CHAPTER-I

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English literature has been attributed with different expectations from different quarters of readers and scholars. When we talk of literature, we mean explicitly belles letters, that is poetry, fiction and so on. Since poetry happens to be the almost universal genre of literature and also the most ancient, I shall limit my study mainly to poetry at first.

During the middle Ages, only a handful of men in Western Europe knew Greek and little Greek literature was available to them. Whatever they knew about Greeks came through the medium of summaries, quotations, or occasional translations. Strikingly, the only available version of Aristotle's Poetics had come through Asia Minor and North Africa into Spain and was actually a Latin translation of an Arabic abridgement a Syriac translation of the Greek text. Homer was little more than a reputation and Greek tragedies 'Lucretius' and 'Catullus' were hardly known.

Throughout these centuries Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, was the treasury of Greek manuscripts and scholarship. On May 29, 1453 the Turks stormed Constantinople, and the Eastern Empire fell. Many scholars became refugees and their
only avenue of escape lay westward; hence they carried their learning
and their manuscripts into Europe and particularly to Italy which was
now ready to welcome and encourage them. So great was the
influence of this event that people who insist on having their history
tidy often consider 1453 as the beginning of the Renaissance.

The most significant event which marks the dawn of the
Renaissance in England is the European invention of printing from
movable type. The hand crafted manuscript was replaced by the
mass-produced books and the result was the appearance of a large
reading public. As we know, the English were great explorers; they
travelled to the West Indies and down the coast of South America
and returned with their ships loaded with many valuables. English
rose to delirious heights of self-confidence after defeating Spanish
Armada (1588). The social system in the middle ages was based on
the power of feudal peers and powerful ecclesiastical figures. The
Church patronized art for the propagation of moral virtues.
Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo D_A Vinci and Titans made use of
religious subject matter. However, 16^th century marked the age of
Renaissance and Reformation which produced the *English Bible* and
*The Book of Common Prayer* along with a number of tracts, treaties
and sermons of books of devotion. Unlike Indian literature which
was secular in nature, English literature was deeply influenced by
religious and political development. To look at Indian literary
contexts, the Vedas celebrate the Vedic seers, prayers containing
metaphysical and philosophical speculations. All in all, the Vedas are to what is called secular literature, one fact stands out unmistakably; in almost all ancient literature, narrative poetry of the epic variety registers its presence. Homer and Virgil were Epic poets. Likewise, the celebrated sage Valmiki composed the famous epic, 'The Ramayana', narrating the Rama's story. The next epic, 'The Mahabharata', describes the unquestionably historical eighteen days war between the two kindred Royal families of Pandavas and Kauravas.

Today, English literature has covered a wide area with many extremely intriguing terms like Classicism, Romanticism, Marxism, Expressionism etcetera adding to its beauty as treasury. Its evolution, at the same time, has been a continuous process of literary consciousness duly conditioned by the result of latest investigations and researches. The world is 'too much' where provinces of life's activities are broadly accelerated by power and pelf transcending the barriers of time and clime. Modern age has an 'upside down trend' coming a long way to that of ancients. Now it appears that literature is an attempt of violent orders from disorder, circumscribing a great disorder into an order. The existing nature and form of literature of an age has least impact of the age which it precedes. However, the original standard and its impact with respect to vision, method and process remains static.
Having briefly discussed the essentials of literary development of English, I would opportunely present brief life-sketch of T.S. Eliot followed by the influencing literary environment and the most significant qualities of his creation, consistently linking with his vision, conviction and mission as my study is directed upon his most valuable work.

T.S. Eliot is one of the finest poets writing in English in the first half of the 20th century. More than any other, he determined the course that poetry has taken since. He is still emphatically modern. He establishes the metric in his first book, 'Prufrock and Other observations' in 1917; the form he pioneers in 'The Waste Land' (1922) and the contents he attempts in 'Four Quartets' (1943). He is a critic of magisterial calibers: interesting, challenging and responsible. As a dramatist, he is more important. Nevertheless, anyone who thinks of writing of verse-drama now can be guided by all Eliot's play and his candid essay 'Poetry and Drama' (1951). Through his metric, he gave poetry a new language. His rhythm disengages from English iambic patterns and asserts the poetry as an individual voice. It is liberation without doctrine and so has formed no school, but anything written now is post-Eliot. He permeats vast range of materials to the poets. Most critics think that certain subjects are suitable for poetry and others not. Eliot helps foster a sense that was increasing in the poets of the half two decades of the 20th century,
that poetry must engage all aspects of society and supposedly 'sordid' material. His 'Prelude' would stand as the best example.

The other major area that Eliot brings to us is rigorous examination of religious questions. They are the result of some repletion on Eliot’s part; his critical ideas are challenging as part and parcel of us all. They investigate the whole structure of culture including totality of our time. The nature of culture in which we live, the education we receive and administer, the values we live by, our trends towards material possessions; all these questions continue unbroken, often intensified from Eliot’s time to our own. He is still, then, genuinely modern. The whole range of his mind thrusts into our present. At the same time, Eliot induces advocates and discovers the tangles of perplexity not easy to unravel. Beyond this, Eliot is seen as 'the man who suffers and the mind who creates'. Many biographers give documentations of his much illness of all sorts but they fail to show how he worked through it as if he found creativity somewhere in ill-health. Above all, it seems that there is no simple and romantic equation between 'the man who suffers and the mind that creates'.

T.S. Eliot was born on 26th September, at Locust Street St. Louis, Missouri, USA. His family, though, had come out of the eastern part of USA, his grandfather William Greenleaf Eliot, had been born in New Bedford, Massachusetts and set out for the frontier city of St. Louis. It was a missionary territory minister and without a church. Within two years his Church was built. He helped to make
the St. Louis School to set up a University in 1857. In Washington University of St. Louis he began his life. Later, W.G. Eliot became Chancellor of this University. Eliot was the seventh child of Henry Ware Eliot and Charlotte Chauncey. Henry Ware Eliot carried his father's high ethical standard into business as chairman of the Hydraulic Brick Company of St. Louis which was built close to the confluence of the Missouri and the Mississippi rivers. This river itself had its impact on young Eliot. In ‘Dry Salvages’ he writes;

“I do not know much about Gods but I think that the river
Is a strong brown God-Sullen, untamed and intractable?
Patient to some degree, at first recognized as a frontier
Useful, untrustworthy, as a conveyor of commerce.”

‘The river’ he says, ‘is within us’ and it carries through time ‘its cargo of dead negroes, cows and chicken coops.’ His early education was at Smith Academy and in 1906 he was enrolled at Harvard. The teachers gathered at Harvard at this time were immensely impressive. Eliot took his Bachelor’s degree in 1909, his masters the following year. In 1910, he was in Paris and towards the end of 1911 he returned to Harvard where he stayed until 1914. Each year his mother Charlotte would take children out of the summer heart of St. Louis to the New England coast. It was an arm of land projecting into the Atlantic. It is the sea that takes origin into sea imagery of ‘Dry Salvages’;
‘The sea is the land’s edge also, the granite
Into which it reaches, the beaches where it tosses,
Its hints of earlier and other creation,
The starfish, horseshoe crab, the whale’s backbone.’

A number of poems which first appeared in ‘Prufrock and other Observations’ reflect his early experience of Boston. In ‘The Boston Evening Transcript’, Eliot contrasts a vigour of life present in some people with an absence of sensation in the lives of the readers of the transcript;

‘When evening quickens faintly in the street,
Wakening the appetites of life in some.’

‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’ which antedates all his poems, makes something rather more solid out of these Bostonian ironies. Prufrock is a victim to some extent of himself but more surely of the largely feminine society to which he seeks access and in which he seeks love or at least response. He is defeated by its falsifying urbanity;

‘In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.’

And by being a totally different wavelength, his hypothetical attempts to preface the overwhelming question;

‘To say: I am Lazarus, come from the dead;
Come back to tell you all.’
Eliot came to England in 1914 to continue his philosophical studies at Merton College, Oxford. He was also engaged on his Harvard doctorate, awarded two years later and published in 1964, titled as ‘Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley’. Bradley was England’s most distinguished idealist philosopher and a fellow of Merton. It was generally expected that Eliot would return to Harvard to teach philosophy but the demands of poetry took him over.

Some obedience to the facts led Eliot away from the speculations of philosophy too, as he saw them, the facts of poetry and so to choose the actual against the ideal. His choice was fostered by the American poet Ezra Pound three years older than Eliot and living in London. Pound, enthusiastic and literary entrepreneur as well as poet, liked Prufrock. He campaigned vigorously on Eliot’s behalf. He eventually secured its publication in Harriet Muneou’s Chicago Magazine, ‘Poetry’ in June 1915. Pound was to speak of ‘Mr. Eliot who is at times excellent poet and who has arrived at time the supreme eminence among English critics largely through disguising himself as a corpse.’ Eliot wrote first ‘The Egoist’ where he became assistant literary editor in 1917. His most important piece appears in ‘The Egoist’ was ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’ in two parts in 1919. In 1915 Eliot married Vivien Haigh-wood, daughter of the painter Charles Haigh-wood. Vivien was a vivacious but persistently ill woman.
His intelligence and unremitting work as a critic and poet lead him to found *The Criterion* which he was to edit from 1922 until 1939. It is not out of place to note that famous Indian novelist M.R. Anand was his literary companion at this time. In 1922, he published his most bewildering poem, ‘The Waste Land’ in *The Criterion* in October. In America the poem won the ‘Dial Award’ of $2000. Stylistically, the poem was to be culmination of one phase of Eliot’s development. It confirmed that he hereafter, switched over to literary pursuit. In 1925, Eliot left Lyods Bank to become the director of Faber and Gwayer in 1929 where he remained until his death. On 29th Jan., 1927, he was baptised in the Church of England and in November became a naturalised British citizen. And hereafter, his public career is seen rising from strength to strength. His lectures given at the University of Virginia are exciting.

In fact, Eliot bears such an agony throughout his life and work that can be retrieved from its torments. He arranged a legal separation from Vivien, which finally ended in 1947 when Vivien died in a private mental hospital in Stoke, New Ingtong. The rights and wrongs of Eliot’s treatment of his wife have been seen as fit subject for the stage in Michael Hastings’ play ‘Tom and Viv’ in 1984. In 1947, Vivien had died; he married second time to his secretary Valery Fletcher in 1957. If happiness comes, like lifting of a burden, the years of his second marriage are always spoken of in terms of their happiness. By the time he married second time, he was
In 1962-63, he was seriously ill. From now onwards this austerely handsome man was gone down the hill. The Leonardo Da Vinci smile, half courteous, half-sardonic, and lingered and the vigilance in the eyes could assume a haggard. The words he gave in 'Simeon' re-echo;

'My life is light waiting for the death wind
Like a feathers on the back of my hand.'

He collapsed in October, 1964, paralyzed down the left side and in coma. It was at home, he died on 4 January, 1965. His ashes rest at 'East Cocker' in Somerset with epitaph inscribed as;

'In my beginning is my end
In my end is my beginning'.

Life, for him, was an exploration, not so much of landscapes and places, as of ideas, some inherited, and some acquired the fruits of three hundred year old American ancestry mingling with his remoter origins in England and in European culture. As he writes in 'Little Giddings';

'We shall not cease from explorations
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time'.
Besides many floral tributes and homage, at the death of T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound felt that Eliot in his career 'paid the penalty of successes'. When Eliot died, Pound said;

*His was the true Dantescan voice-not honored enough, and deserving more than: 'I ever gave him... Recollections? Let some thesis-writer have the satisfaction of 'discovering' whether it was in 1920 or 1921 that I went from Excideuil to meet a ruck sacked Eliot... who is there now for me to share a joke with?' Am I to write 'about' the poet Thomas Stearn Eliot? or my friend 'the Possum?' Let him rest in peace. I can only repeat, but with the urgency of 50 years ago: READ HIM.*

Eliot, the celebrating poet of 'avant-garde', was shaped, toned and tuned by the old and the new in his poetic creation. I am confident that no poet writes or develops in isolation. Eliot was born with tradition rich and selective, evolving principally American, European and English writing. He was bearing immeasurable roots of his religious family background as intuition and many great and ideal personalities as imitation. His puritan and Unitarian concerns may have been characteristically aligned him with elites as then Boston and Harvard were directed by Unitarian. Ronald Tamplin observes, 'there have been five Unitarian Presidents of the United States. And yet in 1900 there were only 75,000 Unitarians in the whole of the country.' The country in which he had lived before 1914 was nurtured by rather different religious forces. His historical
background was puritan. Tamplin says, 'in 1834 his grandfather had left Massachusetts for St. Louis, Missouri, as a missionary for the Unitarian church, and Eliot himself was brought up as a Unitarian. The colours of this background, remotely puritan and proximately Unitarian never left him.'

Essentially his life from 1916 is to be seen first as the gathering of facts in a discipline that, unlike philosophy, acts. Eliot’s choice of poetry rather than philosophy is a consequence of his need for specifics. In that sense poems are incarnations. Secondly, he acclimatises himself to a society where social forms correspond with religious forms.

Nevertheless, I find Eliot’s second entry at Harvard as picking unto insights between Indian and Christian thoughts, of course, seriously directing the days ahead out of all misdirections when he concentrated first not on his poetry but philosophy. I agree with Eliot’s own assertion that ‘a poet accumulates much from the sensations of his first twenty one years of life’, and apply it to none but on him. His sensational period covered his twenty three years of age as at ‘Harvard again in 1911’, when he was probably motivated to search for roots and for a source of ultimate meaning of life. He could be seen acting here with a scholar’s to the habitual Western impulse and the answers to these spiritual fragments in Orientalism rather Indic Philosophy. He learnt Sanskrit under Charles R. Lanman.
In many ways, I find Eliot subsiding all his spiritual quest until when he writes in ‘Dry Salvages’;

'I sometimes wonder if that is what Krishna meant-
Among other things— or one way of pulling the something:
That the future is a faded song.
A royal rose or a lavender spray
Or wistful regret for those who are not yet here to regret
Pressed between yellow book’s leaves that have never been opened.
And the way up is the way down.
The way forward is the way back.'

And then, somewhere in 1914, some obedience to the facts led him away from the speculations of philosophy to the facts of poetry choosing actual against the ideal. One should not confuse to my stressing the Eliot’s actuality against idealism was directed and practiced by him in poetry. His thinking of Hegelian Idealism taught by Josiah Royce at Harvard and Indian Idealism taught by Charles R. Lanman was still meaningful to his creation. However, idealism is predominantly religious in tone and philosophy in clarification.

Thus, to Eliot till now, religion was not a question of transcendent truth but human response together. As on the part of imitation by Eliot, I find him nowhere as a direct follower of any of his predecessors. He touched the great men through their book and mingled with his Unitarian concern revolting against his puritanical shams and hypocrisies and repressive conventions of Boston society.
He looked on but was haunted by a sense of Christian glory with its irrecoverable past. I am sure to say what Elizabeth Drew sums up about Eliot’s work as;

‘Its centre is Christianity, the traditional form of Western culture, but a Christianity accepting its roots in culture much older than itself, and recognizing itself not only in Dante and St. John of cross but in age old ‘Pagan’ symbols of the vitality of water, of fire, of earth and age old concept of the communion and relatedness of the words and sense and of spirit..........

Gurus of T.S. Eliot included Charles R. Lanman, James H. Woods and Iravin Babbit who were the authority on Indian thoughts and tradition and gave a reservoir of ideas on which Eliot has drawn for 50 years."14 His pervasive relationship can clearly be seen with Walt Whitman, Jules Laforgue, Charles Baudelaire, Virgil, Dante and Ezra Pound. Besides above, I present Eliot’s recorded statement in the Page-Borbour’s lectures which he delivered at the University of Virginia in 1933;

"Two years spent in the study of Sanskrit under Charles R. Lanman, and a year in the mazes of Patanjali’s metaphysics under the guidance of James woods, left me in a state of enlightened mystification. A good half of the effort of understanding what the Indian philosophers were after and their subtleties make most
of the great European philosophers look like school boys

My previous and concomitant study of European philosophy was hardly better than an obstacle. And I come to the conclusion—seeing also that the 'influence of Brahmin and Buddhist thought upon Europe, as in Schopenhauer, Hartman, and Deussen, had largely been through romantic misunderstanding.'

It was under these material conditions and the climate of intellectuality that the formative years of his life contained genuine treasury for this modern metaphysical poet. Besides these facts, Eliot drew inspiration from the dramatists of the later Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.

Nonetheless, I find general assumption that Eliot has two marked periods; the period of search for grounds of pure literature and the period of his preoccupation with extra literary beliefs. For example, Delmore Schwartz says that 'by 1934, Eliot contradicted, modified or qualified practically all the literary and critical judgements' that he had made till 1933. Kristian Smidt observes, 'in Eliot's criticism after about 1921, the discussion of the entire process no longer predominates as it did before that time'.
Explaining the cause of the phenomenon he writes, 'perhaps as the result of the general subordination of purely aesthetic interest to metaphysical publication and cultural which took place in his criticism after 1921, he attempted more systematically to repute his aesthetic opinion to his main beliefs and attitudes in other fields.'

For instance, in the Gideon Seymour Lecture at the University of Minnesota, he expresses surprise as well as regret over the 'embarrassing' success in the world of 'a few notorious phrases', by which he probably meant the 'Impersonal theory of poetry', 'Objective Correlative' and 'Dissociation of Sensibility'. But the truth is that it is these phrases which explain his theory of poetry and in which lies the seed of his future developments as a poet of European culture.

The whole trouble starts when we presuppose that there was a sudden change in Eliot and his writing soon after his joining the Anglican Church in 1927. If so, we are not to forget Eliot's own words that he 'was brought up as a Unitarian of the New England Variety', that for many years he was without any definite religious faith or without any at all... That 'for many years', he was 'without any religious faith' proves that he was very much alive to the belief in the spirit of religion, but that he could not decide which religious faith he should embrace. Moreover, before he became a Christian, he passed through a long spiritual introspection which was quite natural for a person who is searching for some concrete pattern of belief in
'the shape of some religious faith'. Eliot himself solves the problem: 'towards any profound conviction one is borne gradually, perhaps insensibly, over a long period of 'time'. And after brooding over what he studied and experienced he finally decided that 'the Christian scheme seemed to me the only one which would work.' 21

What he believes, 'to be incumbent upon all Christians, is the duty of maintaining consciously certain standards and criterion of criticism over and above those applied by the rest of the world; And that by these criterion and standards everything that we read must be tested. However, instead to proceeding with any counter argument to support or reject Eliot's opinion, I would like to go back to the early years when he formulated his theories of poetry.

**Impersonal Theory of Poetry**

Rejecting the romantic concept of self-expression in art, Eliot established 'the metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul.' 22 He says that 'the poet has not a personality to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in a peculiar and unexpected ways. 23 He dismisses Wordsworthian doctrine of emotionalism. The mind of the poet operates upon 'a very great number of experiences which to the practical and active person would not seem to be experienced at all and concentrates them into the form of a poem. Another aspect of the theory is the relation between the poet and his poem. The poet is a finally perfected

17
medium in which special, or very varied, feeling are at liberty to enter into new combinations.\textsuperscript{24} Eliot draws an analogy from chemistry: the poet is a catalytic agent, like a filament of platinum whose presence in a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide causes the formation of sulphuric acid. This chemical reaction is possible only due to the presence of the filament of platinum.

The awareness of the Christian concept of original sin was all the time his main guiding principle. He had learnt from the Christian mystics, the Hindu and the Buddhist scriptures the evils of the assertion of selfhood and the religious bliss of self-effacement for a wider cause and of the ultimate identification with the Eternal. He accepts Middleton Murray's equivalence between Catholicism and Classicism: Catholicism stands for the principle of unquestioned spiritual authority outside the individual, that is also the principle of classicism in literature, Whether he was 'without any definite religious faith in 1923, one thing is quite evident: he had no inclination to join the Roman Catholic Church because, as he started in 1927, 'Catholicism in our time is essentially American and democratic, while 'Anglicanism is essentially Tory.'

Nevertheless, Eliot recognises the 'individuality' of the poet which, he says, does not lie in the fact that 'he least resembles anyone else but that the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors asserts their immortality most vigorously.'\textsuperscript{25} He must be aware of the fact that the existing
monuments from an ideal order among themselves' and that 'the mind of Europe – the mind of his own country' – is much more important than his own private mind. The merit of a poet, according to T.S. Eliot, must be examined in the context of the part traditions of his art and culture. 'No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone', says he. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You can not value him alone; you must set him for contrast and comparison among the dead.' Of course, Eliot can not tolerate an atheist and anarchist like Shelley and an advocate of morality like Arnold who sever religion from culture. To Eliot, 'Shelley was humorless, pedantic, self-centered and sometimes almost a blackguard.' Further Eliot shows his dissatisfaction with Arnold's philosophy which substitutes culture for religion and leaves religion 'to be laid waste by the anarchy of feeling'.

**Objective Correlative**

T.S. Eliot developed his views on the use of emotion in art in his essay 'Hamlet and his Problems' (1919) in which he declared Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' as 'an artistic failure' on the ground that the playwright had failed to objectify or dramatize the feeling of the hero, or in Eliot's own words, Shakespeare did not provide 'Objective equivalent' to Hamlet's feelings. He comments on other successful tragedies of Shakespeare, for example, 'Macbeth'. He notices 'this exact equivalent'; 'the state of mind of Lady Macbeth
walking in her sleep has been communicated to you by a skillful accumulation of imagined sensory impressions; the words of Macbeth on hearing of his wife’s death strike us as if, given the sequence of events; these words were automatically released by the last event in the series,' This is precisely deficient in Hamlet. Eliot’s resolution of this problem becomes his technique of ‘Objective Correlative’. The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art in by finding an objective correlative, i.e. ‘in a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of the particulars emotions; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.’

For creating an impression of the projected emotion in a poem, some items of concrete experience must be woven together so as to create an illusion of real pattern of life linked by the persona.

He does so because he has learnt through F.H. Bradley that ‘there will be no truth which is entirely true’ and that truth is relative and always imperfect, nor is even reality ‘true reality’. It is ‘our first immediate experience’ in which ‘the whole reality is present’, ‘things are but appearances and everything is experience? The only basis and source of reality available to us is our personal experience and sensation and so, instead of asserting truth, we may present our experience and sensation rather than derive conclusions there from.
In this respect, Eliot's theory of ‘Objective Correlative’ is a further development of the fundamentals of symbolism and imagism.

**Dissociation of Sensibility**

Eliot seems to have derived his idea of unified sensibility incorporating both thought and feeling from F.H. Bradley who gives 'the general idea of a total experience, where will and thought and feeling may all... be one...33 In his essay ‘The Metaphysical Poets’ (1921), he deplores the ‘dissociation of sensibility’ that set in the seventeenth century from which English poetry has not yet recovered. Eliot says about it that it was the direct and normal development of the precedent essay whose virtue of continuing the tradition subsequently disappeared.

The origin of the ‘Dissociation of Sensibility’ may be sought in the emphasis on ‘reason’ laid by the scientific thinkers like Francis Bacon, Johannes Kepler and Thomas Hobbes. They were votaries of the scientific method of enquiry and search for the objective truth; personal emotions, desires or imagination were prejudicial to detached observation. While fixing up the responsibility of dissociating thought from sensibility, Eliot remarked in the earlier essay that this process was ‘aggravated by the influence of the two most powerful poets of the century; Milton and Dryden.’

21
Theory of Drama

In the eleventh Annual Lecture of the National Book League, delivered in 1953, Eliot said that ‘there is a dramatic element in much of my early work.’ In another essay, ‘A Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry’ (1928), E, one of the interlocutors, says that drama springs from religious liturgy. He hopes to get ‘dramatic satisfaction’ in a High Mass well performed. D, another interlocutor supports him and enlarges the scope of the discussion by suggesting that ‘the forms of the drama must vary from age to age in accordance with religious assumption of the age’. In the aforesaid ‘Dialogue’ A. says that ‘the craving for poetic drama is permanent in human nature.’

Attempts were made in the 20th century to revive poetic drama and bring into operation the total sensibility. Eliot’s contribution to poetic drama in both theory and practice is considerable. In the first Theodore Spenser Memorial Lecture delivered at Harvard University in 1951, he observed that ‘if poetry is merely a decoration, on added embellishment, if it merely gives people of literary tastes the pleasure of listening to poetry as the same time that they are witnessing a play, then it is superfluous.’ Pointing out the ideal towards which poetic drama should strive, Eliot says that it is an unattainable ideal which provides an incentive towards further experiment and exploration. Dramatic poetry, says Eliot, can enter into this ‘peculiar range of sensibility’. Nevertheless, because
the ideal is ‘unattainable’, he humbly says that his drama of the perfection of verse drama is only a ‘mirage’ which is ‘a design of human action and of words.’

Eliot knew the importance of drama as a powerful medium. His whole pursuit as a dramatist has been to discover a divine plan or order behind the realities of life, to bring together belief, the ideal patterns of religious belief and the real pattern of life and if there be any antimony between the two, to resolve it.

When we look back to the history of the West, we are shocked to imagine internecine political verse. Materialistic bases of psychology and philosophy were substituted by irrationality of science tended to be unscientific and the old beliefs disappeared. Ultimately, quest for some ideal patterns of life based on ethico-moral and spiritual beliefs binded us together. Eliot was being deeply moved by the lack of belief in the elemental values of life. T.S. Eliot observes in 1923 about contemporary history as ‘the immense panorama of futility’. The man became the center of value-judgements and moral concepts. The Golden Jubilee of 1888 held in the honor of Queen Victoria was the landmark in the ‘glorious’ history of England. Rapid industrialization and feverish search for undeveloped and underdeveloped countries became more urgent for exploiting their natural resources. By the end of 19th century, England’s industries could not compete with those of other European countries and the United States. The whole of Europe was turning
towards the dangerous course of history in the form of war. In the words of Pauline Gregg the condition of the post war Europe was as follows;

"Foreign competition, imperial rivalries, tariffs, a changed relationship between Britain and the powers, and an abandonment of balance between her industry, and her agriculture, which made her more than ever dependent upon imported food."

Thus the war fought for an order resulted into dislocating world economy. T.S. Eliot condemned it as ‘immortality of competition.’ He spotted it as avarice. He wrote ‘there is something wrong in our attitude towards money. The acquisitive rather than the creative and spiritual instincts are encouraged.’ England was again paralyzed by the ‘Great Depression’ in 1929. It decided to increase duties on foreign goods. People grew indignant at the policy of the government and a strain of disgust was widespread in all the classes.

Hence, the Second World War brought all the ugly features of the capitalism followed by an epoch of England’s supremacy coming to an end. The science that invigorated the spirit of Renaissance gave birth to a new class of bourgeois is which the arbiters of tastes in art and literature became. They became custodian of morals and ethics which was totally different from the tradition of Christian culture. Utilitarianism was their summon bonus. Whatever
pleased them were fines that which entertained them was interesting; and that which sermonized on some Biblical theme was noble. Contemporary writers fed them with their stuff. They abused science, and the middle class in the same brief.

Instead to keeping pace with time, they turned the wheel of history; Tennyson dwelt in classical legend; Arnold dreamt of Oxford of the 17th century and Browning enjoyed the company of Dukes and Duchesses. It amounted to admitting that the 'actual world of alien, recalcitrant and un-poetical and that no protest is worth making except the protest of withdrawal.'

The Tennysonian spirit of nationalism and imperialism was echoed by Rudyard Kipling, Henry New Belt, Sir William Watson and W.E. Henley. There was a revolt against the decadence of value in the Victorian age, which had sought refuse in a dream world of beauty. Thomas Hardy and A.E. Houseman examined the tragic predicament of man. Rudyard Kipling, whom Lawrence Durrell calls, 'the self-appointed laureate of the Empire,' was a poet of imperialistic politics. He talked of supremacy of British culture. However, with the close of the 19th century, Kipling's popularity diminished because the belief in the principle of national self-determination grew strong.

W.B. Yeats condemned science and enjoyed journeying to the Irish myths, legends and folklores. He believed that poetry is a
revelation; a hidden life. His unsuccessful dabbling in politics and disappointment in his fondness for Maud Gonne was decisive in his life. In ‘September 1913’, he accepted with great pain that;

‘Romantic Ireland’s dead and gone
Its with O’ Leary in the grave.’

Thus, Yeats’ movement which tends to throw belief to dust collapsed. Hardy believed that there is no benevolent God, no moral plan behind the Universe, no heaven, no hell rather it is a blind force (he calls it by different names such as the ‘Immanent Will’ God and the providence) which governs human fate. He reversed Browning’s lines to suit his own purpose; ‘God’s is not in heaven, All’s wrong with the world.’

A.E. Houseman was another version of Thomas Hardy with little difference. He was conscious of the tragic import of life and its ironies. He never hoped to have a glimpse of happiness in life but he believed that man will ‘see injustice done’;

“I pace the earth, and dream and air and feel the sun
Be still my soul, it is but for the sun a season:
Let endure an hour and see injustice done.”

Early 20th century of England saw the emergence of new classes without any tradition of culture. New Plutocrat had no interest in art, literature or culture. They lived amidst bridge, women and champagne whereas slum-dwellers and poor workers were living a
hellish life. Nevertheless, this period reflects the belief of the reading public rather than of the poets. Rationality and intellect drove poetry away. Chesterton loved God and the earth, wine and children. Alfred Noyes believed in the supremacy of love and immortality of soul. Edward Thomas, tortured by poverty, realized that persons like him were destined to be happy.

Georgian poetry (1911-1922) could draw no serious readers of poetry. Rupert Brook sang of youth and joy with intermittent flashes of melancholy. D.E.S. Maxwell says that this movement was 'a protest against the changing civilization.'\textsuperscript{42} In the early month of World War I, volumes of war poems sold like hot cake. Robert Graves and William Watson shared patriotic trends; William Watson in his 'Sons of Britain' writes;

\begin{quote}
'Would you sit at home, and watch and ponder
While the warriors agonise and dare?
Here for you is shame, but glory yonder:
Choose the glory-yea, a hero's share.'\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Charles Hamilton Sorely is the first to catch hold of the meaningless absurdity and horrors of war. He observed the war between England and Germany as their folly';

\begin{quote}
'When it is peace, then we may view again with new-won eyes each others truer from and wonder.'\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}
Edmund Blunden, Richard Alington from the front about clamor of destruction. Herbert Reed wrote:

'The earth was scarred and broken

By torrents of plunging shells.'

Sassoon satirized moneyed-class who glorified the deed of soldiers. E.A. Mackintosh and Robert Graves attacked war for its horror and boredom. Sassoon concludes his 'Lamentations' as;

'.......................... in my belief

Such men have lost all patriotic feeling.'

Wilfred Owen was aware of the catastrophic war situation. He dramatized vulgarity of the war. He wrote in the preface in his projected volumes of his war poems that;

'Above all I am concerned with poetry

My subject is war and pity of war

The Poetry is in the pity.'

C.D. Lewis assessing Wilfred Owen and other war poets, writes 'these elegies are to this generation innocently consolatory: they may be to the next. All a poet can do today is warm: that is why the true poet must be truthful.'

After having discussed about the life of T.S. Eliot, development of his mind and trends of the contemporary literature, I shall attempt at the dimensions of belief in man which prompted T.S. Eliot to compose the story of both side of the walls at which he
is standing and seeing one side-good, the other side-evil. It is confirmed time and again in the past that belief is a light interpreted by everyman for self-survival. Without belief of some kind, the fullness of life can not be maintained. I find faith and belief, two close terms having different implications. A Christian hopes to visualize the eternal truth of life due to his faith in God and Christ. In the light of religious belief life is subsumed in the life of God. The narrow limits of the self are lessened; the personality is enriched and dignified. Alexander Mair has perfectly qualified the meaning of belief as 'it acquires a fuller and more permanent value. It is intelligible how with the emergence of belief of this kind there comes the sense that salvation has been found'.

The act of believing implies the acceptance of certain norms and it goes together with behavior. Action is the test of belief whereas faith is bearing the pattern of change at times. Faith is a willful act of the wisdom. Actually speaking, belief is more or less constrained by fact which convinces us whereas faith reaches beyond the actual or the given to the ideal. Faith does not require reasoning. For a man of religious belief faith is a unchallengeable dogma. S. Radhakrishnan, noted educationist, philosopher and former president of Indian Republic, examines the impact of it and says that 'large section of the people of the world today are victims of unwilling disbelief. They are not able to stand inside the cloistered walls of the
traditional forms, yet, they require a faith........ one must belief, no matter what.  

As far as religious belief is concerned, Buddhism is singular whose emphasis is led on seeing, knowing, understanding and not on faith, or belief.' In Buddhist texts there is a word Saddha (Sanskrit, Sraddha) which is usually translated as 'faith' or 'belief'. But Sraddha is not 'faith' as such, but rather 'confidence born out of conviction'. Again to Buddhists, 'the question of belief arises when there is no seeing---seeing in every sense of the words; the moment you see, the question of belief disappears.' Again, to our bewilderment, 'the teaching of the Buddha is qualified as ehi-passika inviting you to 'come and see', but not to come and believe. Thus the philosophy of Buddhism is genuine and worth imitation and practice. Nevertheless, going back to Christianity, faith was considered necessary to understand that the world was framed by the word of God. Later, Christian Saints started making appeal to apprehend the divine principles of life. The intellectual doctrine of faith continued until Immaul Kant rejected it. In his study of epistemology he arrived at the conclusion that there are two sources of gaining knowledge, namely theoretical and practical. First is limited to reason the faculty of sense-perception and the second is extended upon us with some sort of moral imperatives. It regulates our conduct and develops in us an insight into religious principles.
The relation between belief and values has been studied by modern sociologist. They prefer to use the term ‘belief’ than faith as they are interested in the cognitive aspect of feeling. Talcott Parsons says: ‘Man is a cognizing animal, and so his values do not exist apart from belief which gave them cognitive meaning.’^54 Indian philosopher and poet Rabindra Nath Tagore, perhaps looks at faith as ‘blind-faith’ when he says, ‘faith is a bird, that can see the light when it is dawn and starts singing in the dark.’^55 Besides discussions of multiplicity, I turn to present what John Milton observes as difference between heresy and unbelief ‘a man may be heretic in the youth; and if he believes things, only on the authority of others without other reason, then though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes heresy.’^56 The opinion, held by John Milton, is genuine. As far as belief and heresy is accepted in modern religious concern, it may guide me as well as the readers to judge Eliot’s quest and to experience his exploration.

With above framework and perspective, Eliot’s work needs a serious and sensible study because they are plausible not in 20th century but even today as ‘a quest for belief’. The whole of his poetic creation is a quest before modern social agony. The question of survival at the cost of values is easy but the survival of values at the face of degeneracy is uncalled for in the modern world. Eliot’s quest for belief in the so called civilized world is his concern. I would try to experience, understand and analyzed all the vistas of Eliot’s
literary disclosers. Eliot’s work and its study discloses that its relevance today is more demanding than what it disclosed before decades before the readers of 20th century. Modern trends to do ‘As you like it’ is fanciful but has reduced the social institutions, cultural harmony and religious effects to the dust; the dust which has no sign of water to produce the vital crops.

Division of a work into chapters is a matter of convenience as such I like to divide my study into three evolutionary parts, each having the subject matter common characteristics separately. However, such division is only a continuous flow and knows nothing of absolute endings and beginnings. In fact each part overlaps another. They are of utmost value because they help to concentrate attention upon the ‘Quest for Belief in the Poetry of T.S. Eliot’, most significantly, in each successive stage of gradual transformation into the business of belief. Thus, I divide Eliot’s work into three broad stages namely ‘Illusion’, ‘Search’ and ‘Truth’. I am confident that it will serve to study the progress of Eliot’s conviction, mission and execution. In my study, I have not limited my discussion up to his poetry but have tried to investigate the diverse forces responsible for unbelief. I am bound to devote a considerable space for contemporary literary trends and other non-literary matters. I find them helpful in understanding the broader vistas. The different aspects and their interrelatedness, is, to me, significant for interdisciplinary understanding. As for me, I, instead of giving any
judgement, have preferred to experience and elucidate the poems with occasional echoes of Hindi and Sanskrit poems so as to enjoy the theme and at the same time to understand the dimensions of 'Quest for Belief in the Poetry of T.S. Eliot.'
References


2. Ibid, p.205.


6. Ibid, p.89.

7. C.P., p.196.

8. Ibid, p.222.


11. Ibid, p.35.


25. Ibid, p.49.


27. Ibid, p.49.


31. Ibid, p.100.
33. Ibid, p.141.


44. Ibid, pp. 127-128.


46. Ibid, p.123.

47. Ibid, p. 140.


52. Idem.


