I entitle this chapter as 'Illusion' for my convenience of study. I find the title most appropriate because at this age, not only the poets but the poetry lovers also were illusioned. Eliot himself considers the vision of the poets as Utopian. Victorian poets, for example, experienced the cultural crisis, naked individualism and deplorable loss of values but they never condemned the ethos of their time. Eliot, disapproves the view of beautiful world as theirs and notes, 'but the essential advantage for a poet is not, to have a beautiful world with which to deal; he is able to see beneath both beauty and ugliness; to see the boredom and the horror and the glory.'

Eliot lived through a troubled time; particularly Great Wars raging throughout the world and shattering its social and spiritual values. Mr. Pinto observes;

'The important fact that every poet and indeed every serious writer had to face in England in the first half of the twentieth century was that the society in which he was living was in a very high degree hostile to the spiritual life.'
Eliot, aware of new situations and implications, began to give serious thought ‘Shall I, at least, set my lands in order?’ In the essay on ‘The Metaphysical Poets’, he writes;

‘The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning.’

Eliot with such conviction appears to be pleading his own case but it appears that he wanted to arouse the ‘refined sensibility to be able to reflect the disordered society. It would be meaningless unless we glance at that broken society. His early poems are born of devitalized world that has denied or ignored the spiritual life. We are struck by the confusion, purposelessness and wastefulness of the then world where redemption features are not in sight. Mr. More correctly held later ‘if there be any salvation from such a whirl of chance and time; it is only into the peace of utter escape ‘Shantih, Shantih’.

I understand that Eliot is exploring basically being concerned with the perpetual struggle of good and evil through the fragile body and poor conscience of man. The struggle discerns flashes of values of life immortal. Eliot is aware of that the permanent human values are mandatory to survive. The world poses a threat to the man’s existence because of devoid of any generally accepted standard of belief. He was aware that man has:

‘Invented the Higher Religions,’
And at the same time;

'Men have left GOD not for other Gods, they say, but
For no God; and this has never happened before.'6

And man are dwelling;

'In an age which advances progressively backwards?'7

It is noteworthy that Eliot is aware of the past when people had faith in religion and its wonderful sterility. His traditional knowledge echoes what Bhismā, the great grandfather of Kauravas and Pandavas reminds Yudhisthir about past nature of belief:

'Bandhe Karam ke bandhan mein,
Sab log jiya karate the,
Ek-dusare ka dukh hanskar
Bant liya karate the

Raja-praja nahi thi koi
Aur nahi shashan tha
Dharmneeti ka jan-jan ke,
Man-man par anushashan tha.8

Naturally, I need some space to outline some of the factors directing poet’s conviction before studying the first stage of the poet Eliot’s Unitarian concern. Later, his conversion in 1927 is to be understood as a return to and belief in an orthodox view of the nature of Christ as
the Incarnate God. Eliot, in his quest for belief, tends to see moral
offences as offences primarily against other human beings and not as
against the nature of God. His belief of the primitives is to be taken
seriously yet comprehensively. The word 'primitive' has had
overtones of 'savagery'. Eliot's conviction that modern men 'have
left God not for other Gods, they say, but for no God; and this has
never happened before.'9 is not a simple hypothesis to be worked
with 'The Hippopotamus'. It makes the point that it is the animal and
not the true church which achieves the heaven. Likewise, mysticism
is a thing to which different religions are attached unanimously. His
intellectual imperatives demand of complexity as a path to simplicity
and reason. He is looking for in such a state convinced to be the basis
of his assertion about the values of life. All saints and gurus agree
that mystical union with God is the ultimate limit to the potentialities
of human consciousness. I find it quite fit into Eliot's consciousness
to construe my own experience.

Further, Eliot's use of the city and the desert speaks of
simultaneous desire for commitment and withdrawal. Such desert is
located in the city and in the heart of our near and dear ones. He
elaborates its nature as;

'Second, you neglect and belittle the desert

*The desert is not remote in Southern tropics,*

*The desert is squeezed in the tube-train next to you,*
The desert is in the heart of your brother.' 10

Besides many narratives, following lines project the so-felt heaven;

'The cycle of Heaven in twenty centuries
Bring us further from Good and nearer to the Dust.' 11

Eliot is a believer in 'time the destroyer is time the preserver' 12
which is ultimately in conformity to not only Christianity but

universality. His conviction is a permanent sources of spiritual solace

and bliss. He is a patron of faction of religious fraternity by

observing;

'Our citizenship is in Heaven; yes, but that is the model
and type for your citizenship upon earth.' 13

Decidedly Eliot is like a Mahatma (great soul) when he has a purpose
to be executed by himself;

'Shall I, at least, set my lands in order?' 14

Having presented preconditionalties of Eliot's belief, we shall discuss
his early poems as first stage, the stage of illusion. His first volume
of poems, acknowledged as the inaugural poem of 'Avant-Garde' is

'Prufrock and Other Observations 1917', dedicated to Jean Verdenal
(1889-1915), consist of twelve poems. The first poem in the volume
is 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock';
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock (1917)

Eliot composes its first line 'Let us go then you and I' by inviting all of his readers to certain place which is located not in London but in any commercially civilized city;

'When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table,'

is emotionally, the numbness of heart, aching like pain. The city-evening is peaceful in poem yet it has serious undertone of unhealthiness and unease;

'Streets that follow like a tedious argument
of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question.............

Oh, do not ask, 'What is it?'

Let us go make our visit."

The street, through which Prufrock is likely to explore, is like tedious argument and not reasoning of some values and means of life. The whole existence of these streets is self-posturing having introvert nature. Eliot tries to understand the equivocation between the overwhelming question in the mind of the protagonist and at the face of etherized evening spread all over the street through which the journey is likely to commence. He is extremely curious to approach his destination by side tracking the ultimate results. He visualises the room; perhaps a saloon;
Ronald Tamplin observes, ‘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.’ DES Maxwell notes, ‘Prufrock and the evening are conscious but conscious of nothing’. The romantic journey continues through the street covered with yellow fog, yellow smoke and other jaundiced notions thereof. Prufrock’s mind is so engulfed in his desire that he understands only the uselessness of the time;

‘Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions.
Before the taking of a toast and tea.’

The subsequent lines as;

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

are unstable shifting identifying Prufrock’s surroundings and the ‘tedious argument’. These are the intensified possibility of Eliot’s belief ‘in the necessity of suffering, a bidding farewell to the novel fancies of death even as the essential precursor of spiritual rebirth.’ Many learned minds misinterpreted ‘Do I dare disturb the universe?’
It is perhaps timidity also but I find in it the metaphysical 'passivity' intending libration from the world and union with God. Moreover, Prufrock is an old man so he can not dare surrender to passion. If he is saving himself from defilement and tinge 'not to disturb the universe', he could, as per Buddhist doctrine, be called 'Brahman';

'He whose destiny neither the Gods nor demigods nor men do know, he who has destroyed defilements and become worthy, him I call a Brahman.'

The next striking utterance comes from Prufrock 'How should I begin?' and 'How should I presume?' These two individual questions rather doubts are not from a layman's head. It is Prufrock who belongs to a very high class society and is confident of his past like Leicester of 16th century (The Waste Land, Pt. III, The Fire Sermon-line 279) as he says;

'For, I have known them all already known them all
Have known the evening, morning, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall.'

'Human being, said Eliot, 'can not bear very much realities.' And if 'after such knowledge what forgiveness?' I want to make the point to knowledge static for a while and search for a resemblance in the character of Prufrock with that of Pururava of Indian myth that projects his abilities before Uravashi;
Martya Manav ki vijay ka turya hun mai.
Urvashi! apne samay ka surya hun mai,
Andh tam ke bhaal par pawak jalata hun,
Badalon ke sheesh par syandan chalata hun.²⁷

Pururava gets detracted of Uravashi’s charm and says;

‘Main tumhare baan ka bindha hua khag,
Vaksh par dhar shish marana chahata hun,
Main tumhare haanth ka leela kamal hun,
Praan ke sar mein utarana chahata hun.²⁸

The emotional conditional of the two characters stated herein can be further substitutabily understood with Prufrock’s affirmity and cravings for communionship with the women of his acquaintance whose closer contact is his passion;

‘Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?²⁹

People are unable to discipline their mind and the self in the modern commercialized civilization. The mind veils the inner-self and heightens it. It keeps God far away from us and at the same time it inculcates in us that happiness must be found outside, yet the same
mind that separates us from the self also helps us to reunite with it. That is why the ancient sages, who were true psychologists, concluded that the mind is the source of both bondage and liberation, the source of both sorrow and joy; our worst enemy as well as our greatest friend. That is why, if there is anything worth knowing in this world, is the mind. The sages of the *Upanishads* said the mind is the body of the self;

\[ Yo \text{ manasi tisthanmansoyantar, yam mano na ved,} \]
\[ yasya manah shariram' \]
\[ Yo manontaro yamyati, aish ta atmantayayamimritam. \]

The English version of above *Sloka* can be as, ‘he who dwells in the mind, yet is within the mind, whom the mind does not know, whose body the mind is, who controls the mind from within. He is your self, the inner controller, the immortal.’

Nonetheless, ‘Prufrock’ is drowning in the whirlpool of his passion but at the same time he is looking for liberation he is craving like a man addicted to careless living and grows like a creeper. He jumps hither and thither like a monkey in the forest looking for fruit.\(^{31}\) His plucking of courage over vacillation and fear makes him a man of jaundiced eye. ‘I have known the arms already, known them all’; ‘Arms that lie along the table’\(^{32}\) is feminine smell in Prufrock. It is passion in defiled mind and at the same time a sign of dejection. He says;
‘I am Lazarus, come from the dead.
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all.’ 33

It is the experience of hell which Lazarus will tell to his men of the earth. In his journey he approaches ‘without belief or hope’ hence he sidetracks the issue:

‘Oh, do not ask what is it?
Let us go and make our visit.’ 34

How ridiculous? The proposed visit expected by poetry-lover-reader gains no materialization. He recapitulates ideas without belief in harmonious operation of the principles of decay and regeneration. The old beliefs are gone in modern Prufrocks. The society has become autonomous; only cogs in the vast machinery of modernization. He says, ‘I have measured out my life with coffee-spoons’ the self-boosting has frozen man’s essential yarning desire for the meaning of life. He is not contended to think anything about seriousness of problems of life. He talks on petty matters like the following;

‘I have gone to dusk through narrow-street
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt sleeves leaning out of windows.’ 35

Prufrock prefers to be a crab rather than bearing the curse of living a hellish existence. He feels remorseful like Davis and his men who
wept, fasted and mourned the deaths of Saul and his son Jonathan. He has passed through the crucial moments of murderous situation as if some one would have chopped of his head and placed it in a platter, as had happened to John, ‘the Baptist’.

Prufrock vacillates and yearns communion with not only some human being but within multiple meaningless exciting materials. His urge equates one of that Andrew Marvell’s;

‘Let us roll our strength and all
Our sweetness, up into one Ball
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life.’

Prufrock knows that the fashionable ladies won’t care for his concern with any serious problem of life; one of them would say in a comfortable tone;

‘That is not what I meant at all
That is not, at all.’

He is again lost in the memory of the dry monotonous life lived everyday in such an atmosphere he feels that;

‘It is impossible to say just what I mean.’

Yet, he does not lose hope, rather he falls prey to wishful thinking. Would it not be possible, he says, that one of these ladies might one day say that life is not meant for what they were doing?
'But if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen
Would it have be worthwhile
If one settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl
And turning towards the window, should say:
That is not it all.
That is not what I meant at all.'

The noble Prince Hamlet could not achieve his purpose and went on procrastinating his plan till he was killed yet he could say;

'The time is out of joint O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set right.'

Moreover, by Killing Claudius, Hamlet transformed the prison of Denmark into a purified nation. But Prufrock can not be a noble soul like Hamlet. With this awareness of his hollowness, he feels that he has grown into old under the pressure of these moral questioning of his inner self and failing to push his belief in the essential search of human values. He imagines himself a buffoon, chanting a childish rhyme full of despair;

'I grow old............... I grow..........................
I shall wear the bottom of my trousers rolled'.

What an unredeemable narrative? Perhaps Larkin's following beautiful stanza from 'The Old Fools' shares an ability to battle despair with a mature and careful romantic posture;
‘Perhaps being old is having lighted rooms
Inside your head, and people in them acting
People you know yet can’t quite name:
Like a deep loss restored from known door turning
Setting down a lamp smiling from a stair.’

Nonetheless, Prufrock’s ‘memory with desire’ weighs so heavily that it can be seen as an attempt ‘to regain the blissful seat of heaven.’ Prufrock is enticed by desire serpent to the city trenches of ‘dooms day’. His mind is a untidy home where dwells evil from his paradisal tidings. He curses himself because he fears that he can not establish communication with the forces of nature operating harmoniously, such as the mermaids; ‘I do not think that they will sing to me.’ However, he is still under the spell of the music of their harmonious life;

‘I have seen them riding seawards in
Combing with the white hair of the waves bloom the waves black
When the wind blows the water white and black.’

How long it can be a dream-world of fantasy to keep Prufrock absorbed? Actually speaking, the preconscious, the Super-Ego developed by Sigmund Freud in his ‘Interpretation of Dreams’ (1900) functions here well. Freud says, “Consciousness is, in general, a very highly fugitive condition” “What is conscious is conscious only for a moment.” I would recall the Bhagwadgita in which it is
repeatedly emphasized that the spirit behind one’s thought, action and word is of utmost significance, while explaining the yoga of meditation of Arjuna, Lord Krishna equates a ‘Karmyogi’ to a ‘Sanyasi’, to extol the high discipline and mental renunciation involved in the practice of Karmyoga, when there is no desire for the fruit of action performed, and there is no trace of any longing at all in the mind. It is not out of place to remember Nachiketa, a character in Mahabharta, who gained the highest knowledge from Yama by his determination. The mind determines the spiritual evolution and great ‘yogis’ like king Janak have cautioned against the mind that plays tricks and delutes.

Prufrock is found balancing his potentialities without powerful mind. He says, ‘I have known them all (L-48), I am no prophet (L-84), I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker (L-85), No! I am not prince Hamlet (L-101), I grow old (L-120), and many more reflect Prufrocks pre-epileptic signs. He, at last, is joined by his you and thrilled to evaluate his actions;

‘We have lingered in the chambers of sea.’ 47

The mind (Prufrock) and the soul (you) are to be liberated by abandoning the alluring worldly glitters. Prufrock’s mind is similar to that of a double-edge sword that can be used for both, self-defense and self destruction. Prufrock is a case of low stage conscious: conscious but conscious of nothing meaningful. Shri. N.
Veezhinathan, famous Indian expert of Bhagwadgita clarifies. ‘One can delve into philosophy, theology, science, technology etc, but it is of no avail if one is unable to control the mind. It is only by concentrating on God and trying to gain Atma Jnana that one can hope of travel towards liberation.’

Famous Indian theologian Bhrtihari wrote long ago;

‘Bhoga na bhukta vaymev bhuktastapo na taptam vaymev taptah, Kalo na yato vaymev yatastrisna na jeerna vaymev jeernah!’

The same could poetically be read as;

‘I thought I was enjoying sense pleasures;
I did not realize they were enjoying me.
I thought I was spending my time;
I did not realize it was spending me.’

Prufrock has failed to look at his life. He has pursued the fulfillment of his desire with eyes open yet time has eaten him up. I find Eliot projecting Prufrock as Open-Eyed person of modern world. He is conscious of everything but he is conscious of nothing. He is blind eyed. He failed to practice Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata, the three principles to enlightenment.

**Portrait of a Lady (1915)**

This is the poem of true tragic relationship of modern men and women in the modern world. In the ‘Portrait of a Lady’, article ‘a’ is significant for me because Eliot, here, did not use article ‘the’. 
It, obviously, means that the portrait of the lady is for random representation of modern developed ladies who mostly experience sardonic suffocation. Next to it, I would avail an opportunity to present a brief story from *Brihadarayaka Upanishad*, which shall enable us to experience Eliot's plan of the poem;

> Yagyavalkya was one of the greatest sages of ancient times. He had two wives: Katyayani, who was old, and Maitreyi, who was very young. He decided to go into the forest to live as a renunciant. He divided his wealth into two shares and gave one share to each. Katyayani accepted her shares but Maitreyi asked, 'Will this wealth give me mortality?' 'No,' said Yagyavalkya. Maitreyi astonishingly refused and said, 'then I do not want it.' 'I married you not for your wealth but for your knowledge. I want to attain the self'. Yagyavalkya was very pleased and Maitreyi his dear became dearer to him.  

Eliot has succeeded in projecting the lackness of knowledge of self, or not, is to be experienced here.

The epigraph of the poem from ‘Jew of Malta’ by Christopher Marlowe is a dialogue spoken by a Friar. He is beginning to accuse Barabas, (the villainous Jew of the title), who interrupts him and finishes off the sentence with his own words. It is
a scene of double deception. The Friar is trying to blackmail Barabas, not simply charging him with sin. In turn Barabas, self-accusation is callous and comically prompt. He wants to deceive the Friar by concealing his real sin which go far deeper. He comes fresh from a grotesque crime; the poisoning of a convent of nuns. It suggests the situation of moral uncertainty in the poem that is hinted in epigraph.

Eliot observes everything under trivial hypocrisy and as an advance to ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’. The anthropology by Eliot in present poem, peculiarly significant, is expression of the scientific spirit which has resulted into spiritual as well as carnal indifference. The poem is set in a December afternoon. A lady and her inept friend is responsible to the occasion;

‘You have the scene arrange itself-as it will seem
With ‘I have saved this afternoon for you’.

Eliot has braved with smoke and fog as earlier but ‘I have saved......’ indicates that the two are going to conclude decisively over some personal misunderstanding. They are not only physically present in the darkened room but mentally also. ‘Four rings of light: perhaps suggests that they have tossed the seventh noble path of Right Mindfulness of Buddhism which says that’;

‘Right Mindfulness (or Attentiveness) is to be diligently aware, mindful and attentive with regard to (1) the activities of the body (Kaya), (2) sensation or feelings
(Vedana), (3) the activities of the mind (citta) and (4) ideas, thought, conceptions and things (dhamma)."  

Wisdom has been eradicated from their mind due to lack of energetic view which develops and bring the good of mind to perfection. The envy of life has sapped lady’s vitality and the callous of her lover has thwarted her dreams. Three sections of this poem signify the gradual death of the lady’s hope. The romantic aromas of the lady’s drawing room suggest burial in the grave of her own romantic dream. The lover recollects how the lady adorned friendship and yearned for it without which she called life is nightmare;

‘How much it means that I say this to you

Without these friendships life what cauchemar.’

The lover feels ‘a dull tom-tom’ inside his brain. ‘Tom-Tom is a native East India drum, the correct Hindustani version of which is tam-tam.’ It is worth experience by a reader to realize the science of sound over the ear possibly making unfit to hear nothing over the effect of drum sound in the ear. He decides to jolt his mind in trifling matters;

‘Let us take the air in a tobacco trance

Admire the monuments

Discuss the late events,

Correct our watches by the public clocks.

Then sit for an hour and drink our bocks.’
An Indian scholar observes a great virtue in resignation by the lady. Resignation by itself is a great virtue and one simply hopes that the lady is going to practice ‘a tobacco trance’. Is it the modern Western vision of the ‘trance’ generally practiced by the Indian Yogi? One seems to ask this pertinent question.\textsuperscript{57} She becomes merely ‘an object for detached contemplation.’\textsuperscript{58}

Faith for Eliot carries with its consequences: Belief dictates action. The lines are swift about dull actions of the lover and the lady without belief. The reason of hope (the spring) opens second section but it does not make promise of fructifying of her dreams. The lady is twisting a lilac in her fingers, a phallic symbol, suggesting her amorousness;

‘Now that lilac is in bloom.

She has a bowl of lilacs in her room.’\textsuperscript{59}

The lady feels immeasurably at peace and finds the world to be wonderful and youthful. She knows that her lover has ‘no Achilles heels’;

‘You are invulnerable; you have no Achilles’ heel

You will go on, and when you have prevailed

You can say: at this point many a one has failed.’\textsuperscript{60}

She does not leave the wiles of coquette to gain his favor. What she has to offer him is only friendship and sympathy and in doing so she has reached near the point of her death;

\textsuperscript{57}
'But what have I, but what have I, my friend
To give you/ what can you receive from me?
Only the friendship and the sympathy
Of one about to reach her journey's end.' 61

She wants to get into the dull routine of life;
'I shall sit here serving tea to friends.' 62

It is strange that why such Ladies of this civilized world have not followed the guidelines of many of the elders extended to even the minors. I find a Buddhist principle to be adhered if one falls pry to such relationships;

'If, as one fares, one does not find a companion who is better or equal, let one resolutely pursue the solitary course; there can be no fellowship with the fool.'63

Women remained victim of drudgery and broken dreams in all ages. Lines from Philip Larkin's 'Breadfruits' (1961) resembles as romantic fantasies arrive into the pathos;

'A mortgaged semi-with a silver birch;
Nippers; the widowed mum; having to scene
With money; illness; age.'64

In a similar case, he observes about the lives of the women in 'Afternoons' whose romantic fantasies lead to pathos of;
'An estateful of washing
And the albums, lettered our wedding lying
Near the television.'

The lady's maelstrom of conflicting situation and the future of her love reveal to her the nothingness of future ahead. It has become a process of gradual extinction from self;

'Perhaps you can write to me.

............................................

This is as I had reckoned.'

When lust engulfs friendship and egotism is preserved by either of the two; the latter does not bother about the feelings of the former. The lady has forgotten the outcome of the lust-wrecked relation; lust then;

'..........misses out all that love means

Giving, taking, accepting, and perhaps abstaining.

Always being gentle and full of thought.'

What to imagine about the cause of such cleft between them. The painful struggle of the lady and her pitifully twisting feelings can be seen with George Meredith's 'Modern Love';

'No villain need be passions spin the plot;

We are betrayed by what is false within.'

She is imprisoned in her own net and says;
'I have been wondering frequently of late
(But our beginning never know our ends.)
Why we have not developed into friends.'^{69}

The relationship in suffocating prison reminisces Col. Lovelace's phrasal lines;

'Stonewalls do not a prison make
Nor Iron bars a cage.'^{70}

And it is here, a poetry lover can not fail the Excellency of T.S. Eliot who minutely visualizes the final and pathetic substitution recalled by the visitor for the lady. She is like a 'dying fall of the music' which echoes P.B. Shelly's lines vibrating the heart of the lady;

'Music, when soft voices die
Vibrates in the memory.'^{71}

The lady and the visitor are unable to develop into any relationship of healthy spirits as M. Drayton (1563-1631) felt in his 'Love's Farewell,'

'Since there is no help, come let's kiss and part-
Nay! I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad with all my heat,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.'^{72}

The lady is bound in her utter remorse to say;
'So closely? I myself can hardly understand.

We must leave it now to fate.'  

She does not contemplate and meditate the self otherwise she could have realized like Aushinary, wife of Pururva, on his parting;

'Main hi de payi na bhavmay vah aahar purush ko,
Jiski unhen apar kshudha utani avashyakta thi.'

Neither can free thus because none is aware of neither love nor friendship. Emily Bronte has beautifully sung it as;

'Love is like the wild rose-briar
Friendship like the holly-tree
The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms.
But when will bloom most constantly.'

If this be the story, I find that until we are not able to skill at;

'Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.'

The so called modern society having ‘Strong Brown God’ has to have life partners who neither lament at nor repent for such parting. Eliot writes later in 'The Rock' chorus II;

'What life has you if you have not life together?
There is no life that is not in community
And no community not lived in praise of GOD.'
The poem 'Portrait of a Lady' is actually a story of all men and women who are victim of greed, lust and selfishness and desirous of developing a friendship in the limbo. Indian philosophers and theologians have suggested understanding self in their voluminous works. I would present the further story to what I presented in the beginning of the study of this poem. Being pleased with Maitreyi, Yagyavalkya explains the greatness of the self to her;

'We love one another not for each others sake but for the sake of the self ................. see the self; hear the self; contemplate the self, Meditate on the Self, Make the self manifest before you. By hearing about the essential nature of the self, by perceiving the essential nature of the self, you will come to know everything that can be known.'

Prelude (1920)

The protagonist of this poem explores during winter night fall in an urban street; from indoor odor of cocking to the smoky twilight outside. The passageways are littered with 'grimy scrapes of withered leaves.' There is no suggestion of human action until section II announces the arrival of morning with;

'............... of faint stale smell of bear.

From the saw-dust trampled street,'
which presents the real condition of perceiver’s soul in a passively-waiting street? The poem is a cannonade of filthy pursuits of life. ‘The thousand sordid images’ flickering against the ceiling and clasping of the yellow soles of feet followed by last but third line, ‘wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh’ reflects a cynical revulsion from sentimental fancies and such existence is contemptible. Eliot is not yet firm in his belief in any significant routine of human life as well as his own. He, in his quest for belief and permanent faith in any religion, explores through these streets and apartment houses. Readers are to know and enjoy this poem with Prufrock’s ‘evening...... spread out against the sky’ along with Prelude’s evening;

‘The Winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.’ 80

It echoes that Eliot has not yet settled in his own strife for belief until he seeks the spring of 1922, when he composes ‘The Waste Land’ to write;

‘Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers.’ 81

The perceiver of the poem resembles to the situation of ‘The Fire Sermon’, Pt. III of The Waste Land where the ‘river tent is broken’ and ‘the nymphs are departed’ but here;
‘The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of bear
From the saw-dust-trampled street.’ 82

Further, the perceiver of the poem is;

‘Sitting along the bed’s edge, where
You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the yellow soles of feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.’ 83

which can be imagined with the lady, the characters of the ‘Portrait of a Lady’, a poem discussed earlier who yearns for friendship without which the life becomes ‘Cauchemar’. It hints at nothing concrete as belief in modern aristocratic world. The belief which guides in pursuits of life has either been abandoned or side-tracked. He has a vision while being lost in ‘sordid images’ of material life of;

‘The notion of something infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.’ 84

Eliot is far better and deeper in his quest which is buried beneath the monotony and dirt;

‘Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh
The world revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.’ 85
To understand and appreciate the poem, let’s recall that Eliot, like Jacobean, is the problematic and transitional in nature. He perceives and associates his thinking; as he writes in his finest essay ‘The Metaphysical Poets’ (1921);

‘When a poet’s mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man’s experience is chaotic; irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love or reads Spinoza and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the type writer or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.’

In view of the above statement, Eliot has tried to find the verbal equivalent for the states of mind and feelings like metaphysical poets at a time when there was an absolute conjunction between ‘mind and feeling’. The poem ‘Prelude’ has attracted post modern British poetry wherein poets like Geoffrey Hill succeeded to echo similar mystification in this poem ‘Picture of Nativity’ as;

‘Sea-preserved, heaped with sea-spoils,
Ribs, keels, oral sores
Detached faces, ephemeral oils,

Sea-preserved, heaped with sea-spoils,
Ribs, keels, oral sores
Detached faces, ephemeral oils,

.............................................................
.............................................................
Artistic men appear to worship
And fall down; to recognize
Familiar token; believe their own eyes.
Above the marvel, each rigid head,
Angels, their unnatural wings displayed,
Freeze into an attitude
Recalling the dead." 87

The 'marvel' in the above poem is twisted, concentrated and misshapen in order to signify the deformity of integrity like Eliot's;

'I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images and cling.' 88

'Prelude' is an account of light which creeps up between the shutters while the sparrow chirps in gutter. As entitled, the full story of the illusion can be seen as broadened in 'The Rock' Chorus-VIII;

'They followed the light and the shadow, and
the light led them forward to light and
the shadow led them to darkness.' 89

What Eliot distinctly invents is that what we follow as light is actually darkness leading to filth and what we ignore as darkness is actually light leading to knowledge of self. I find, Prelude as a preparation to know the self in quest for belief. It is as usual, Eliot's paradoxical way of projection of history and time.
Rhapsody on a Windy Night (1915)

Eliot’s preoccupations with time and memory are equally preoccupations of the French philosopher, Henri Bergson who influenced among others the important American thinkers like William James, George Santyanan and A.N. Whithead. ‘Much of the atmosphere of this poem is derived from Charles Louis’ book ‘Babu de Montparnasse (1911). The poet observes with a detachment that implies a woman hesitating towards him in the light of the rancid butter and he sees the moon; no romantic symbol, but its decayed face cracked by ‘washed out smallpox’. His attention is drawn to each of these sights by the street-lamps which, at intervals, cast an imperfect sputtering light ‘through the paces of the dark? Each sight is the spring for a cluster of memories; ‘a crowd of twisted things’. The mind of the speaker is filled with ‘twisted thing’. This is what the speaker observes; a version of the dirt and filth of the urban rubbish;

‘Of sunless dry geraniums
And dust in crevices.
Smells of chestnuts in the streets
And female smells in shuttered rooms
And cigarettes in corridors
And cocktail smells in bars.’ 90
The world of 'Prufrock', 'Prelude' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy-Night', which has reduced human beings to mere phantoms who do not even dare to communicate with their belief; in the life sustaining values of emotional relationship, is not dead. The moon 'smooth's hair of the grass' may, at first, seem an affectionate, even coy image, but it is likely that it had its origin in man's tremendous sequence on the grass as hair in 'Song of Myself' by Walt Whitman where he says that the grass seems to him 'the beautiful uncut hair of graves.'

Although, at the end of the poem, there are all traditional images of spiritual realization and enlighten, like key, lamp, ring (circle) stair but the verb 'mount' is an invitation to ascent. The end of the upward journey and the culmination of these images are, however, frustrating. The significance of 'put......sleep, prepare for life' is reminiscent to King Pururava, who in his utter bewilderment, wants to sleep saying;

Neend jal ka srot hai, chhaya saghan hai,
Neend shyamal megh hai, sheetal pawan hai.

However, the time travelled by the explorer is not in contemplation of natural cycle;

'The lamp said
Four O' clock
here is the number on the door
Memory!
You have the key.

The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair
Mount.

The bed is open; the tooth-brush hangs on the wall,

Put your shoes at the door, sleep-prepare for life.

The last twist of the knife.' 93

Here Eliot has typified the lamp as the guardian angel. It is Lamp which hints about the eternal time – to be ‘four o clock’. We Indians are told by our ancient sages in Vedas that it is morning hour when knowledge visits mind: All knowledge awakes with the morning : It is called ‘Brahmabela’ (the time of communion with Brahma, the source of all true knowledge). One who awakes at this hour has the ‘key’ to spiritual enlightenment. Such person has only to ‘mount’ the stair for receiving his vision. The ‘ring’ on the stair is significant and distinct to the wheel. The ‘wheel’ symbolizes the life and the death and has universal application. The ‘ring’ is limited to only the course of life and it does not include death at all. Hence, by mounting, a man seeks vision for life. In this way when a man mounts, he practices, the Noble Paths to be liberated from the life. Eliot has perhaps got directions from the paths of Patanjali’s yoga and Buddhist doctrine - ‘Sleep’ or ‘Death’ is the preparation for ‘life’ for human life moves in a ‘ring’, it is cyclic.
'Poems, 1920'

The poems, collected in this volume, qualify not only the bewildered civilization but extend the satiric vein on the pervasion of human relationships. Eliot finds religious institutions as 'gone to devils hands' because of corrupt priesthood. Money has taken the role of a force where feelings and emotions display the vulgarity and naked sensuality. The nightmarish isolation of each and every man has lost the power of intuiting truth. This volume contains poems like 'Gerontion', 'The Hippopotamus', and three 'Sweeney Poems' which are unique in their kind and quality for there are hardly any such poem in the whole of English literature projecting the science of devilish sex. These poems are very much authentic promulgation of man's physicality as animal magnetic.

Gerontion (1920)

The significant poem of the volume is being taken up in my study is 'Gerontion'. This poem, published in 1920, has invited a very large critical appreciation from all corners of poetry lovers. I find that the poetry lovers have missed many things. If we review Gerontion as a sahridaya reader, to reach at the center of disbelief, we may speculate that Gerontion was much degraded and degenerated. He was a practitioner of immorality. He was having fire of youth and was burning in it thereof. We may suppose that
Gerontion has often proposed his mistress like that of Andrew Marvell;

‘Let us roll our strength and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball
And tear all pleasures with rough strife.’

I find Gerontion in his early youth a believer in materialism and hedonism mixed together. Indian poetry lovers can think of him as a believer in Charvak’s philosophy, who was anti-Vedic and who propagated;

‘Yavajjivet sukham jeevet, rinam kritva ghritam pivet,
Bhasmibhutasya dehasya, puragaman kutah’

Further, if such was Gerontion, he could be seen besides Sir Epicure Memmon who enjoyed pleasure in satisfying his appetites, in food, in wine or women. He was perfectly devoted to his hedonistic needs. With passing of time, however, Gerontion learns the true values of life like Thomas Beckett (1118-1170) and shed his pomp, grandeur and hedonistic attributes and began to live a simple life, to become a champion for the cause of the Christianity. With this proposition, I find Gerontion, now, grown old in 1920. Now we can compare him with Tiresias of ‘The Waste Land’ who sees and feels the post World War I. He accounts his life, knowledge, experience and religion along with the history and it’s utility as well as comparatively, with religion under the perspective or spectrum of existing nature of man.
I shall examine this partly overlooked poem with single purpose of imagination, which Shakespeare says ‘to body forth the forms of things unknown.’ It will disturb, and excite us with what is mysterious. It may move us with the experience of poetry and religion together. It focuses the world of modern drawing rooms containing shagged wilderness. I expect the poetry lovers to be ready to experience for which we ‘cry and crave’ but do not deserve. I would preserve and praise the idea of a calling. It is the call of the will of God to the will of individual man. Eliot’s Gerontion is a marked man, pre-elected to a kind of greatness which makes him rise above his surroundings because he has dimension in same spiritual world; the faintest-hearted of him is the first, Prufrock.

Eliot’s spectacular epilogue ‘thou hast nor youth, nor age’ is adorative because modern world has forgotten to follow the great men of the past. They are self-made masters because the memory of great men like Gerontion is an after dinner sleeps to them. Nevertheless, we remember them simply before becoming unconscious by sleeping so that we may dream for both; ‘youth and age’ irrespective of natural cycle. Gerontion, the protagonist, is remembered by the boys of modern world as a story of amusement while waiting for rain. As we know waiting in any form is necessarily a form of punishment to the person waiting. We can see even today that many persons while waiting for something turn to some kind of amusement whether it is reading something, chewing
something or else in order to avoid or lessen in the punishment of waiting. Gerontion has become a thing of amusement and not worship because he is a ‘man of God’ and not a ‘man of men’.

By man of God, I mean a person who is devoted for the cause of religion and by ‘man of men’ a person of heroism, nationalism or patriotism, fathered by unnatural voices and hence ironically virtuous. Gerontion feels with every modern trivial day-today activities of men and women who bear adulterate culture of globalization;

‘Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London.’ 

And hence commercialized in their head, heart and soul. Gerontion, his thinking, his convictions and his hints for the cause of betterment of human kind, is ridiculed as;

‘............. an old man
A dull head among windy spaces.’

‘Nature is God’ is an old saying and it hints or gives signs whenever man, passionately, violently as well as aggressively and remorsefully waits for the hints of the nature. The nature expects these men to be prepared for wonderful thing so that paradoxical ‘bright darkness’ could be swaddled. Gerontion looks the depraved society and their illicit relationship. He remembers the cosmopolitan denizens enjoying with various delicious eating and drinks. They do not believe in celebrating May Day as festivity of spring rather it is
festivity of mere appetites for them. Eliot, in his quest for belief, was always looking for piosity of this festivity and gave importance of the spring very often. Harry, a character of ‘The Family Reunion’ (1939), a play by T.S. Eliot, says a good deal of it;

'Spring is an issue of blood
A season of sacrifice
And the wail of the new full tide
Returning the ghosts of the dead
Those whom the winter drowned
Do not the ghosts of the drowned
Return to land in the spring?
Do the dead want to return?' 98

Gerontion’s measure of insight is immeasurable by anyone as he fixes the sense and body of humanity in history. ‘The cunning passages, contrived corridors’ make individual senses engaged with ‘thousand small deliberations. ‘The whispering ambitions’ of modern men echo Amy, a character in ‘The Family Reunion’, a play referred above, who discloses the same as deceitful and futile;

'A curse is slow in coming
To complete fruition
It can not be hurried
And it can not be delayed’.99

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In this regard, John B. Wickery's observation is worth mention. He says, 'yet at the same time history is the source of man's salvation in so far as it contains and records the recurring presence of the mystery of death and life which is concretely embodied in the figure of the dying and reviving God. It is this, then that history gives to mankind that there is a God, an incarnate deity, is accepted by man, a point dramatically rendered by Gerontion's reliving of the nativity.'

History is unbelievably entices us towards virtues which:

'Are forced upon us by our impudent crime.'

Again he observes 'history is next seen by Gerontion not only to give a deity to men when their minds are diverted to mundane issue, but also to give a plethora of deities so that the craving for the one god goes unsatisfied and ultimately dies.' Christ is the object of worship whose appearance in history is not possible. Gerontion is not able to visualize the determinate of modern wrath-bearing Tree;

'..........................think

Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural voices
Are fathered by our heroism Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.

These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.'

Gerontion has been asked by different authors to accept his old age, appears to be in appropriate because Gerontion is nothing than Tiresias of 'The Waste Land' and whatever Gerontion feels and sees
in the story of modern world not of Gerontion. The world is decayed and not Gerontion. Nonetheless, following lines reveal a prelude to a new existence hoped by Gerontion;

‘The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours. Think at least

We have not reached conclusion, when I

Stiffen in a rented house, Think at last

I have not made this show purposelessly.’

It is Gerontion who realizes that death is not the end for men because he has ‘made the show purposefully’. He has an object rather a mission in which the life and its contemplation is to exist as per the will of God. He finds people as to be ‘backward devils’. In Christian myth, people were punished as devils moving backward in hell. Likewise, this world goes as backward as possible with strenuous mental agitation. Gerontion recollects that there was a time when he was hailed, adored and affectionately remembered by the people because of his materialistic communion with them. When he flushed himself out from that world and began to follow the rule of God, he was abandoned by his companions. Now Gerontion says;

‘I would meet you upon this honestly.’

Gerontion’s honesty is the bliss of realizing god. It is everlasting to him. The *Upanishads* describe various types of joys that one can experience in this world and in heaven if one is honestly committed.
Gerontion has ‘gained’ knowledge of self and laments being removed from people’s heart. However, he is likely to enjoy God’s graciousness. He says;

\[
\text{‘I that was near your heart was removed there from} \\
\text{To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.’} \quad 106
\]

This is Gerontion’s preparation to join Tiresias of ‘The Waste Land’, the poem to be discussed in next chapter, where people are having ‘a heap of broken images’ along with ‘fear in a handful of dust.’ Gerontion unhesitatingly declares that;

\[
\text{‘I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it} \\
\text{Since what is kept must be adulterated.’} \quad 107
\]

This simple and ordinary gossip like that of any layman is spiritual experience of worldly man. Such utterances come through the lips of only those who have acquired nearness to God. We can see that Gerontion is now far away from any sort of detractions. Eliot has amazingly drawn this protagonist before us as a man without passion of senses. Gerontion further clarifies that the ‘closer contact’ in any form with modern people, is impossible for him because;

\[
\text{‘I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch;} \\
\text{How should I use them for your closer contact?’} \quad 108
\]

‘Knowledge is enveloped with ignorance hence it is that human beings that are constantly falling prey to delusion. Ignorance veils the spiritual nature of the self’. The veil of ignorance has been lifted by
Gerontion and he was understood the delusion of senses. Gerontion is now like a river (self) destined to meet its origin. Eliot has asserted in 'The Four Quartets';

'The river is within us: the sea is all about us.'

The river that merges into the ocean all owe its existence to the ocean (the sun evaporates the water of the ocean and clouds discharge it as rain which run as river) but it is spoken of as distinct though there is no essential difference (as water) between the river and the ocean. So, also, an individual identifies himself with the body-mind personality instead of the self due to ignorance and thinks he is different from the reality. Modern people, as seen by Gerontion, are identifying themselves with the body-mind personality and they, due to veil of ignorance, think different from the God like river-and ocean; hence the loss of sensuousness followed by impossibility of any closer contact. Gerontion finds that people have deliberately ignored the 'calling'. His senses are cooled when he looks back in the past. He finds it just like the passing images in a television screen. I do not know whether Eliot took instructions from the Aitareya Upanishad which deals with the self. Its philosophical method helps spiritual aspirants to gain the true knowledge of the self. 'Its teaching' leads from the known to the unknown, from the beautiful and enjoyable universe that is immediately perceived to the creator responsible for its creation. The Supreme Being is the inner essence of the entire creation investing the infinite variety characterized by
name, form and tendencies; ...while the Atma is imperishable; the body is subject to growth. Gerontion’s observation is Upanishadic preparation making body and soul distinct. Modern men protect the profit of their ‘chilled delirium’ by fair or fowl means. Gerontion looks towards death in the forms of spider and weevil and it’s an operation so that there could be rebirth; full of spirituality and knowledge of self.

The last seven lines of the poem echo the supposed wreckage of the present world. He finds the end of spiritual extinction scattered at far remote ends of the earth like Bear (a well known constellation), Belle Isle (an Island in the North Atlantic), Horn (the southern extremity of South America), Gulf (a system of currents in the North Atlantic) and Trades (trade-winds). Gerontion imagines the outer-space where he may visualize his past, after meeting his well believed death. The last line has epilogue like effect having no movement, no action, as if Gerontion has attained the highest glory of belief in Christianity.

Eliot, in his quest for belief, has tried to elucidate the industrial culture among the people throughout his poetic-career. Such culture recurs exclusively in his poem ‘The Waste Land’ (1922) and ‘East Cocker’ (1940). He finds that they go not in some illuminated zone of the universe but in dark;
‘The captains, merchant bankers, eminent men of letters, The generous patrons of art. The statesmen and the rulers, Distinguished civil servants, chairmen of many committee, Industrial Lords and betty contractors, all go in the dark.’

Hence, my elaborate exploration into Eliot’s quest and belief into the predicament of men engaged in futile toil of searching for the worth of life in material pursuits, reveal to me that Eliot was not bewildered by our all miss-sets. He, being a poet and prophet despises and discourages all misfits in the world, beginning from London and ending at Erosion less Shallow Banks of North East, at Belle Isle, Horn and Bear. Gerontion is definitely an old man driven by the trade winds to some sleepy corner. I find Gerontion’s observations are preliminary to that of ‘The Waste Land’. He is aware of his body and sense. He is not sensuous at any cost rather he observes sensuousness, profitability oriented mechanical life and emotional discharge of modern human being. Eliot has called the people in material pursuit as fisherman in ‘Dry Salvages’, third part of ‘The Four Quartets’. These people are bailing forever;

‘Where is the end of them the fishermen sailing into the winds tail.’

Gerontion presents a scene of decay and refuse, to be circumscribed into ruins which remind us of Preludes. ‘Gerontion’, with ‘we would see a sign’, a biblical reference, expects these people to look for
wonders and miracles but I do not find them preparing to believe and change like ‘The Hollow Men’ who also do not believe in their existence. It is surprising that, in the past, Gerontion was never declared as the protagonist observing the decayed Post World War I culture and the society of non-believers.

Undoubtedly, Gerontion is old, having lost his senses and desires for pursuit of materialism; he enjoys the pleasure of nearness to God. He bewails the derailed curiosity of all men and women, old and young along with rich and poor. It is contemplation of a pattern, exploration in any direction, to be self-complacent and profitable. The demonic worship of machine has led these men wandering in bramble lying awake to unweave, unwind, and unravel the tangle of their faith. We have developed into unrelatedness, forming the apathy of a silent funeral. These hectic people have forgotten to recognize what king Pururava (the hero of Uravashi) affirms;

‘Dristi ka jo pey hai, vag rakt ka bhojan nahin,
Roop ki aradhana ka marg, alingan nahin,
Toot girti hain umangein
Bahuon ka pash ho jata shithi.’

Gerontion may be expected to evoke with what Bhisma preaches to Yudhisthir in Kurukshetra;

‘Aur sikhao bhogvad ko,
Yahi reeti jan-jan ko,'
Sweeney Erect (1919)

This poem echoes our previously discussed poem, 'The portrait of a lady'. However, here the poor epileptic woman is neglected by her pleasure-seeking husband. Her agony echoes like that of Ariadne and Aspatia.

Ariadne was the daughter of Minos II of Crete and Pasiphae. Falling in love with Theseus, she gave him a thread by which he extricated himself from the Crelan Labyrinth; with her aid he slew the monster Minotaur. Theseus married Ariadne but forsook her in the Island of Nexos. There, she found by Dionysus, who, according to one tradition, married her.

Needless to wonder in search of Sweeney, the persona, in the poem because Eliot himself clarifies that 'Sweeny is a compression of several characters' one of who may be Todd; the Demon Barbar who used to cut the throats of his client to make meat pies. The lady has fits of epilepsy but it does not matter for Sweeney. He 'wipes the suds around his face.' The society men and women are more concerned with the smartness of their manners. 'The ladies of the corridor' fear that the woman is suffering from the Hysteria and;
'Call witness of their principles
And deprecate the lack of taste.'

A lady called Mrs. Turner intimates 'it does the house no sort of
good; which projects her vigorously sick at ease and for which
Dorisplans for Salvolatile and a glass of brandy neat as the solution
for her senses recovery. Eliot finds a number of such ladies in the
condition of Hysteria, paralysis or neurosis. The lady in the 'Portrait
of a Lady' was victim of her own over-ambitious love. The lady of
'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' is the victim of her mechanical
emotions. Likewise, when Eliot studies them in a group, they are
collected Nightingales in pubs and cafe with epilepsy of
hedonistic needs. Likewise, the men of these poems are all modern in
look, proud of their knowledge and experience and ready to explore
towards their physical pleasure with these women folks.

Eliot's observation throughout the poem up to 'Sweeney
Erect' confirms that these men and women do not believe in true love
and relationships; that they do not recall rather trust in the well
established religious institution; that they believe, if they do so, in
self-gratification and self-complacency. Their feelings are timeless
values Eliot's anger and bitterness against declining moral standards
and echo in Donald Davies' long poem 'England' where the
poet is of the opinion that coupling like Dogs in yard,' would
ultimately lead to indignity for the whole of present civilization.
Sweeney among the Nightingales (1918)

Though, this poem along with 'Sweeney Agonistic' is incomplete, yet, this is striking and significant for my study. Eliot has, it appears, caught the post-world war glimpses in some cafe in London. I have to begin with my notice to the last but one stanza which lays a picture of a church where Nightingales sing near a convent of nuns. These Nightingales are comparable to the 'changed Philomel' of 'A Game of Chess', 2nd movement of 'The Waste Land'. Eliot's implication of Nightingales is, virtually, a stain observed about modern women. The act of cry, by a Nightingale, is believed to reveal two broad occurrences. They cry when some innocent girl is suffering who stood for womanly virtues and on an action of betrayal resulting into murder as Agamemnon cried while being killed by his wife.

Nevertheless, to begin with the poem 'The Apeneck Sweeney' comes first handedly representing claustrophobia of Boston society. The 'lady in cape' is doubling and redoubling her repulsive fury and cravings. Eliot has beautifully set the cafe scene under 'the circles of the stormy moon' which indicates some disaster unnatural may it be, is likely to occur. Sweeney is neither curious at some action nor interested at. Perhaps he is just an eye witness. The water of the 'Sunken seas hushed' which means the life giving source is neglected here on the cost of lust. The woman wearing the 'Spanish Cape' is over powered by her passion; she rushes to and
tries to sit on his knees. Sweeney is in a state of dilemma. He is silent all the time. He sprawls like a four-footed animal ‘at the window-sill and gapes’. Eliot has stylistically reinforced the sexual symbolism of the setting;

‘The waiter brings in oranges
Bananas, figs and hothouse grapes,’

The poem advances with Rochel satisfying her lust sadistically;

‘Rachel nee Rabinovitch
Tears at the grapes with murderous paws.’

Eliot catches the sardonic animal magnetic going at all corners of the possible angels. He seems to practice his own theory of poetry as ‘the essential advantage for a poet is not to have a beautiful world with which to deal; it is to be able to see beneath both beauty and ugliness, to see the boredom and the horror and the glory. It is Eliot’s quest for belief which brings him to the cafe where modern Philomels try to sit on the Sweeney’s knees because they do not remember the creator’s directives and social regulations to self-perseverance. Sweeney is noble because he is physically in control knows the temperament of modern female and waits for the woman’s epileptic fit to subside. He, in the further course of action, moves to window-sill and gapes which shows his indifference. It is Sweeney who is worth mercy of God and not these women. To our disbelief in such life, we can recall our birth-history and only can lament over these Londoners for they,
in the perspective of social development and gaudiness, have forgotten true values causing seer shamelessness. An Indian poet laureate has excellently narrated such degeneracy as;

‘Jhar gayi poonch, romant jhare
Pashuta ka jharna baki hai,
Bahar-bahar tan sanwar chuka,
Man abhi sawarna baki hai.\textsuperscript{119}

Had they belief in their creator’s object and the true value of life, they won’t turn towards inhuman qualities. Eliot, certainly, had unbearable ‘aching of heart’ to write the poem ‘Sweeney Among the Nightingales.’

**The Hippopotamus (1917)**

Next significant poem of my study and analysis is ‘Hippopotamus’. In this poem, the Quester diatribes against neglected Christianity and perverted faith. It led Eliot to think and experiment the poem as alternative object to heavenly bliss because men, through their secret mission along with their ‘Brown God’, have failed sardonically. Eliot has, amazingly, compared the objectivity of two differently opposite elements;

‘Flesh and blood is weak and frail,
Susceptible to nervous shock.’\textsuperscript{120}

The narrative is an analysis of susceptible flesh and blood and never failing rocky Church along with the objectivity of the two. Men are
condemned to death for the 'Original Sin' and at the same time the role of the church is to extend relief by establishing faith and monitoring their life to redemption oriented finality of life. Eliot finds Hippo's venerable steps erring while true Church never fails to encompass material ends. The rock bound intentions are authority of religion and not the desired place of redemption guidance.

Eliot's prophetic quest for belief has equated him to many of our saints, typically, St. Kabir Das. I would present one couplet, out of his many;

'Roda whai rahu bat ka, taji pakhand abhiman,
Aisa je jan whay rahai, tahi milai bhagwan.'\(^{121}\)

This simple couplet is a subtle incantation at the face of many of 'patently sincere' fluent and impressive recitations of Biblical verses. At last, Eliot distinguishes between the Hippopotamus and the Church as;

'The Hippopotamus's day
Is passed in sleep; at night he hunts;
God works in a mysterious way.

The Church can sleep and feed at once.'\(^{122}\)

A similar kind of dissatisfaction can be found in a number of Eliot's successors like Philip Larkin and Donald Davie. These poets observe that the Church which symbolizes institutionalized religion and had been a great force in bringing people together in the past, has now
submerged in spiritual chaos. Present civilization has threatened churches with extinction and the poets are compelled to meditate over the loss of faith. The poems like 'MCMXIV' 'Church Going', 'The Building', and 'Aubade' explore different dimensions of religious conviction. The pragmatic view in 'Church Going' and things of utility of such places is worth notice;

'When churches fall completely out of use
What we shall turn them into, if we shall keep
A few cathedrals chronically on show,
Their parchment, plate and pyx in locked cases.'

Donald Davie in 'North Dublin' projects the sidetracked spiritual values. Enright's 'Sunday' deplores the banished religious conviction and the unfortunate degeneration among the priests. Nevertheless, the objectivity of the Hippopotamus is merged with its suitable message as disbelief in contemporary Christianity and its functioning.
Reference


15. Ibid, p.3.
17. Idem.
29. S.P., p.5.

32. S.P., p.6.

33. Ibid, p.3.

34. Ibid, p.5.

35. Samuel, 1:12.

36. Mathew, 14:3-11.


40. Ibid, p.6-7.

41. Ibid, p.6.

42. Shakespeare, 'Hamlet' I-V, 188-89.

43. S.P., p.7.


45. S.P., p.7.


47. S.P., p.7.
50. idem.
52. S.P., p.9.
58. Idem.
60. Ibid, p.10.
61. Idem.

66. S.P., p.11.


69. S.P., p.11.

70. F.T. Palgrave, op. cit., p.107.

71. Ibid, p.333.

72. Ibid, p.49.

73. S.P., p.11.


75. F.T. Palgrave op. cit., p.386.

76. Ibid, p.122.

77. S.P., p.104.

78. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 2.4., 1-5.


80. Idem.

81. Ibid, p.41.


84. Idem.

85. Ibid, p.15.


89. Ibid, p.108.

90. Ibid, p.18.

91. Walt Witman, 'Song of Myself' in 'Leaves of the Grass' cited by Ronald Tamplin, p.64.


93. S.P., p.16.


96. S.P., p.21.

97. Idem.


101. S.P., p.22.


103. S.P., p.22.

104. Idem.

105. Idem.


108. Idem.

109. CP, p.205.


115. S.P., p.27.

117. **S.P.**, p.36.

118. Idem.


