The institution of prophetism is an old one. Tremendously important in God's revelation to mankind was the ministry of the prophets. Through them came some of the sharpest moral and spiritual insights. Through them God affirmed again and again His own character and the notion of His covenant. The prophets thundered the judgement of God against wickedness and breathed the tenderness of His mercy for those who repented their sins and turned to God with penitent hearts. The prophets showed the meaning of contemporary events. They were spoken of as the preachers of righteousness, the spokesmen of God. The prophets played a very significant role in the total life of Israel in particular, and of mankind in general. The spiritual life of the chosen people rose and fell and declined. Throughout the centuries the faith and loyalty of godly leaders ebbed and flowed. In the time of depression God in loving kindness raised up prophets, great preachers of righteousness like Moses, Samuel, Nathan, Elizah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, Hosea and Micah to call the people back, their waywardness to higher levels of faith and loyalty. So even in the twentieth century the name of God, the Creator, in his mercy and saving grace anointed the preacher of the true righteousness for the degenerated people alienated from God, 'the still point of the turning world,' and who are indwelling the modern waste-land. He walked on the hellish road of London and burnt with God's wrath and indignation and passion for righteousness. As for
the Romans and others men of letters, especially poets, were raised to
the office of prophets and seers, so was the preacher of the true
spirituality for the waste-landers. He is none other than the great
man of letters, T.S. Eliot. T.S. Eliot is the prophet of his age not
in the traditional sense of the word, but in the order of the
classical thinkers who became the whole and sole mouthpieces of their
times. T.S. Eliot saw the alienation of the waste-landers from the
'Still point of the turning world,' and with the prophetic vision
his heart cried aloud the grief and indignation of the human
situation of the twentieth century. As the prophets were the
conscience and voice of their age, so is the prophet of the modern
age. Ezekiel became the conscience of the captives in the Babylonian
captivity so became T.S. Eliot.

Referring to the prophetic personality of T.S. Eliot, G.H. Mair and
A.C. Ward have to say, "The disillucionment in Eliot's early poems
found much ready acceptance in 1917, and thereafter that he became the
prophet of a new age."¹ A prophet in the Biblical sense is a God-
inspired soul who aims at his message to be strictly observed and
followed in order to seek salvation. It is highly presumptuous to
proclaim that Eliot is a prophet in this strict sense of the Biblical
prerogative. But however he is more or less a parallel voice of the
Biblical saints and prophets who rightly comprehended that evil of
their times and who rightly again suggest ways and means of relief.
Eliot rightly understood the crisis of the twentieth century, and in
order to tide over the crisis, Eliot felt that it is necessary to reinterpret the pertinent message of the ancient prophets in such a way that they should become conscious of the duties and responsibilities of modern men in being a person with self continent and persons of being. Eliot however does not invert a few slogans and axioms. On the other hand through his dramatic and apocalyptic poems, he aims at the most needful messages. These messages are the voices of hope of deliverance from the state of wilderness and hopelessness.

Title of the Prophet:

The first person who The Bible designated a prophet in the Old Testament was Abraham. He came to know the possible destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah which later came to be talked and referred as the synonyms for the extreme wickedness and alienation and estrangement of the wicked from the sweet and dulcet fellowship of God. Although he was marked to be a prophet of his own time, The Old Testament prophetism as such among the Hebrews can legitimately be said to have received its normative form in the life and the person of Moses who later constituted the standard of comparison for all subsequent prophetic personages. Two general descriptions appear to have been used for the prophets: first- the man of God. 'The man of God' described how they appeared to their fellow men. This title was first used for Moses. The other title was, 'My servant' or 'His servant', or 'Son of man.'
However, apart from these general descriptions there are three distinct Hebrew words used particularly for the prophets.

i. nabi
ii. roeh
iii. hozeh

The Old Testament term 'nabi' was applied to a wide range of personalities with many functions, varying from the comparatively primitive to the highly sophisticated and including both the advanced visionary and concretely ethical individual. Nabu is the Akkadian form meaning 'to call' or to announce'. In the sense, prophet is an announcer. In the code of Hammurabi, the verbal adjective 'nabi' means "called", while in the old Babylonian term 'nabaum' was invariably used with respect to some person designated by the Gods to occupy an important function in human society. The Hebrew 'nabi' or 'nabhi' was thus some one who had experienced a vocation or divine call and who was fundamentally an independent religious and charismatic figure. In this respect, T.S. Eliot is a sort of prophet, because he is a religious and charismatic figure in the age when the sense of religious sensibility has extinguished in the post-war Europe. He is an announcer of religious or higher spiritual values to the captives captivated by the modern Pharoahs-urbanization, industrialization and technocratization and the demon of materialism.

Two other terms were also applied to the Hebrew prophets, namely roeh (רֵעַ) and hozeh (הָזֵה). First of these is the active
perticipal form of the verb to 'to see' and is translated 'seer'. The another is active participle of the verb meaning to 'see', but since it has no equivalent in English it is commonly rendered as 'prophet'. These two terms in their contexts suggest some parallel to the prophetic function. The prophet was also called a seer. The seer was responsible for warning the nation and the people in general of their sinfulness, and inevitable judgement for their unfaithfulness to God. In this respect too, Eliot stands as a seer. He set himself to this prophetic office to warn the waste landers of their degeneracy, and sterility and spiritual emptiness.

The English word 'prophet' comes from the Greek terms 'prophetes' (προφήτης) which in Classical Greek one who speaks for another, specially one who speaks for God, and so interprets His will for men. Hence its essential meaning is an interpreter. So it will not be an exaggeration if T.S. Eliot is considered as the prophet of his age.

T.S. ELIOT'S PROPHETIC MISSION

The prophets of the Old Testament took their calling very seriously. They had deep sense of mission. The purpose of their ministry may be gleaned from their divinely inspired messages delivered from time to time over a period of many centuries.

1. To make known the nature and will of God and set up the standards of righteousness.
2. To rebuke sin and bring the wayward and erring to repentance. It is written in the scripture:

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins.

(Isaiah 58:1)

3. They were to condemn mere outward religious and pseudo faith.

4. The prophets spoke out sternly against the sins in the social realm—oppression of the poor and defenceless, immoderate luxury, sexual immorality, idolatry and adultery.

5. The prophets demanded trust in the living God, and preached repentance and salvation.

6. They initiated religious, social and moral and political reform.

History became revelation because there was added to the historical situation a man to say what it meant. Keeping the mission of the Biblical prophets in mind, T.S. Eliot's prophetic ministry can be briefly outlined:

1. As the prophet of this age, Eliot's aim in his literary works was to make known the nature and well of God to the waste landers inhabiting his waste land.

ii. As a classical thinker and enlightened prophetic personality, he also aimed to rebuke the sins and spiritual emptiness of the degenerated post-war European civilization. As Ezekiel was
commissioned to cry and blow the trumpet warning the waste
landers of their ruin, and thus hasten then to seek salvation, so
is T.S. Eliot commissioned to blow the warning trumpet, create a sense
of fear and urgency to seek refuge immediately under the 'shadow
of the red rock'. He alarms the waste landers with his
prophetic zeal, "London bridge is falling down, falling down,
falling down." London bridge is to be symbolically interpreted
as the post-War European civilization. As Ezekiel saw in vision
the valley of dry bones, so Eliot saw the civilization falling
down, falling down.

iii. As the classical prophet and the mouthpiece of his time he
indirectly aimed to revive the traditional and the Biblical
religious faith and the lost religious sensibility. In the
Babylonian captivity, due to the influence of the paganism the
new generation of Israelites had lost their traditional and pure
religious faith. So was the miserable and unfortunate condition
of the almost all the prophets' contemporary generation. They
were commissioned to set their contemporary civilization in
order. The Biblical prophets were the guardians of faith.
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jonah, Amos, and Micah were called our to
revive the religious sensibility of the degenerated people of
their age, So, is T.S. Eliot. The secularization has destroyed,
as paganism in the ancient time destroyed the traditional faith
of the chosen race, the modern civilization. Eliot has some
personal prophetic 'obligation' to fulfill. In The Waste Land,
Eliot wrote, "Shall I set my lands in order?" (C.P.P., p. 50). He set himself to set the falling London bridge in order, because the post-war civilization was being enslaved by the 'non-Christian mentality.' In his essay "Though After Lameth" T.S. Eliot writes with a prophetic sense:

The world is trying to the experiment of attempting to form a civilized but non-Christian mentality. The experiment will fail; but we must be very patient in awaiting its collapse; meanwhile redeeming the time; so that the faith may be preserved alive through the dark ages before us; to renew and rebuild civilization, and save the world from suicide.

(Selected Essays, p. 387)

To save the world from suicide is a prophetic mission which T.S. Eliot was called out for. He set himself to preserve the diminishing flame of the traditional Biblical religious faith of the post-War Europe. T.S. Eliot seeks order in the world of disorder. He grapples with the important question, "Shall I set my lands in order?" and fulfills his prophetic obligation through his writings with prophetic cursing tone. In this context what Admund Wilson says is worth quoting. He rightly comments:

T.S. Eliot has thought persistently and coherently about the relations between the different phases of human experience, and his passion for proportion and order is reflected in his poems.

Like the Biblical prophets, Eliot was highly critical of pseudo-faith. Due the devastating influence of science and rationalism, there is outright rejection of faith on the part of man. But there are so
called believers who believe in Christ and his teaching empirically, but without any passionate participation. He aims to revive the lost and dead religious sensibility with his poetic techniques of contrasting experiences of different ages in history with the experiences of his time, because such faith without passion avails nothing. Union with Christ for Eliot is a conscious attachment to Him. Prophetic works of the Biblical prophets and the major works of T.S. Eliot have this in common that both seek to integrate, to make man's life whole, to redeem them from their bewildering, meaninglessness, and from the futility of life. Like the Biblical prophets, he is an explorer beyond the frontiers of ordinary consciousness who perceives more than most other men can do.

He was against the prevailing modern tendency to make religion more comfortable and cheap to attract people. Christianity was no longer a path to the cross but considered to the bed of roses. This cheap and cushy religion was also characterizing his waste land. He writes, "You will never attract the young by making Christianity easy, but a good many can be attracted by finding it difficult: difficult both to the disorderly mind and to the untruly passions." He emphasized on the need to teach afresh the lesson of mortification, sacrifice, discipline of emotions, and thought and mind. He did not propose to "trim his values according to his cloth" because to him spiritual values were of great importance.
Prophetic Consciousness of his own indwelling Sin

Consciousness of awesomeness and emptiness of one's own inner life was the very first step in God-realization, and was a very horrified experience for the Biblical prophets. In the case of T.S. Eliot, the reference to Isaiah's inner experience of his own sinfulness is very important. Isaiah mentions his glorious but horrified experience:

The year king Uzziah died I saw the Lord: he was sitting on a lofty throne, and the temple was filled with his glory. Hovering about him were mighty, six winged seraphs. With two of their wings they covered their faces; with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew in a great antiphonal chorus they said, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is filled with his glory." Such singing it was! It shook the temple to its foundations, and suddenly the entire sanctuary was filled with smoke. Then I said, "My doom is sealed, for I am a foul-mouthed sinner, a member of a sinful, foul-mouthed race... (Isaiah 6:1-11).

Israel was in the state of spiritual crisis, and God called Isaiah to send him as his messenger to preach and teach higher spiritual values. But prior to his called there came a deep awareness of prophet's own indwelling sins. So also happens to T.S. Eliot who was commissioned to hold a similar responsibility that of the Biblical prophets. In his own inner life, he finds the indwelling sin, and perpetual struggle of good and evil. He believed intellectually and emotionally in the Original Sin, which is a veritable watchword of prophets of living God. Eliot was much saturated with the Pauline thought of sin and redemption. St. Paul considered himself to be the greatest and
chief amongst the sinners. He believed that he was rotten through and through as far as his old sinful nature was concerned. He confessed panically: "Oh, wretched man I am! Who will deliver me from the body of sin and death?" (Romans 7:24). David says, "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceived me" (Psalms 51:5). Likewise Eliot has a prophetic vision of sin. Lyndal Gordon writes of Eliot that "he believed that the disappearance of belief in original sin meant the disappearance of real people who undergo moral struggle." For superficial worldly observer the moral struggle might appear to be a vain spiritual exercise, but for T.S. Eliot the moral struggle which he points out to be lacking in the context of the modern time is a grave problem. It seems that the individual and personal moral struggle of the sort that could be found in the Biblical generation is disappearing due to the disappearance of belief in Original Sin. Perhaps it may not be possible to have a kind of heroic moral struggle in the post-War Europe in particular and in the modern world in general. So in a sense real people, as Eliot understands, are disappearing, and the unreal city of Eliot is inhabited by the unreal people. Sin reigns over a charnel house; the subjects of its empire are the modern men as good as dead, dead in every sense of the word, dead morally and spiritually, and therefore doomed to be destroyed.

St. Paul uses Greek words. The word ἁμαρτία (hamartia), and the corresponding term in Hebrew has much the same original sense of 'missing a mark.' Both words are used with a higher and a lower
meaning; and in both the higher meaning belongs to be the sphere of religion. In classical Greek hamartia and hamartanen are common enough in the higher senses of 'missing an aim,' of error in judgement or opinion; in the graver sense of serious wrong-doing they are rare. But when one turns to the Bible this proportion is utterly reversed. The words denote nearly always religious wrong-doing. One must take the deepening of meaning which the words have undergone through the theological context in which they are placed. "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9). "Against thee, Thee only have I sinned and done that which is evil in Thy sight" (Psalm 51:4). "Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4).

It is impossible to have an adequate conception of sin without an adequate conception of God. The Hebrew in general, and St. Paul in particular, had this; and that is why sin is such an intense reality to them. It is not a mere defect, the coming short of an ideal, the mark of an imperfect development. It is something more than a negation; it is a positive quality, calling forth a positive reaction. It is a personal offence against a personal God. It is an injury or wound—if the reaction which it involves may be described in such human terms as injury or wound—directed against the Holy one whose love is incessantly going forth towards man. It causes an estrangement, a deep gulf of separation between, God and man.⁶

As for St. Paul so was sin for T.S. Eliot. For him, also, Sin was an
intense reality— an injury or wound causing an estrangement, a deep
gulf of separation between God and man. As St. Paul speaks most
directly of the baleful activity of Sin, so also does T.S. Eliot with
his prophetic indignation towards sin.

One's sense of moral responsibility shifts from the sin of birth to the
sin of characterizing oneself with irresponsibility and faith. Man
is under a necessity to think deeper and deeper into the propriety of
his deeds and actions. Such a responsible performance by all and
sundry is an immediate necessity in the context of twentieth century
crisis. The expression 'moral struggle' may have to be replaced with
the authentic struggle. T.S. Eliot all through his poetry is
spokesman of this authentic struggle that should be the proper way of
man operating with self-search. His Prufrock or Gerontion is not
certainly equivalent of the Biblical prophets. They are the modern
counterparts or anti-heroic, anti-type of the Biblical prophets.
Eliot's landing on this anti-types is highly pertinent. Man devoid
of capacity to believe automatically dwindles into a laughable and
ridiculous jumble of a few careless reaction. The gravity of the
world in which the modern man lives demands a seriousness ironically
becomes the message of Eliot's anti-types searching in themselves.
The overwhelming question, that Prufrock suggests, concerns with the
most definite possibility of man losing certain capacity in the
process of growing and aging. "Do I dare eat a peach?" is a self
directed and alarming question, so the modern enthusiasts Prufrock
has a meaning to offer. Human capacities are such that they are bound
to windle into nothingness in course of time. This is the forewarning or a fair threat that Eliot introduces in the tone of his declaration.

T.S. ELIOT'S PROPHETIC VISION OF HORROR AND GLORY.

The Biblical prophets were men of their age. They were concerned with the glory and horror of their contemporary civilization. Jeremiah was called a weeping prophet. He lamented over the fall of Jerusalem. In prophetic book "Lamentation" he has a vision of lost glory and present horror. He is a tragic prophet. Almost all of the Biblical prophets have this sort of vision of the horror beauty and ugliness. Eliot, modeling himself with the prophetic personalities of The Bible, has such prophetic vision of horror and glory; he goes deeper and deeper to see world of ugliness underneath the illusionary beauty. Like Pascal, Eliot was endowed with "the mind to conceive, and the sensibility to feel the disorder, the futility, the meaninglessness, the mystery of life and suffering" while "the majority of mankind is lazy-minded, incurious absorbed in vanities, and tepid in emotion, and is therefore incapable of either much doubt or much faith." He is not an unbeliever, for the unbeliever is, as a rule, not so greatly troubled to explain the world to himself, nor so greatly distressed by its disorder nor is he generally concerned (in modern terms) to 'preserve values'. Unlike the unbeliever, he was deeply troubled and distressed by the existing disorder of the post-War European world, as the sighing prophet Jeremiah lamented over Jerusalem's lost glory.
because after the war beautiful city was ruined and laid waste. Even before his entry into the Anglo-Catholic Church, such prophets were his model and inspiration. Hence he undergoes such prophetic agony like the true prophet and seer and watchman. He bemoans over the lost glory of his Jerusalem which is London in particular and the whole of Europe in general. Some how critic like I.A. Richard could not put right prospective towards the authentic prophetic personality in stating that "Mr. Eliot is neither sighing after vanished glories nor holding contemporary experience up to scorn." \(^{10}\) Contrary to what I.A. Richards says Eliot does shed tears over the lost glory of the post-War Europe, and scorn the social corruption with his prophetic tone in his stylistic satirical manner by contrasting the present experiences with those of the ancient. He introduces so many reminiscences of other experiences but in ironic manner. As a creative artist, Eliot like James Joyce and Ezra Pound, has been constantly preoccupied with the modern inferno—"the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." \(^{11}\) In the whole corpus of his poetry, ranging from the Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock to Four Quartets, Eliot presents "a series of kaleidoscopic pictures of a thoroughly secularized world—a world which after the war was shown of its basic spiritual and material values." \(^{12}\)

T.S. Eliot has succeeded in presenting his prophetic vision of the horror and glory which is according to him the chief milieu of the artist. "For the poet should endeavour not only to visualize a world which is beautiful a good but also to see beneath both beauty and
ugliness and to ugliness and to give us from time to time his vision of the horror and glory. In a sense Eliot is essentially a tragic writer, and his tragic view of life is prophetic in spirit. The despair and disillusion which are reflected through the "earlier critical writings of Eliot are not the expressions of personal weakness but are perfectly impersonal and objective, because they symbolize human predicament which through the ages has remained essentially the same and has found different modes of expression."

His vision of horror and glory is further extended and exemplified in The Waste Land in which Eliot pictures the desolate world with its horror and glory with the powerful poetic vision. There is persistent conflict as beauty and ugliness, horror and glory. This conflict is no way trivial or shallow. This is the conflict of the Puritan turned artist, as Edmund Wilson puts it. He writes:

We recognize throughout The Waste Land the peculiar conflicts of the Puritan turned Artist: the horror of the vulgarity and the sympathy with the common life, the ascetic shrinking from sexual emotion, with the straining after a religious emotion which may be made to take its place.

Nevertheless, the poems should not be treated as a distaste for life, or a romantic pessimism of any kind since it is concerned it is concerned with the sickness of the land which was once sound and glorious. As Gilbert Seldes says:
It (The Waste Land) is specifically concerned with the idea of the Waste Land—that the Land was fruitful and now is not, that life had been rich, beautiful, assured. Organized, lofty, and now is dragging itself out in a poverty stricken and disrupted and ugly tedium, without health, with no consolation in morality.  

As a poet of prophetic vision of glory and horror he is not depicting something new in the history of mankind. As a true prophet Eliot notes that pathetic futility of worldly expedients against the divine visitation. As Matthiessen points out, Eliot has presented in The Waste Land, "the intolerable burden of his unreal city, the lack of purpose and direction, the inability to believe really in anything . . ." Hence the horror of the twentieth century civilization is that life has become "bareen and sterile that man is withering impotent, and without assurance with that the waters which made the land fruitful will never rise again." Both bitterness and desolation are not on the surface only in his literary works but in depth. Critic like I.A. Richard has not put proper prospect to Eliot's prophetic vision of horror and glory, his bitterness and desolation in stating that "both bitterness and desolation are superficial aspects of his poetry." They are not the superficial aspects of his poetry. In the post-War Europe no real love, hope, and peace exist. In order to intensify the expression of tragic horror he introduces so may reminiscences from other sources. As Matthiessen points out:

T.S. Eliot is not making mere literary heightened consciousness. He is not imitating these poets; nor has he mistaken literature for
life. Each of these references brings with it the height of its special context, its authentic accent of reality, and thus enables Eliot to condense into a single passage a concentrated expression of tragic horror. 20

T.S. Eliot has the conscience of his time. He has fully grasped the horror and glory. Both horror and glory find expression in his works. In this context what Helen Gardner has to say is worth quoting. Says Gardner:

Up, The West Land the moment is from what might be called boredom to something that might be called terro, alternating with its more disinterested compassion, horror or more truly, since teror and horror are present from the beginning, the poetry shows a deepening sense of horror in which boredom is swallowed up. The later poetry shows a movement from teror or horror towards glimpses of glory. 21

His prophetic vision of horror and glory seems to be equal with that of the Biblical prophets and that of the great saints and the artists of the historical past. And it is so in its expression and spirit. To borrow the words of F.O. Matthiessen, "the poems embodies simultaneously several different planes of experience and suggest the likeness between different waste lands." 22 But however, to emphasize the essential equivalence of difference experiences and to suggest likeness between the tragic horror of different waste lands was not his sole purpose. This is his mature prophetic literary style and technique to suggest contrast by ironical emphasis and suggestion of the equivalence and the likeness between the tragic horrors of different waste lands. In the ancient waste lands the waste landers
atleast had sense of good and evil, so salvation was readily available to them when they sought after God. But the persistent tragic contrast of the present waste land with that of the ancient is that unlike the ancient waste landers, the twentieth century men have lost the sense of good and evil. Adam’s knowledge of good and evil created the first waste land in which he was put to inhabit by the creator and subdue the earth and be the beneficiary but only in love-relation and in proper harmony with the nature and environment. After his first disobedience to the law of his Creator in order to be equal with Him, he became stranger to his creator and to the beautiful creation. He could not live any longer in harmony with the nature. Here the first disorder and elemental disbalance occurred in the human set. However, Adam and Eve existed in the waste land with the knowledge of good and evil but the modern man, the waste lander, does not really exist because he is, unlike the waste lander of primaeval waste land, ignorant of good and evil. In this context Cleanth Brooks has to comment: "The fact that have lost the knowledge of good and evil, keeps them from being alive, and is the justification for viewing the modern waste land as a realm in which the inhabitants do not even exist." In the ancient waste land the inhabitants prayed and fasted and longed to be revived and roused from their death-in-life. David prayed, "Will not thou revive us ... O Lord? (Psalm, 85:6). But the modern waste lander disliked to be roused and quickened form their death in life.

T.S. Eliot’s Prophetic Tone and Style:

The civic life of the modern Europe as well as the personal life of
the most concerned people of the societies shows a typical fall and
degradation in its human standards while The Waste Land is the
abundant document focusing upon the fallen state of social life.
In The Ariel Poems and his Four Quartets there are many instances
where T.S. Eliot is showing his personal concern to the depraved
condition of the modern man's life. The Waste Land there is the most
detestable affair between the lady typist and the young man
 carbuncular. That way there are innumerable expositions of this sort in
the other books of The Waste Land and in others short poems of T.S.
Eliot -- Love Song of Alfred J Prufrock, Gerontion, Sweeney among the
Nightingale, Rhapsody in a Widy Night, Burbank with a Baedeker;
Bleisteen with Cigar, Sweeney Erect. T.S. Eliot not only pin points
the wretchedness of life in the plan of the inter-personal relation
in the society, but also makes the wretchedness itself quite
arresting and vivid. Though modifying colours of reflections and
sarcastic remarks thrown by the prophet-poet are the masks and the
mouthpieces of his poetry. The adoption of the masks and the
mouth-pieces made his task less painful in the sense that the
reflecting statements in The Waste Land are those of the poet's
protagonist, Tiresias. Likewise until he arrives at his Four
Quartets and The Ariel Poems, Eliot did not leave the act of shooting
from behind the masks and mouth-pieces. Strictly speaking, his Four
Quartets alone are the dispassionate autobiographical outburst.
Even The Ariel Poems maintain in themselves a distinct poetic
career voicing forth the poet's concern. This does not mean that
Eliot is withdrawing himself from maintaining the stance of authentic
rivalry against the widest spread evil in the society. The Biblical prophets directly distinguished, determined and denounced the evil of life around them but T.S. Eliot is adopting the method of masks and mouth-pieces. The very nature of evil and rudeness of the twentieth-century-life is so wretched that speaking through the masks and the mouth-pieces becomes highly convincing rather than the poet himself becoming the mouth-piece of these poems. Moreover Eliot imaginatively inwards his poetic thoughts into the inauthentic and irresponsible persons and personalities around him; and for such a critical purpose the poet directly becoming the mouth-piece has its own disadvantages. The dramatic monologue tradition established by the great Victorian poets served Eliot's poetic purpose more abundantly than that of the direct pondering techniques of the Biblical prophets. However the ultimate moral purpose more or less got served equally well. The new age with its ludicrus new vistas of life needed rather a sort of subhuman treatment. Therefore all most all of the masks and mouthpieces are T.S. Eliot. They are ironically the prophets of the modern age and are completely characterized with the most eroding evil forces of life; for example, Tiresias, who is the mouth piece of *The Waste Land*, is a mythological character directly lifted from the Greek mythology and Greek drama. The irony of the pagan becoming the mouth-piece of Christian sentiment and purity and his manner of looking at the Original Sin with a grave concern, is a mere poetic ingenious manner of T.S. Eliot trying to give a great universal concern to the loss of the fundamental ethics and morals. At the same time Tiresias, being mythologically endowed with the
practical manner of subjective understanding and undergoing the life-properties of both man and woman in his various faces of curses, is the right choice of a mask. Torsias is highly impressive in being ludicrous. The prophetic tone adopted by the Eliot is in turning against himself, which gives spacious opportunity to be a self-critical. The concept of self-criticism is the very backbone of the Christianity. Introspection is the only manner of the Biblical prophets that gave them self-confidence and self-assuredness coupled with the authentic vision of the life of the people of the Kingdom of God. The kind of waste land that awaits the modern man is the anti-type of the kingdom of God. The ludicrous anti-type of the social cultures of the sort is that are depicted in Gerontion, Tiresias, and Prufrock, etc. The only point of the great poetic interest in these anti-hero-prophet-types Eliot introduces is that unswerving and unhesitant introspection even when they are living in the life of sin, sloth and wretchedness. In one word, what makes Eliot a profound prophetic voice of twentieth century is to be found in his potential introspection. In this context the mouth-pieces and the masks served their best in being the dramatic personnel of T.S. Eliot. If so Eliot is a dramatic prophet, an arresting voice, and chastising tongue, but all with the humble human purpose of awarding a simple, straightforward, natural life devoid of all vanities. Eliot's most important pre-occupation always remained with a art of inculcating faith in a simple straightforward, humble life devoid of all materialistic vanities and industrial theme. For recapturing the simplicities of life, which in its turn, is what T.s. Eliot means by, endowing oneself with faith, life is required to be lived in an
atmosphere of open freedom of choice and dependency on the higher values and virtues of life. Wherever they are found and in whatever form they are glorified in almost all the great religions of the world—Christ-like charity, Buddhist-courage to renounce and Hindu’s stances of self-evidencing processes are all that T.S. Eliot required to save the world from turning into the waste land on the brink of which the twentieth century brought the world-culture. Eliot’s formula is faith in oneself and in other.

T.S. Eliot’s Propetic Indignation on Spiritual Ignorance:

When the prophet of the waste-landers journeyed to London, he saw the modern London-dwellers living in the realm of death, as if they were born for dying but not for the like God had originally planned for them. Increase of their knowledge of words which means the knowledge of the flesh and what belongs to the realm of flesh has brought them further from God and nearer to death. In The Rock, T.S. Eliot say:

Knowledge of words and the ignorancy of the Word
All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance
All our ignorance brings nearer to death
But nearness to death no nearness to God.
Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
The cycle of heaven in twenty centuries
Bring us further from God and nearer to the dust.

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

Above lines resound the spirit of God’s painful cry over Israel’s destruction. Prophet Hosea cried out:
My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge;  
Because you have rejected knowledge I will also reject you...  

(Hosea 4:6)

Above quoted lines either of T.S. Eliot whom we are considering to be the prophet of his age or of Hosea, the prophet of living God, reflects the controversy of God with his people. There was a nation that had collapsed morally. It is significant that the prophet's primary concern was not economic or the political condition, but their moral and spiritual condition. They properly understood that the moral break down of a nation is the primary source of its collapse since it usually preceded and causes economic and political decay. Any one can see more clearly the truth of this if he thinks of this as of individual rather than of the nation. When a man goes to pieces, it is the moral part of his that goes first. Loss of character is more to be feared than the loss of any other possession. Prodigal son's loss in the far country was not material but his character.

The moral decay always starts within. It is the inwardness of sin that creates the problem for man. It ushers in a process of decay which no material factor can stop—nothing but moral and spiritual regeneration. So it is with a nation. One may always risk the statement that the ultimate cause of the decline and final collapse of every nation or civilization has been moral or spiritual rather than material. No nation that is morally rotten can permanently endure. Morality bears the same relationship to a nation's life which the heart bears to the human body.
Now an apparent question is "What caused Israel's moral or spiritual deterioration?" The prophet's answer is disarmingly simple. He says that his moral or spiritual decay springs from the religious illiteracy of his people. They do not know God. "My people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge." The waster-landers of T.S. Eliot's age or the modern age are very close to the prophet in his emphasis on knowledge yet very far from him. The modern man stands with him in his emphasis on academic knowledge as essential. Any thinking and sensible man with him would think ignorance is a great enemy. Yet the modern man, while they agree with him in his emphasis on the knowledge, they differ radically with him as to what it is essential to know and how such knowledge is to be obtained.

When prophet Hosea spoke of knowledge, he meant first of all the knowledge of God. Such knowledge was to him the first item on the agenda of education. He put that ahead of all else. When Hosea spoke of knowledge of God he meant more than intellectual knowledge. The key to the prophet's meaning is found in Genesis 4:1, "Adam knew his wife, Eve." Knowledge of God is an intimate communication with God in whom man lives and moves and has his being. Such knowledge is more than belief. It is very easy and glibly to say that I believe in God, but knowing God is much deeper. St. Paul believed in God but more than that he could say, "I know whom I have believed," (2 Tim 1:12). Many among the modern man may know more about God theoretically than some of the saints. Knowing about God is one thing, and knowing
God is something else. There is a difference between religiously sophisticated and being religious. The knowledge of God which prophet Hosea speaks, because it is not theoretical, could not be obtained simply by man's effort. So is the understanding of prophet, T.S. Eliot.

Such knowledge comes from knowing self—not from knowing simply the mind. It involves the discipline of the life, the submission of the will, and doing His will. St. John says: "If any man will do his will, he will know." (1John 2:3-5). Such knowledge comes from the walking in the light not just talking about it. It is the knowledge of God which is never exhaustible. So lack of such dynamic knowledge in Hosea's mind as well as in Eliot's, was the root cause of deterioration. All the political difficulties sprang from men's moral collapse, which in turn grew out of their ignorance of God. T.S. Eliot also saw the deterioration of the contemporary civilization and points out the root cause of degeneration. He saw moral and spiritual lawlessness not only among the laity, but also clergy, in the school of priesthood and sisterhood. T.S. Eliot denounced this moral deterioration. He did not advocate theoretical knowledge about God but experiential knowledge of Him who is the "still point of the turning world." The knowledge of God personalizes morality and gives morality a compelling character which it could not otherwise possess.

There is another reason of why morality and spirituality will not endure without a knowledge of God. Such knowledge not only
personalizes ethical and moral reality but also eternalizes it, and gives to it the assurance of permanence. Man needs that assurance. The path of moral reality is not an easy one. It is straight, narrow and often steep. T.S. Eliot's prophetic concern is that the waste landers should aim for this knowledge, and walk on this straight, narrow and steep road. This is possible only when one stands firm on the foundation of such path. According to Schopenhauer "to preach morality is easy, to find a foundation for morality is hard." And this foundation is God. T.S. Eliot looks for this foundation. This gives the quality of permanence to moral values, and without that morality will lose much of its significance. The fruitless religiousness has become the hunting ground of evil forces in Eliot's time. In his time all were well informed. Magnificent schools, impressive college campuses and scientific research centres speak eloquently as of men's eagerness for knowledge in the modern age. Yet Eliot finds they are living in the realm of death, though they are fighting illiteracy as though it were a plague and ignorance as some dread disease. For the modern men knowledge means secularized knowledge, but for Eliot as for Hosea it means the knowledge of God. For Eliot the knowledge is not so much as the acquisition as the impression of facts, but an impression which masters not only a man's thoughts but his heart and will. Modern man believes education is the answer to his problems—secularized, factual, scientific education. To Eliot, it was clearly evident that secularized education cannot stave off the modern man's catastrophic problems. Why not? For one
thing-secularized education has done so much to replace God from the very heart and mind of modern man. He is now far from Him whose near once was he. Some one has rightly said about the education, "Without the knowledge of God, of truth, our education is like spokes without a hub." It is a fragmentary, it hangs at loose ends, it lacks meaning or rather its meaning lies largely in the materialistic realm. Eliot realized the fact that secularized knowledge cannot save the modern man from doom. In the course of time modern man is lost. T.S. Eliot saw the danger of secular education. The secularized education has done a great deal to cultivate a material and political valuation of man, who is deep down in his heart by creation religious. William Paton pretty well said:

"The impotence of contemporary moralism arises from the fact that we are trying to maintain a political valuation of man which had roots in a religious understanding of him, when that religious understanding has been forgotten."

Whatever problem T.S. Eliot has dealt with in his works is deeply rooted in the modern man's problem of spiritual illiteracy.

Generation Without hope: Belief in Progress.

As oxygen is for the lungs, so is the hope for the meaning of human life. Take oxygen away and death occurs through suffocation, taken hope away and humanity is constricted through lack of faith and hope, (breath), despair, supervenes, spelling the paralysis of intellectual
and spiritual powers by a feeling of the senselessness and purposelessness of existence. As the fate of human existence is dependent on the supply of oxygen, so the fate of humanity is dependent on the supply of hope.

It is scarcely necessary to prove that the Western humanity of T.S. Eliot's time and of today at least in Europe, has entered a phase when it is feeling an acute and distressing need of breath through the disappearance of hope. Every one is becoming aware of this, to a greater or lesser degree, and if anyone is not aware of it he can find proof of it in contemporary literature and philosophy. And T.S. Eliot's work is a better proof of it.

Hope is the positive and anxiety is negative mode of awaiting the future. Through anxiety and hope man relates to himself to the future in passive expectation. Hope means the assured presence of the future and the substance of the being, or more precisely it is one of the ways in which what is merely future and potential is made vividly present and actual to us. A man may have also an active rather than passive attitude towards the future. "Through such an active attitude man imagines himself to be the architect of his own destiny." The life and thought of modern Western European man is plainly distinguished from that of man of tradition by the fact that this active attitude through which man seeks to control his future.
At the time of Renaissance the modern man began to experience this strange confidence in his power of controlling and constructing his future. From that time onwards hope lost its significance in proportion as self-confidence grew. If a man had his future entirely in his own hands, he would no longer either hope or fear. He would indeed be the master and controller of his future.

But no man can altogether conceal from himself the fact that the man is very far from being the unqualified arbiter of his future. He can not remain aware that his power and freedom to shape the future is limited because dependent on factors over which he has no control.

T.S. Eliot rightly brings this expression through the words of Chorus:

We understand the ordinary business of living,  
We know how to work the machine,  
We can usually accidents,  
We are insured against fire,  
Against larceny and illness  
Against the defective plumbing,  
But not against the act of God  
We know various enchantments . . . .  
But the circle of our understanding  
Is very restricted area  
Expect for a limited number  
Of strictly practical purposes  
We do not know that we are doing.  

(C.P.P., p.291)

It is obvious that man is dependent upon nature and the 'Not-self'. But in the structure of modern man's life technology forms the characteristically predominant feature. Hence the degree of modern
man's control over his future depends on the success of the man-made means; the hope of the modern man has assumed a new form. It became hope in the increase of means and his power to control his future correspondingly increased. This is belief in progress. This hope may be rightly termed as a technological hope. This is the typical modern Western form of hope. This is the typical characteristic of modern Western humanity. Modern man is well aware of the fact that it is characteristic of him. But all this can not provide any production for the act of God that is something which distinguishes him, the modern human being (Western) from the human being of the ancient or past is a fact which he does not immediately realized. As clearly as the nineteenth century marks the claim of this belief in technology, so clearly is the twentieth century in the time of its rapid decline since the technological hope does not rule out the factors of insecurity in human life. Indeed as far as Europe is concerned one must perhaps already say that the technological hope was, but no longer is the hope of our time. The world wars and the rise of the totalitarian states have destroyed it. They have shattered the two main pillars on which it rested, belief in technics and belief in the state and organization as the means of guaranteeing man's progressive control of his future; and in the process the belief it-self has been shattered too.

Belief in progress as hope resting upon self confidence is the opposite of the Christian hope, the hope which is founded upon trust in God. Technological hope emerged only in the Christian Western Europe, "but
only because in proportion as Christian hope declined the former arose as its distortion and substitute, its parasite. But just as the technological hope replaced and inherited the Christian hope which had once prevailed in the Western Europe and America, so now at a time when the hope itself which had become the hope of Europe is dying. T.S. Eliot as a seer witnessed the emergence of sheer hopelessness in the form of a philosophy of despair, of the nihilistic meaninglessness of life.

Belief in progress or hope out of the faith in reason and the self assurance it conveyed. "Reason may imply something formal but also something substantial. Reason in the formal sense—the capacity to recognize truth and to set himself aims to pursue—is the natural basis of his freedom. But reason may also be understood in the substantial sense as the right recognition, the right purposes, the life in accordance with reason." The fact that reason is increased in the formal sense is no guarantee that this heightened freedom will be used in the right and reasonable way. The increased intellectual capacities of man by no means necessarily imply a good and right and an ethical use of reason. In replacing the Christian dogma of the radical sinfulness of man by that of his rational freedom and an innate goodness, the enlightenment overlooked the danger that the more enlightened man is, the more strongly and dangerously will be able to express that sinfulness. Indeed, the more man trusts in freedom and affirms it the more likely he is to misuse the freedom
which he confuses with absolute or divine freedom. Thus Modern man, who for the sake of his freedom emancipated himself from God and became godless, thus became the destroyer of himself. The greater the resource which progress places in his hands, the dreadful must be his work of destruction. The monstrous increase in the scientific means of conquering nature have been exposed as dangerous possibilities of universal suicide. Emil Brunner rightly says:

Science and technics in the atom bokb, social political organization in the totalitarian state . . . have been the dreadful unfolding of their truly daemonic potentialities. At the same time the charm of the idea of progress has vanished and humanity, in the full flower of its development, has fallen a prey to the panic of nihilism.30

Infact man's life is a cheat and disappointment. In Murder in the Cathedral T.S. Eliot writes:

All things are unreal,
Unreal or disappointing:
The Catherine wheel, the pantomime cat,
The prizes given at the children's party,
The prize awarded for the English Essay,
The scholars degree, the statesman's decoration.
All things become less real, man passes

From unreality to unreality.
This man is obstinate, blind, intent
On self-destruction,
Passing from deception to deception,
From grandeur to final illusion,
Lost in the wonder of his own greatness,
They enemy of society, the enemy of himself.

((C.P.P., p.194)}
The technological hope is based upon the self-certitude of man. This is the Child of the enlightenment of the early eighteenth century. Later on German idealism gave to the idea of progress a new metaphysical basis and explanation by interpreting reason itself in theological terms as divine, and at same time transmuting the homely conception of progress into the loftier idea of development. This history of the cultural development of man through the expansion within him of the divinely implanted power of reason. But this idea of development in the process utterly alienated from its original sense. Truly the nineteenth century belief in progress and the inspiration of that belief could boast of being no day dream, but resting upon a solid foundation of fact.\textsuperscript{31} But form the end of the century onwards the voices of doubt grew ever louder, and in the first decades of the new twentieth century this creed of the modern man collapsed under the shock of the terrible new eventuality of the world war. T.S. Eliot saw with his own prophetic eyes the horror and the loss wrought by the war. He saw there is plainly progress in regard to means, but hardly any is discoverable in regards to the end of man.

For here there is no secure traditional values, no storehouse of good that could be inherited or quite simply conveyed from one generation to another.

Belief in progress, hope in a better future, was an illegitimate child of Christianity.\textsuperscript{32} In Christ the attention of man was directed towards the future through the hope that the true end of man's being
would find ultimate fulfilment in the Kingdom of God. Humanity has a future because it awaits the coming of the Kingdom of God. The technological hope could not take place without far reaching the intensive criticism of the Biblical foundations and theological formulations of Christian hope. The Christian hope and faith in revelation was insalently thrown away through the blind arrogance of generations intoxicated by the success of increasing scientific knowledge. Eliot believed in the God of revelation, the God of the Covenant, The God whose world plan is disclosed to mankind in Jesus Christ. Outside God he could not see the real progress of humanity. Faith in God incarnated in His son, Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, was the essence of progress. Faith was/is the foundation of hope, hope is that which gives content to faith. And this faith and hope are rooted in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Through this unity of faith and hope the revelation of insecurable will of God in Jesus Christ as Eliot thought to be, becomes answer to man's deeply felt question as to the meaning of his existence: an answer which he is not capable of providing. Harry needs an Agatha to get the answer. For like Harry's all men's questions imply in the last resort the one question: the final goal of life and the meaning of life. Eliot observed modern man cherishing merely partial purposes and never succeeding in believing them to be rooted and completed in an ultimate meaning, thus finding his life as a whole infected with meaningless. In fact, for T.S. Eliot, the individual and the universal goals for all mankind are so inextricably one that the individual can attain his meaning and his goal only in his relation to the Creator and the Kingdom of God.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


Previously the Essay was titled, 'The Poetry of Drouth' which appeared in the December 1922 issue of the DIAL. It was later revised for Axel's Casatle, and the revised version is printed in the collection.


4. Ibid., p. 408.


8. Ibid., p. 11.

9. Ibid., p. 408.


Jyoti Prakash Sen, *op.cit.*, p.3.

Edmund Wilson, *op.cit.*


Gilbert Seldes, *op.cit.*

I.A. Richards, *op.cit.*

Matthiessen, *op.cit.*, p.22.


27 Ibid., p.8.
28 Ibid., p.10.
29 Ibid., pp.21-22.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., p.18
32 Ibid., p.20
33 Ibid., p.25.

*****