound truth of Eliot's personality when the symbolism and imagery of his poetry are taken into consideration. While the aesthetic manner of his symbolism takes its origin in the French Symbolistic poets and Baudelaire, the spirit of suggesting the evocative manner of looking at the world of nature and fellow men with a sense of serious introspection goes back to his association with the Bible. Starting with his Prufrock and aiming at his Waste Land stage there are numberless instances where T.S. Eliot has directly restarted/restored to the Biblical parallel in his poetic
pictures. But however these parallels have been affectively transplanted into a distinctively different purpose than drawing the attention of the readers towards their Biblical origins. The Biblical origins are just there and they go to clarify that Eliot mainly depended upon the Biblical stylistic, especially in his symbolism. It is not only the structural aspect of symbolism that becomes prominently Biblical, the ingenious manner in which Eliot expressively and suggestively correlates the Biblical symbolism with the truths and values (or valuelessness?) of the twentieth century life at once reveals his personal discordance of the modern man's life and his inner most concordance of the Biblical properties as the possible sources of offering deliverance for man from the wretchedness of life. This does not mean Eliot wanted everybody to convert himself to Christianity. He did not know anything of this sort. On the other hand merely ideologically speaking he had only disgust to show about the ostentatious religious exhibitions. As Prof. Narsingh Srivastava rightly points out, "Eliot's quest had not come to an end even when he had surrendered himself to Grace."54 Eliot borrowed the ennobling ideas from all parts of the world and from all religions. While it is true that "religion is not averse to the accumulation of beliefs even in defiance of logic,"55 Eliot was not concerned with dogmatically imposing Christian principles on his readers. However "it is by no means an effort of compromising Christian principles with the truth of other religions, rather Christianity remains at the center of his belief."56 These intentions are also available in the very structure of his symbols and imagery.
T.S. ELIOT'S ARTISTIC AND SYMBOLISTIC USE OF THE BIBLICAL SYMBOLS

In the poetic work of T.S. Eliot, the Biblical material is at the center, but the poet does not deal with it directly. His symbols are very much traditional. As T.S. Pearce remarks that "for the most part Eliot's symbols are more nearly to the conventional symbols..." The Bible, Christian literature and Christian myths are the main source for his traditional symbols. He has made use of the Biblical symbols Cross, rock, fire, Garden, desert, logos, water, stairs, animals such as lion, tiger, leopard, dog, dove and snake, colours such as red, violet, white, blue. He has also used spring and winter to symbolize spiritual experience.

Symbolic Use of "Rock" in T.S. Eliot's Work

T.S. Eliot has made artistic and symbolic use of the symbol of rock which is a profound symbol standing for God. Prior to considering Eliot's symbolic meanings which are variant in their context, it is of great worth to enhance our understanding in brief about the rock-symbol in the Bible in order to gain the spirit in which T.S. Eliot has used the same. In the Old Testament rock (sela and sur) symbolizes the security and defense of a steep and inaccessible refuge. It is also used of an immovable foundation. To remove 'the rock' is equivalent to shaking the world. In an interplay of these symbols it is found that God is spoken of as a rock.
Biblical Symbolic Meaning of Rock:

In the Holy Bible "Rock-symbol" has been used with various meanings in their different contexts:

1. Rock symbolically stands for God the Father and God the Son Jesus Christ as well. In I Corinthians 10:4 St. Paul says: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them that Rock was Christ.

   a. Christ is Rock of Stability. He never changes. Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever" (Hebrew 13:8). The one trust in him and build his house upon this rock will have stability.

   b. He is Rock of strength. In Psalm 62:2 David declares: In God is my salvation and my glory. "He is only my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved." And he adds, "He is only my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my Glory, the rock of my strength; my refuge is in God." (Psalm 62:6-7).

   c. Christ is the Rock of our standing. David again declares in Psalm 40:2, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit; our
of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings."

d. Christ is the Rock of Safety. In Psalm 61:2,3 David says: "When my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy." He again declares in Psalm 94:22, "But the Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge."

e. Christ is the rock of Supply: God split the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers. . . . Behold, he smote the rock, that the water gushed out, and the stream overflowed." (Psalm 78:15, 16, 20). In Deutonomy we read that God "made his to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock," (Deutonomy 32:13).

f. He is the Rock of Satisfaction. In Isaiah 32:2 there is a Messianic Prophecy which reads:

 Ana a man shall be like and hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; rivers of water in a dry place, like shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Christ is the smitten rock, and Water from this Divine smitten rock brings complete satisfaction.
T.S. Eliot has used the rock-symbol with these depth spiritual allegorical meanings when he says, "There is shadow under this red rock, come under the shadow of this red rock. Here the rock is a refuse. To borrow the words of Cleanth Brooks, "Rock here is a place of refuge." Red is used as an adjective in a very significant way. The rock is red. Red is a colour symbol standing for blood-sacrifice. Christ is the red rock because he laid his life on the cross. He offered his precious blood which made him red. Even in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He prayed in agony, his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke 22:39-46). Here is a very close allusion to the prophecy of Isaiah according to which Christ will be like a shadow on a great rock in the weary land. Keeping this symbolic expression in his mind T.S. Eliot declares to the waste landers who are wandering in the wilderness, weary land, that there is a shadow in this red rock and they should come under the shadow of this red rock for stability, strength, standing, safety, supply and satisfaction. Christ is the rock of refuge. He is the shelter.

A Godless man is weary and tiresome. The modern man whether he accept it or not, but it is a bare naked fact of his life that he is in urgent need of a shelter. Christ, the red rock, offers an open invitation to such, "come unto me, all ye that labor and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls," (Matthew 11:28-29). Helen Gardner says:
The image is purposely vague and terrifying. We may be reminded of Isaiah's vision: 'A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land', but the rock here looms menacing and red, and in its deep shadow there is no comfort but the terror of our mortality. \(^59\)

Helen Gardner has grossly misunderstood the line "come in under the shadow of this red rock' in stating that 'there is no comfort, but the terror of our mortality." Eliot's prophetic concern was to show the degenerated man that outside the red rock there is terror but under the rock comfort for weary souls. With a prophetic mission T.S. Eliot is extending on behalf of the red rock this invitation to the tired.

2. Red rock also stands for the Church. Christ is the visible body of Christ. Always, there may be few exceptions, the church building is washed with red or crimcion or scarlet which reminds of the red rock smitten on the cross. According to the Catholic faith, salvation is possible only within the Church. Outside the Church there is no salvation. Jesus said, "And other sheep I have, they are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and their shall be one fold, and one shepherd,"(John 10:16). So when Eliot says, "There is a shadow under the red rock,"(Come
under the shadow of this red rock," he used the red rock evidently meaning the Church. There is shadow in the Church. He did not mean the denomination, but the Catholic Church which is historical in its origin continuing with the traditions of apostles and saints. Regeneration is possible for the degenerated inhabitants of the waste land only under the shadow of the red rock. They must come under the red rock.

3. Rock also stands for St. Peter of every age, When Jesus asked the disciples, saying to them, "who do men say that I am?". And they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, 'Elizah', and others, one of the prophets." And Jesus said to them, "But who says ye that I am?. And Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said:

And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against.

(Matthew 16:13-19, Mark 8:27-30)

According to the Catholic tradition, the Church is built upon St. Peter who is the rock. In Greek "Petros" means a stone, and "Petra" means a massive rock. This rock is red because he followed the path of the Great Master, Rock of Salvation, and became martyr. So the Church is built upon the red rock who may be any Peter of any age. There is continuation in building of the Church so also the martyrdom of Peters, like that of Bishop Thomas Becket which copiously gets
revised by T.S. Eliot in the *Murder in the Cathedral*. Under the red rock there is shadow, because saints die not only to save themselves but to save others who come under their shadow. So red rock stand not only St. Peter of the New Testament, as the Catholic believe, but also for the every martyr. And T.S. Eliot meant not only St. Peter of the historical past, but also the Peter of every age, therefore he says in "The Rock":

```
But the man that is will shadow
The man that pretends to be.
And the Son of Man was not crucified once for all,
The blood of the martyrs not shed once for all,
The lives of the Saints not given once for all:
But the Son of man is crucified always
And there shall be Martyrs and Saints.
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(C.P.P., p.106)

There will always be red rocks which will shadow the man who quests for regeneration and salvation.

T.S. Eliot has also used the rock-symbol in symbolistic and expressionistic manner with a satirical and ironical spirit. When the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt, they were thirsty and dying without water. They cried to God for water and God asked Moses to ask the rock for the water to drink, but Moses struck/smote the rock twice with his rock. Thus the thirst of murmuring Israelites was quenched. But Eliot, the Moses of his degenerated age, witnessed something different than the experience of Moses, the Prophet of God. In the waste land, which may rightly be taken for the wilderness, there is rock but without water. The modern man has left and "forsaken the fountain of living water and
hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13). Eliot finds that:

Men have left God not for other gods, they say,
but for no god; and this has never happened before
That men both deny gods and worship gods,
professing first Reason,
And then Money, and Power, and what they call life, or Race or Dialectic.
The Church disowned, the tower overthrown,
the bells up turned, what we have to do
But stand with empty hands and plans turned upwards
In an age which advances progressively backwards?

(C.P.P., p.108)

In the wilderness wherein people have left the Rock, the smitten rock there will be no water to drink. In satirical manner but with his grieved heart Eliot observes in The Waste Land:

Here is no water but only rock
Rock and no water and the sandy road
The road winding above the mountains
Which are mountains of rock without water
If there were water we should stop and drink
Amongst the rock one cannot stop and think
Sweat is dry and feet are in the sand
If there were water amongst the rock

(C.P.P., p.47)

Unlike the smitten rock, the rock in the waste land is not the fountain of water. It has nothing to offer to the thirsty soul.

Hence such rock is of no use and should not be considered as rock any more according to Eliot’s prophetic observation. Eliot says:

If there were water
And no rock
If there were rock
And also water
And water
A spring
A pool among the rock
If there were sound of water only
Not the cicada
And dry grass singing
But sound of water only a rock
Where the hermit-thrush sings in the pine trees
Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop
But there is no water.

(C.E.P., p.47-48)

This hermit-thrush is already symbolized by Walt Whitman as a symbolic of death. It holds the gargling whistle of water in its sweet voice but like Eliot's thunder which withholds all the elements clustered in itself on the top of the mountain, the hermit-thrush too withholds the spiritual ablation in its glottis. The whole experience is quite tentalizing and painful thereof.

4. Rock-symbol also stands for sterility and unfertility. Jesus gave a parable of the sower and the soil. In this parable He talked about three kinds of soil—the soil of the wayside, the soil of the stony or rocky ground, and good soil. In his private explanation he told the symbolic meaning of the parable specially of the different kinds of soil, which stands for man's heart. So a rock upon which some seeds fell and as they sprang up, they withered away, also with its symbolic meaning stands for sterile of human heart. So when Eliot makes reference of the dry rock in Ash Wednesday, and in Dry Salvages also most probably he means sterility of human heart as well as the dead institutional church which is dry as rock and without water or life as dry bones. He writes in Ash Wednesday:
Who then made strong the fountains and made
fresh the springs
Made cool the dry rock and made firm the sand

(C.P.P., p.64)

So it is the Lord who makes the sterile heart fertile. God can change
the stony heart into the heart of flesh, if the dry bones allow Him to
work in their life.

Eliot also makes mention of blue rocks. Blue is a colour symbol
standing for heavenly status. Eliot writes:

And are terrified and cannot surrender
And affirm before the world and deny between
the rocks
In the last desert between the last blue rocks

5. Rock-symbol also stands for the mounting problems in one's
spiritual life. There come so many difficulties and
discouragements on the quester's way as massive rocks hindering
his spiritual triumphant march. This meaning becomes obvious
when Eliot prays to the Blessed Mother:

Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, Mother
and spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated
And let my cry come unto Thee.

(C.P.P., p.67)
What Cleanth Brooks write about the rock symbol is worth quoting in this context. He writes: "rock throughout the poem seems to be one of the desert symbols."

Fire symbol

Fire symbol is much traditional and religious. Fire is the emblem of God's work (Jeremiah 23:29; Act 2:3). Fire is the instrument of God's judgement, (Genesis 19:24; Exodus 9:23; Levitations 10, Number 11:1, 16:35; 2 Kings 1:10) Amos 7:4:2 Thess. 1:8 Rev. 8:8). Fire also stands for hell—which is everlasting fire (Deutronomy 32:22; Isaiah 33:14; 66:24; Mark 9:44; Jude 7; Rev. 20:10. It also stands for God who is a consuming fire (Hebrew 12:29). The fire stands for the presence of God. He answered by fire (king 18:24). Fire is also the symbol of lust. It is also the symbol of the Holy Ghost. In the New Testament when the early Christian prayed and waited upon the Lord for the comforter, in Jerusalem, the Holy Ghost came upon the disciples as the tongues of fire (Act. 2:1-4). Eliot in "Little Gidding" used the fire symbol with the intension to mean the Holy Ghost:

Water and fire succeed  
The town, the pasture and the weed.  
Water and fire deride  
The sacrifice we denied.  
Water and fire shall not  
The marred foundations we forgot,  
Of sanctuary and choir.  
This is the death of water and fire.  

...  

After the dark dove with the flickering tongue  
Hand passed below the horizon of his homing  
While the dead leaves still rattled on like tia.

(C.P.P., p.146)
In the above passage water and fire both are symbols of the Holy Ghost. Here the symbols are used in ironical and satirical manner. The modern pseudo-believers or Christians profess to believe and talk of the Holy Ghost who is one of the Truine Godhead. Mainly the true mission of the Holy Ghost is to affirm the sacrifice the innocent Lamb of God has offered on the Cross on behalf of the sinners to save them from the pit of death. He enables the sinner to believe and accept the efficacy of the sacrifice and respond positively "the importunity of the blood", (Animula: C.P.P. p. 71). But Eliot finds the stiff-naked the Holy Ghost is derided, and denied the Lamb's sacrifice.

Hence this is the death of both water and fire. Because the one who denies the Person of the Holy Ghost, is dead. For the dead in sin the Holy spirit is also dead. Hence they are in bondage of sin and death living in the fire which is hell. So the only hope for redemption from the fire of hell is to make a choice between the two fires: the Holy Ghost and the pleasure of the flesh which is also symbolized by the fire symbol leading to the eternal fire. Eliot rightly says in "Little Gidding":

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The only hope, or the else despair
Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre-
To be redeemed from fire by fire.
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(PQ. C.P.P. p. 144)

This is the age of the Holy Ghost. One behalf of the Lord, God the Father and God the Son, Holy Ghost is functioning and executing the
redemptive work, which Christ had started while He was on the earth with His redemptive mission. So one has to make the choice of the fire to be redeemed from the fire. If the believers walk by the fire—the Holy Ghost, they are no longer the debtors of the fire to fulfil the lust of the flesh and thus to remain in the eternal fire. No man can redeem himself from the fire, but the Fire. T. S. Eliot says:

The intolerable shirt of flame
Which human power cannot remove.
We only live, only suspire
Consumed by either fire or fire.

(Ibid.)

Both the fires are consuming. The Holy Ghost consumes the believers preparing them for eternal life while the unbelievers are consumed by the fire of the flesh leading them to the eternal fire. So the fire sermon is also the symbolic in which fire is used to mean the lust. To put it in the words of Prof. P. S. Sastri, "The Fire Sermon speaks of the sterile and painful burning of the senses of the desires and thoughts, and of all objects."61

The role of the Fire is to make the communion of the saints dead in the history alive to the present believers.

You are not here to verify, Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity Or carry report. You are here to kneel Where prayer has been valid. And prayer is more Than an order of words, the conscious occupation Of the praying mind, or the sound of the voice praying. And what the dead had no speech for, when living,
They can tell you, being dead: the communication
Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the
language of the living.

(Ibid., p. 139)

Hence T.S. Eliot has used the Fire Symbol with its Biblical symbolic
force in an artistic symbolists manner. What T.S. Pearce says about
the fire symbol is worth quoting. He says:

Fire is either purgative or pentecostal. It
either represents a burning away of corruption
and decay, or the arrival of a saving and
purifying grace. In other words, it retains its
traditional symbolic force, as the destroying
fire of Hell, refining fire of purgatory, or
the inspiring fire of Holy spirit.

In the Fire Sermon, "the fire is the sterile burning of lust," to
borrow the words of Cleanth Brooks. Infact the waste landers are
burning with the fire of lust and sensual passion. What Hugh Kenner
writes in this connection is worth considering. He says "The Fire
Sermon" closes with a burning that images the restless lust of
nymphs, the heirs of city directors, Mr. Eugenides, the typist and the
youngman carbuncular, the Thames daughters. They are unaware that
they burn ... They burn nevertheless.

Garden-Symbol:

As Northrope Frye opines, "Desert and garden are central symbols in our
literary and religious tradition."

In the Holy Bible there
is Garden imagery such as the garden of Eden, the garden of Gathsamane (John 18:1). Apart from these two gardens they are some more references to the gardens as the garden of herbs (Deutronomy 11:10) 1 Kings 21:2). In the song of Solomon the bride is compared to a garden (5:1, 6:2) Zion is compared to a garden which is without water (Isaiah 1:30). God promised to restore the house of Jacob as a watered garden (Isaiah 58:11). The redeemed souls are compared to a watered garden (Jeremiah 31:12). Garden in a sense stands for fertility (Isaiah 61:11). God asked the captives in Babylon to plant garden and eats its fruits. So it stands for prosperity and blessings (Jeremiah 29:5). Eliot has used the Biblical allusion of garden in his poetry. In "The Burial of the Dead" Eliot writes:

You gave me hycinths first a year ago;
They called me the hycinth girl.
Yet when we came back, late from the hycinth garaden,

(C.P.P., p.38).

The hycinth garden is extremely beautiful but the experience which takes place is sterile of horror. In "What the Thunder Said" Eliot makes use of the Biblical allusion of the garden of Gathsamane:

After the torchlight red on sweaty faces
After the frosty silence in thy garden
After the agony in stony places

(C.P.P., p.47)

In Ash Wednesday Eliot writes:

The single rose
Is now the Garden
Where all loves end
Terminate Torment
Of love unsatisfied
The greater torment of
Of love satisfied
End of the endless
Journey to no end
Conclusion of all that
Is inconclusible
...
Grace to the Mother
For the Garden
Where all love ends.

(C.P.P., p.62)

Allusion of a garden is also in the following lines of Ash Wednesday:

Who who walked between the violet and the violet
Who walked between
The various ranks of green
Goin in white and blue, in Mary's colour
Talking of trivial things
In ignorance and in knowledge of eternal dolour
Who moved among the others as they walked,
Who then made strong the fountains and made fresh the springs.

(C.P.P., p.64)

In the third section of Ash Wednesday Eliot refers to the garden in the desert:

The desert in the garden the garden in the desert
Of drouth, spitting from the mouth the withered apple-seed.

(C.P.P., p.66)

In the fourth section of Ash Wednesday there is the Biblical allusion—
allusion to the Garden of Gethsemane:
This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams across
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree
Drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.

(Ch. P.P., p. 66)

In his Four Quartets there is more allusions and references to the garden:

There they were, dignified, invisible,
Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves,
In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air,
And the bird called, in response to
The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,
And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses
Hand the look of flowers that are looked at.

(Burnt Norton, C.P.P., p. 118)

In the second section of Burnt Norton there is again reference of the rose garden:

To be conscious is not to be in time
But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,
The moment in the arbour where the rain beat.

(FQ C.P.P., p. 119)

In East Coker there is allusion to the Garden of Gathsemane:

Whisper or running streams, and winter lighting.
The wild thyme unseen and the wild strawberry,
The laughter in the garden. Echoed ecstasy
Not lost, but requiring pointing to the agony
Of death and birth.

(F. C. I. P., p. 127)

Here the garden image presents the agony of soul.
Hence "the gardens tend to be the places where significant things happen, experiences of special meaning to the people concerned, experiences which simply further possibilities of life not yet realized, or perhaps messed. The gardens have the special poignancy of the what-might-have been."

In the Bible garden symbol is very prominent—Garden of Eden, Garden of Gathesamene. Eliot was also made elaborate use of the Garden symbol. Eliot writes in his *Four Quartets*:

> Footballs echo in the memory  
> Down the passage which we did not take  
> Towards the door we never opened  
> Into the rose-garden. My words echo  
> Thus, in your mind.  

*(C.P.F., p.117)*

The key note of the passage is the rose-garden. Eliot has used this rose garden imagery symbolically in much of his poetry. In the various portions of his poetry this image gives different meanings. But here it seems to function in a double sense, one as an actual place rose-garden and the symbol of those worldly experiences which reveals the immanent character of the ultimate reality. The rose-garden symbolizes the meeting of eternal and temporal. There are many echoes in the Garden, other than the echo of the Logos, which mean temporal. The echo of the satan is deceptive which led Adam and Eve to disobey God and to their excommunication from the Garden of Eden. There is the echo of Logos. There is also the echo of the
bird to dishonest and deceitful person and also to the persons who can
see the reality of the roses, for the roses have "the look of the
flowers that are looked at..." This bird is the messenger of Truth.
This bird is none other than the dove which is the symbol of the
Holy Spirit, which is the bearer of Truth at the present age. It
tells us that the echoes in the rose-garden with life and that life
itself is the manifestation of something which more than mere flux.
This bird also knows that the man will not agree to that which is
true:

Go, go, go, said the bird, human kind
Cannot bear very much reality.

(C.P.P., p.118)

In his Four Quartets, the crisis is more spiritual rather than
temporal. It concerns with the state of man to start with the Garden
of Eden and to end within the heaven where man potentially hopes to go
and settle. Here the temporal scheme works, unlike in The Waste Land,
concentrates upon imaginatively picturising the life particulars in
the Garden of Eden with a possible suggestion that it is romantically a
place of exquisiteness and ecstasy. Since the garden of Eden is in
heaven it considered as the original home of man. Since all human
endeavour, spiritually speaking, is directed towards reaching heaven,
it all amounts to aspiring to revisit the home; practically speaking
the home of Adam is the Garden of Eden, itself. Therefore, in all his
Four Quartets there is a suggestion of the past and the present being
involved in a unified manner, again spiritually speaking, for the
purpose of approaching the future.

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,

(Ibid.)

In the ultimate sense time past, time present and time future standing for the Garden of Eden, the earth and the Garden of Eden again in name of heaven, become highly abstract symbols. The symbols are significantly expressionistic. The garden, into which Eliot as a spiritual dreamer enters, and the bird hasten him go further into the garden are. significantly symbolic of his religious aspirations. The poem directly celebrates the garden. Here emerging into the garden amounts to travelling back home.

Since the whole formate is metaphysical, the garden too is metaphysical and suggests about very comfortable nature of the original abode of man that is the Garden of Eden, in the context of the poem the garden of "Burnt Norton". After his brief speculation on time duly decided into past present, future, Eliot poetically built himself faith into the rose-garden. The rose garden is the symbolic manner of suggesting the Garden of Eden. The rose-garden of Eliot is the imaginative reconstruction of the Garden of Eden.
Some time in summer of 1934, Eliot visited Gloucestershire. He found there an uninhabitated mansion built on the site of the an ecuian country house, which was rather built some two hundred years ago. He also wandered in its deserted garden. The archaic interest of T.S. Eliot in visiting the house and moving in the garden are appreciable but a greater appreciation has to be paid for the manner in which the expressive symbolism of description vaguely, but strongly brings a metaphysical dream for his inner spiritual experience. It is almost a vision into which he was literary walking:

Other echoes
Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow?
Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,
Round the corner, Through the first gate,
Into our first world, shall we follow
The deception of the thrush? I not our first world.
There they were, dignified, invisible,
Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves,
In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air,
And the bird called, in response to
The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,
And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses
Had the look of flowers that are looked at.

(C.P.F., p.118)

It is at once the formal deserted rose garden that he visited in Gloucestershire and the Garden of Eden into which the bird hastened him, and into which the poet hastens us with his "Shall we follow" In stating that the journey would be into the first world where our ancestors were dignifiedly preserved invisible suggests at the garden which was inhabited by Adam and Eve in the heaven. Literal going back to the heaven is not possible for man, but according to the
spiritual conviction of Eliot we could reach there emotionally by following their scriptures and by following their faith of religion. Sinful man or the fallen man cannot enter the Garden of Eden with his mortal body. Only the spirit can hear the unheard music and thus regain the lost eternity in God's blissful garden. Regaining the lost paradise or the Garden of Eden is only possible by God's grace. When once one enters the rose-garden all the doubts that usually stick to the human self organism probably get suspended. We become almost as eternal as the roses themselves which are so carefully cared and looked after God himself and eternalized. So the roses are the symbols of the redeemed souls. Souls redeemed by and watered by the blood of the Lamp of God, the Eternal Logos, are eternal and permanent inhabitants of the Garden of Eden. Roses appear as our own souls, which become the original inhabitants of the primaeval garden.

Rose garden is also the place of rest and peace. What T.S. Eliot Pearce Writes is worth considering:

The garden becomes specially the rose garden in The four Quartets most prominent in Burnt Norton, where it signifies a place of release from the bondage of earth and time, a place of order and beauty, relieved of suffering and futility.67

Logos-Symbol

T.S. Eliot has profoundly used the symbol of Logos as John the evangelist has used to introduce the historical Jesus, like St.
John, Eliot has introduced his readers to the Word (Gk. Logos) whom he identified with Jesus Christ. The term Logos was used among the Stoics in describing the principle of divine reason (logos spermatikos) which caused the natural creation to grow. The Idea was much more fully developed as distinct entity in the Writings of Philo where it is used of the instrument through which the world was created. Nevertheless Philo never conceived as a person, nor did he explicitly claim its pre-existence to the world. Philo denied the incarnation of the Word while St. John asserted that the Word had become flesh. St. John stressed the incarnation of the Logos in the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. For the wastelanders "the gift half understood is Incarnation," (Four Quartets: C.P.P., p.136). Many rejected the Incarnation of the Word and it was as if losing its saving efficacy. So Eliot, with a prophetic mission to re-install the divine efficacy of the Incarnation, used the ancient symbol 'Logos' with a fresh vision though with a petic and artistic style in expressionistic manner. In his "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service" Eliot brought out the Incarnation theory pretty well:

In the beginning was the Word.  
In the beginning was the Word.  
Superfetation of  

(C.P.P., p. 34)

In Ash Wednesday which is a Christian poem Eliot says:
If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
If the unheard, unspoken
Word is unspoken, unheard;
Still is the unspoken word, the Word unheard,
The Word without a word, the Word within
The world and for world;
And the light shown in darkness and
Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
About the centre of the silent Word.

(C.P.P., p. 65)

In A Song For Simeon, Eliot says:

Let the Infant, the still unspoken Word,
Grant Israel consolation
To one who had eighty years and no to-morrow.

(C.P.P., p. 70)

In Choruses from The Rock Eliot Writes:

The endless cycle of idea and action,
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;
Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.
All our knowledge brings us nearer to death,
But nearness to death no nearer to God.

(C.P.P., p. 96)

With a prophetic vision Eliot notes the pathetic futility of worldly expedients against the divine visitation. The modern man is ignorant of the Word made flesh. Incarnation of the Logos is the God's intervention in the human history to save the wastelands. The sinners who are devoid of abundant life that God wants to give.

Logos is the symbol of Incarnation and this "Incarnation is the spiritual center of these last three poems in Ash Wednesday." as Helen Garden expresses.

In the works of T.S. Eliot, water with its symbolic values has a prominent place. It is first of all symbolically the source and strength of life. Without it the earth is nothing but an arid desert, a land of hunger and thirst, where man and beasts are doomed to death. But there are also water of death: the destructive flood that overruns the earth and swallows up the living. Finally in cultic ablution which is taken over as a custom of domestic life, water purifies persons and cleanses of the stains incurred in the course of every day life. Thus water is almost closely intermingled with human life and the history of the people of the covenant. T.S. Eliot uses water very symbolically in his poem:

Here is no water but only rock
Rock and no water and the sandy road
The road winding above among the mountains
Which are mountains of rock without water
If there were water we should stop and drink
Among the rock one cannot stop or think
Sweat is dry and feet are in the sand,
Dead mountain mouth or curious teeth that cannot spit
Here one can neither stand nor lie nor sit
There is not even silence in the mountains
But Red sullen faces sneer and snarl
From doors of mudcracked houses
    If there were water

And no rock
If there were rock
And also water
And water
A spring
A pool among the rock
If there were the sound of water only
Not the cicada
And dry grass singing
But sound of water over a rock
Where the hermit-thrush sings in the pine trees
Drip drop drip drop drip drop drop drop
But there is no water.

(The Waste Land, C.P.P., p. 47-48)

One required to know briefly the meaning of water in the history of the people of God to understand T.S. Eliot's use of water as symbol.

1. Water and Temporal Retribution:

If God grants and denies the water according to his good pleasures, he nevertheless does not do it arbitrarily but according to the conduct of His people. Accordingly as they remain faithful or not to the covenant, God grants or denies water. If the Israelites live according to the divine law and obey and voice of God, God opens the heaven to bestow rain in good seasons.

If you walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them then I will given you rain in due season... And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all His commandments which I commanded thee this day...

The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasures, the heaven to give the rain unto thy lands in its season... (Deuteronomy 28:1,12)

Water is, then, the effect and sign of blessings of God towards those who serve Him faithfully. Dryness is an effect of the divine curse towards godless people.
And water shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. (Isaiah 19:5 f)
Thus says the Lord; Behold, I will plead thy Cause, and take vengeance for thee, and dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.
(Jeremiah 51:36)

Moreover son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they shall eat bread with care and weight: and they shall drink water by measure, and with concentration that they may lack bread and water . . . . (Ezekiel 4:16-17)

So T.S. Eliot, the son of man, saw there was not a single drop of water. Absence of water testifies God's wrath for the modern waste-landers are the object of God's wrath. Jerusalem means house of peace—but there is no peace due to the lack of water. The sweet fellowship of God has been withdrawn from the indwellers. Because of the broken fellowship and alienation with the 'Still Point' of Jerusalem, it is not still, but under sin. She is under God's fury. Jerusalem, the city of London, is lying waste and dry without living water. She has no longer God's favour and access to His divine grace.

2. Terrifying Water:

Water is not only or merely the power of life, but from the sea it reflects the demonical restlessness by their perpetual agitation. The sudden swelling of the West wind-blowing away the earth and living things during a storm (job 12:15, 40:23) symbolizes the misfortune that is prepared to fall upon man unexpectedly. Terrifying waters, then
symbolizes God's judgement and death to godless indwellers of the world. In the time of Noah flood brought destruction for the world. The title 'Death By Water' does manifest the aspects of terrifying in water.

3. Purifying Water:

The symbolism of water as a sign of purification and of life is too frequent in the history of religion. In the Old Testament the purifying role of water is very evident. It appeared in many events of sacred history. In numerous cases of impurity the law imposes ritual ablutions which purify and make men fit for worshipping God (Number 19:2-10, (Deutronomy 23:10-f). The prophet proclaimed a pouring forth of water which cleanses from sin (Zech. 13:1). These practice symbolised the cleansing of the heart and achieved it when they were joined with some sentiments of repentance. According to Josephus, the ritual baths are common among the Essenes, as well as in the Community of Damascus and Qumran. It is a daily assurance, and expresses one's endeavour toward a pure life and his longing for purifying grace. They submerged themselves in the water.

These different bodily or physical purifications were to signify the interior purification of the heart-essential to the one who wished to draw near to the Most Holy God. So in T.S. Eliot's use of water symbol one can grasp the fact that as a prophet he watched the
waste-landers. He finds absence of purifying water. To quote T.s. Pearce, "Water especially as rain signifies a relief from the desiccation of the spirit, though in the form of sea, it is again likely to mean a purgative cleaning force." There is no purity of life. No one seeks God. Modern man does not wish to draw nearer to God - the Holy God. So there is no purifying water available to them. Purification is beyond their desire. Absence of water does show the absence of waste-landers' wish for purification - morally or spiritually.

4. Regenerating Water:

The theme of the symbolic water, finally, holds an important place in the perspective of restoration of the people of God. After the gathering of the people dispersed, God will distribute in all abundance the purifying waters which will cleanse the heart of man and thus enable him to fulfill faithfully and completely the law of Yahweh.

The water that the prophet Ezekiel sees rising from the temple symbolizes the life giving power of God. Water also stands for the Holy Spirit. Water as the source of life symbolizes God. Water stands for regeneration or spiritual revival of man. As a prophet T.S. Eliot wants to hear the sound of water but he finds no water - is no spiritual awareness. No spirit of God covering the waste-landers. Out of the rock water came in the wilderness, but in the waste land
there is no water but rock. Here rock symbolizes the church. Chapel is empty. Existing churches were empty devoid of living water. So many thirsty souls did not get water to quench their thirst. Even T.S. Eliot's thirst was not satisfied till he reached the spring of water. Very close to the water symbol is concept of regeneration. Prophet Ezekiel wrote, "I (God) will sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean from all your filthiness . . . (36:25).

To conclude what T.S. Pearce says is worth quoting here. He writes: "In Eliot's imagination sea is also prominent. In The Love song of Alfred J Prufrock looks to the sea and mermaids as a way of escape from his drab and pointless life. In The Waste Land the sea penses away all the sinful lust of the flesh which have conceived it. In The Dry Salvages, the sea represents time, in its aspect of a continuing flow or flux." 71

Desert-Symbol.

The symbol of desert is very central in our literary and religious tradition. As Northrop Frye puts it that "desert and garden are central symbols in our literary and religious tradition, . . . " 72 Symbol of the desert in the Bible is not sterility, solitude and loneliness. When God's people sinned against Him, he turned them to be a desert-like. They were like a watered garden symbolising life but without the fountain of living water the garden turned to be desert. T.S. Eliot has used the symbol of desert in his poetry with its Biblical symbolic implication in a prophetic suggestive manner. The symbol of desert serves the poet's purpose to create the images of death and sterility. While garden is the symbol of fertility desert
of sterility. To quote T.S. Peare, "... deserts, dust dryness where ever they appear tend to symbolize the desiccation of the spirit, though sometimes they may hint at some kind of purgation." 73

In 'H's Ash Wednesday Eliot writes:

The desert in the garden the garden in the desert Of drought spitting from the mouth with the withered apple-seed.

(C.P.P., p. 66)

Desert for T.S. Eliot is a matter of mutual discardent of the element--earth, water, air and fire. The mutual antogonism and discard is understandable. Fire opposite of fire, earth stands in opposition with the air, but the created world comes out of a proportionate admixture of these primal elements. Last book of The Waste Land celebrates the thunder which however is admixture of all three elements of fire, air and water. In The Waste Land, the thunder is fixed on the top of the mountain it never gets sublimated, diluted into most required rain for the earth to become fertile. In due seperation of the earth from the other elements culminates into the Waste land. Eliot wants to suggest that every man's life in our time is figured into a process of elemental discard which is to say that there is no concord and balance of elemental potentiality. Life's activity depends upon its fertility and its capacity to germinate. Germination in nature is a cyclic phenomenon of nature. But the elements discard is the most unbearable phenomena of the
present day life of man. The inner vital spiritual force which ultimately balances the elemental potentiality is coming to be a non-unity because of the essential loss of human capacity to believe and trust is symbolically suggested by T.S. Eliot as a result of spiritual incapacities in the modern man. Faith in the higher values is the essential requisite of the time. Without this sort of faith, life turns to be desert.

**Stair Symbols:**

Is The Bible Jacob saw ladder in heaven. So also the poet has seen the stair way and climbed the same. He has used the symbols of stair in various contexts. Alfred J Prufrock says:

> And indeed there will be time
> To wonder, "Do I dare?" and "Do I dare?"
> Time to turn back and descend the stair,

*(C.P.P., p. 4)*

As Northrop Frye rightly comments, "Prufrock wonders if there is time to turn back and descend the stair." 74

In *Portrait of a Lady* Eliot Writes:

> The October night comes down; returning as before
> Except for a slight sensation of being ill at ease
> I mount stairs and turn the hundle of the door
> And I feel as if I had mounted on my hands and knees.

*(C.P.P., p. )*
After climbing the stairway the narrator realizes of the thick darkness of his self-possession. He confessed:

My self-possession flares up for a second; This is I had reckoned.

To put it again in the words of Frye, "the narrator in Portrait of A Lady nearly loses his precious self possession at the top of his lady's stair." 75

In Rhapsody on A Windy Night the Lamp said:

Four O'Clock
Here is the number on the door.
Memory!
You have the key,
Little lamp spreads a ring on the stair.
In "The Boston Evening Transcript" the narrator says:
When even quickness faintly in the street Wakening the appetites of life in some And to others bringing the Boston Evening Transcript, I mount the steps and ring the bell, . . .

(C.P.P., p. 16)

What Northrop says is worth quoting. He says that "the narrators of Rhapsody on a Windy Night and The Boston Evening Transcript make their assignations with time and life at the top of the steps." 76

In La Figlia Che Piove the narrator says:
Stands on the highest pavement of the stair-
Lean on a garden urn-
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair-

(C.P.P., p.20)

In "Burbank with a Baedeker; Bleistrin with a cigar" Princess Volpine climbs stairway. Eliot writes:

Princess Volupine extends
A meagre, blue-nailed, phthisic hand
To climb the water-stair . . . .

(Ibid., p. 24)

She climbs "the water-stair to dessert Burbank for Klein." 77

In "A game of chess" in The Waste Land the lover climbs the stair.

... staring forms
Leaned out, leaning, hushing the room enclosed.
Footsteps shuffled on the stair.

(Ibid., p. 40)

In "The Fire Sermon" in The Waste Land the small house agent's clerk climbs the stairway come to the lady typist. After indulging in an indifferent love-making, rather unwelcomed love-making, "he gropes his way, finding the stairs unlit..." (Ibid., p.44).

Above cited references of the stairway is infernal. Frye is right in stating that the stairway appears in the infernal vision in many
Ironic on texts usually connected with failure in love. In Ash Wednesday there is more evidence of stair-symbols. Here it is not used in ironical context but in his "purgatorial vision." Eliot says:

At the first turning of the second stair
I turned and saw below
The same shape twisted on the banister
Under the vapour in the fetid air
Struggling with the devil of the stairs who wears
The deceitful face of hope and despair.

(C.F.P., p. 63)

As Jacob dreamed and wrestled with the angel, the poet sees himself as if he is fighting not with the angel but the devil, He is "in a lower world fighting the demon of hope and despair." Helen Gardner rightly says:

The image of stairs is traditional and obvious and three temptations are vivid and unambiguous. The struggle with the devil of the stairs who wears the deceitful face of hope and despair.
Round the turn of the next stair, emerging from this darkness, the world suddenly appears, as through a window entrancingly beautiful . . . . This successive moods, or well known psychological states, we can call the temptations to self absorption, self disgust, and self indulgence, or we can see them as hinderance to sincerity, and contrition and love.81

Duncan Jones in an essay on Ash Wednesday connects the three stairs not with the ascent of purgatorial mount in The Divine Comedy which are interpreted allegorically as sincerity, contrition and love and anagogically as contrition, confession, and expiation by the blood of Christ.82 The stair-symbol is also associated with Dante's Purgatorial mount in his Divine Comedy. What F.O. Matthiessen writes about the symbol is worth quoting in this context. He says:

The symbol of the stair is perfectly concrete whether or not we identify it with Dante's Purgatorial mount. For in either case, the rhythms give us the feeling of difficult climbing movement, and each turning of stairs a district stage of spiritual struggle.83

The obsession with self, "the inability of the individual to escape from the bonds of his own indentity is represented by the first turning. The damp blackness of the second turning represents the state of mind . . . the utter emptiness . . . ."84 and the third turning the poet presents the "stage of struggle-forgetting his despair in a glimpse of the lovingness-possible in this world, and looking how something beyond hope and despair to faith which small sustain him, to his salvation through grace.85 T.S. Elliot's images are "exact and
suggestive in their portrayal of these three spiritual stages."

Animals-Symbols

In The Bible animals are used with their symbolic meanings, implications and significance. Snake, dove, leopards, lions, tiger, horse, dog, wolf, eagle, all are the Biblical symbols. T.S. Eliot has used these symbols with their traditional implications for his own artistic purpose. In The Bible, snake stands for Satan, devil and also for Christ. Dove symbolizes the Holy Ghost. Lion stands for many things—terror, for Israelites and the divided kingdoms (Ezekiel 19:1-9). It is also stands for courage and boldness of the righteous, as well as of the mighty (II Samuel 17:10). It is also linkeden to devil (I Peter 5:8), Psalm 10:9). The righteous are bold like lions. Revelation 5:5 portrays Jesus Christ as the lion of the tribe of Judah. In Eliot's use lion symbolizes: courage, boldness of the righteous like Thomas Backet, who could say, "It is the just man who like a bold lion, should be without fear./I am here," (C.P.P., p.213).

Tiger stands for terror and wrath. When T.S. Eliot says in "Gerontion", "In the juvescence of the year/Christ came the tiger." (C.P.P., p.21). The tiger image stands for the second coming of Jesus who will appear as the King and Judge with wrath and terror. Leopards is also symbolic in its use. It stands for God's wrath and is the agent of destruction of evil, thus the agent of purgation and purification. So Eliot's three leopards sitting under the juniper tree are the agents of purgation, and purification.
Hippopotamus

In the Book of Job a very and different and distinct animals, the hippopotamus is portrayed in the address of the Lord to the patriarch:

Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox. Lo now his strength is in his loins, and his force is the novel of his belly. He moveth his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his stones are wrapped together. His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God; he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him . . . . Behold he drinketh up a river and hasteneth not; he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. Job 40: 15-25.

The last verse may be better rendered;

"Will anyone capture him when in his sight? Will anyone bore his nostril in the snare?"

The hippopotamus is strictly herbivorous, and makes sad havoc among the rice fields and cultivated grounds when at night he issues forth from the reedy fens. His appetite is immense. The hippopotamus can cut the grass as neatly as if it were cut down with scythe, and it able to sever, as if with shears, a tolerably stout and thick stem. He feeds on the dry land, though an inhabitant of the waters, and searches the rising grounds near the rivers for his substance in company with the animals of the land. But his home is notthere; the whole of the day is spent under the shady cover of the marshes, or sleeping and snorting in still water, and in the long riches of rivers, often sinking to the bottom for a considerable time, and then rising to the surface, where
it floats motionless, with only its eyes and nostril above water. This animal is symbol of strength. It may be well said that T.S. Eliot is comparing the power of the world—power of flesh and blood and the Spiritual power—the power of the Spirit. Hippopotamus stands for the power of the flesh and blood and the Church for the power of the Holy Spirit, the Power of God.

The broad backed hippopotamus
Rests on his belly in the mud;
Although he seems firm to us
He is merely flesh and blood.

Hippopotamus seems firm and stable but it is not so because he is flesh and blood

Flesh and blood is weak and frail
Susceptible to nervous shock;

Though the hippopotamus is strong in its appearance, he is weak and frail. Wordly power, how firm it may seem, is ever and always weak. Flesh is corruptible while the spirit is incorruptible. Paul says:

"Have no confidence in flesh." (Phil 3:3)

The hippopotamus is the symbol of the physical dimension of man who insistently craves for animal pleasures. "Of what awaits the Church" would be for this hippopotamus, 'who can never reach/The Mango on the man tree' (C.P.P., p.30) impossible. If so Eliot wants to suggest that
the pre-occupation would not allow man to transcend from physical to the spiritual state. In the vision of the transcendence of the hyppopotamus, "I saw the 'Potamus take wing/Ascending from the damp savennas,' there is an abundant suggestion of irony. As in the case of "Sweeney among the Nightingles" there is that disgusting inter-mingling of the lower and the higher properties of life on the earth and in heaven. The final impression Eliot, by using the symbol of hyppopotamus in artistic and symbolistic manner, produced on the mind of the readers is all important. Man with his nasty physical dimensions and cravings, does not deserve even that imagined heaven of the poet.

Snake

Eliot has sincerely used this symbol with symbolistic implication variant in their contexts but reminiscent of the Biblical text. He has made use of the symbol of snake or the Old Serpent. Eliot writes in _The Rock_:

The great snake lies ever half awake, at the bottom of the pit of the world, curled in folds of himself until he awakens in hunger and moving his head to right and to left prepares his hour to devour But the Mystery of in.uity is a pit too deep for mortal eyes to plumb. Come Yet out from among those who prize the serpent's golden eyes, The worshippers, self-given sacrifice of the snake. Take you way and be ye separate.

(C.P.P., p. 112)
In the above passage, snake has been used symbolically with its two variant meanings. The great serpent stands for Satan, the prince of the darkness who is the demon of hope and despair, with whom Eliot fought vigorously. This is the Christian mythology that the serpent is lying in the pit, that is hell. It is reminiscent of Miltonic sublimity and heights of expression and imagery. It is more celebrated in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Milton speaks of internal serpent with a great fervent and reflects at the Biblical intensity of sin. Eliot too is doing more or less the same here but in quite a modern way. 'Then mystery of iniquity is a pit too deep for moral eyes to Plumb' says T.S. Eliot. The iniquity that T.S. Eliot speaks of concerns with the disownment of man by God. If so it is a metaphysical rebellion in the heart of the poet that speaks here, Eliot with a prophetic tone hasten the people, who accept the efficacy of the self-given sacrifice of the snake, from those 'who prize the serpent's golden eyes!' Here the 'serpent's golden eyes' symbolizes the worldly or sensual pleasure, which are cheap attractions for the flesh and blood. Self-given sacrifice of the snake stands for the self-given sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Snakes also stands for Christ. In the wilderness when the Israelites sinned against God, the poisonous snake, which is the symbol of sin and also the sensuousness and lust, but them and they began to die. Due to the fear of death, they came to Moses and asked for redemption. When they had repented God asked Moses to make the bronze serpent. Moses made the bronze serpent and put it on the pole, and it came to pass that anyone bitten by the poisonous snake, when they look at the bronze serpent, lived (Number 21:5-9). The bronze serpent is the typological symbol of Christ.
The dove was used as a symbol for all kinds of virtues. Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). Even in The Song of Solomon the bridegroom addresses the lady of love as dove. He says: "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song of Solomon 2:14). "My dove, my undefiled is but one (Ibid., 6:9)." In the Old Testament sacrificial system a pair of doves was offered by the Jews who could not afford to offer goat or lamb. Dove was sent out from the ark by Noah to know if the flood has ceased (Genesis 3:3). But these Biblical symbolic uses and meanings received far less attention of the students of the Bible. In the New Testament since the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus Christ as a dove, the dove is the symbol of the Holy Ghost. In the gospel accounts of St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. John and St. Luke it is mentioned. St. Mark writes:

And John (the Baptist)... preached, saying, 'There cometh one mightier than I after me the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop stoopstodynamic and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him... . . .

(Gospel according to St. Mark 1:6-11)
St. Luke accounts:

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him.

(The Gospel according to St. Luke 3:21-22)

Ever since the baptism of Jesus Christ the dove has become the symbol of the Holy Ghost in the Church History. So even T.S. Eliot's artistic and symbolistic use of dove in his *Four Quartets* bears and confirms its Biblical symbolic meaning. T.S. Eliot writes in his *Four Quartets*:

The dove descending breaks the air
With the flames of incandescent terror
Of which the tongues declare
The one discharge from sin and error.

(C.P.P., p. 143)

After the dark dove with the flickering tongue
Had passed below the horizon of his homing
While the dead leaves still retiled on like tin

(C.P.P., p. 146)

The above cited short lyrical passages echo the advent of the Holy Ghost as it is accounted in The Acts of the Apostles:

When the day of the Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, fire, and it sat upon each of them. And
they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.


In his Four Quartets T.S. Eliot not only speaks of the Holy Ghost but also of His functions—declaring sin, error and also the terror of divine judgment as Jesus Christ said to His disciples. Jesus said:

But now I go my way to him that sent me, . . . Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the comforter (Holy Ghost) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father: . . . of judgement because the prince of this world (satan) is judged.

(The Gospel according to St. John 16:5-13)

Thus T.S. Eliot making artistic and symbolistic and symbolistic use of dove describes the advent and the functions of the Holy Ghost which is the "only way to achieve release from the fire of suffering," to borrow the words of T.S. Pearce.

Symbol of House:

St. Paul has used the symbol of house to describe human body. So in like manner T.S. Eliot has also made artistic use of the symbol of house in his poem. In Gerontion the narrator says: "My house is a decayed house." Again he says:
I have no ghosts,
And old man in a draughty house
Under a windy knob.

(C.P.P., p. 22)

The Tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours.
Think at last
We have not reached conclusion, when I
Stiffen in a rented house . . . .

(Ibid)

Tenants of the house,
Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season.

(Ibid., p. 23)

When St. Paul used the symbol, he was rather occupied with the unseen
and eternal. By using such symbol he was in fact emphasising the
mortality of human body. Earthly tent or house is the usual Greek
expression for body, so for St. Paul also is an appropriate symbol of
transitoriness, alluding to the Israel's pilgrim life in the
wilderness. St. Paul was mindful of heavenly body which is not
belonging to the perishable nature, but Eliot's Gerontion is, unlike
St. Paul, incapable of spiritual hope and trust, so he cannot look for
higher and ultimate goal--hope, rich in flesh but poor on even
bankrupt in spiritual matter. He lives in a decayed, draughty and
rented house. This house does not belong to man. One day this body
will be destroyed. So this is in a sense rented house which one has
to leave or vacate sooner or later. Gerontion is aware of this
reality, but he is deprived of St. Paul's higher spiritual experience
because his house is not built upon the rock but sand. He is not a
good builder. He has no courage to stand against the windy knob. What T.S. Eliot Pearce says of Gerontion in a decayed house is worth quoting. He says:

Gerontion is old and desiccated. He has never experienced heroic action which might have given life meaning, he has only dwelt in a decayed house, subject to the sordid dominations of the Land-lord, a cosmopolitan inheritor of mixed and confused cultures, waiting for a sign to show that there is something to wait for; and even when the sign, which was Christ, came it was of no avail among human beings separated from each other by their alien cultures and their individual addities. He is aware only that life is a welter of confusions, deceptions, contradictions, in which men long for what they have had and lost without realizing they ever had it, and waste or spurn what they have because they do not recognize its worth.

Gerontion is living in a decayed culture where the modern man is incapable of heroic action. He is alien to his own cultures and environments. His life is decayed so is the environment. The house does not belong to him and he does not belong to the house. He is a tenant. In this context what T.S. Pearce has to say is worth quoting. He writes; "He (Gerontion) is a tenant in a house, this world, which is not his real home, and he is waiting for rain, the rain of the Holy Spirit, which will relieve his own parached spirits, distant from God, the rain which will generate life in his dry and dead mind, or spirit."
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17 Ibid., p.25
18 Ibid., p.
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22 Charles Chedwick, op.cit., p.49.
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29 Ibid.
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