Chapter: VI. T.S. Eliot's The Elder Statesman

The Elder Statesman is the last play of T.S. Eliot which is based on Sophocles’ Oedipus at Colonus. Colonus is a place near Attica of Athens, with holy groves dedicated to the furies, revered in the propitiated name of Eumenides; it is destined to be the last place of rest for Oedipus in his old age. Wandering Oedipus reaches Colonus along with Antigone, his faithful daughter, gets protection from Theseus, the king of Athens. Further events take place like intermittent series of episodes. Oedipus has once again become acceptable to the gods as his body has become pure and purged through suffering and pilgrimage. He is a Greek hero now; he can curse his enemies and save his friends. His body can protect the state, in which it lies, from pestilence, draught and enemies. Creon comes to Colonus to persuade Oedipus to return to Thebes where he will be kept in its vicinity as a captive. Oedipus refuses to go back to Thebes; Creon kidnaps Antigone and Ismane to compel Oedipus to return. But Theseus restores them. Etiocles, the younger son of Oedipus has usurped the throne of Thebes and has driven his elder brother Polynieces to exile. Polynieces has married an Argos princess and amassed a huge army and is marching against Thebes. Oracles say that the side which has Oedipus’ blessing will win. Oedipus refuses to bless either of his sons and curse them both to die in the ensuing war. Oedipus dies mysteriously after enjoying peace and happiness at Colonus.

The source of The Elder Statesman can be traced in Oedipus myth. Eliot himself acknowledged it when he says in 1938 on The Family Reunion that:

Harry's career needs to be completed in Orestes or in Oedipus at Colonus.¹

The hero of the play is Lord Claverton, the Oedipus figure; he has retired from active politics and business, on the advice of a doctor. Besides old age, Claverton fears to be alone and he is afraid of exposing to strangers. He is more ill than he is aware of; so Dr Selby has selected Badgley Court, a convalescent home with an atmosphere of a hotel, for Lord Claverton to live his last days. He meets there two of his old acquaintances; one is Fred who has changed his name to Frederico Gomez and the other is Maisie who is Mrs. Carghill now. Fred has committed forgery and undergone conviction. He left England and became rich by illegal business. He blames Claverton’s company for his downfall. He seeks to renew his friendship with Claverton and threatens to reveal Claverton’s crime of running over an old man and not stopping to report of to the accident to the police, if he refuses to give it.

Claverton had loved Maisie and left her. She had sued a breach of trust case against him; then a settlement was made out of the court. She has his passionate love letters and she threatens to use them now. They taunt Claverton and ridicule his mask of an elder statesman. Claverton, like sin laden Oedipus, also recovers his nobility by confessing his sins before his daughter Monica and her fiancé Charles Hemington and stands firm against his accusers. His accusers separate his son Michael from Claverton. He blesses young lovers Monica and Charles. The Bagley Court is Claverton’s last place of rest, like Colonus was to Oedipus in his old age; he declares: ‘I feel peace now’ and refuses to leave it.

Eliot’s choice of Sophocles’ Oedipus at Colonus as his Greek source for The Elder Statesman is to express his final resolution of the theme of spiritual quest. Eliot’s choice of the old king Oedipus as his prototype for Lord Claverton stresses the expiation of sins by prolonged suffering and
devotion to the will of God.² The final words of Oedipus to his daughters might serve as epigraph of Eliot’s play, The Elder Statesman:

One word makes all those difficulties disappear: that word is love.³

Helen Gardner feels that, The Elder Statesman’s sources are also found in Eliot’s own poetry: the poem “Difficulties of a statesman”, in the sombre passage of “Little Gidding” and the “gifts reserved for old age”

Let me disclose the gifts reserved for age. To set a crown up on your lifetime effort ... of Things ill done and done to others harm.⁴

Claverton’s only daughter Monica Claverton-Ferry is staying with him. She has a young lover Charles Hemington, who is a practicing barrister and politician. A day before the departure to the Badgley Court, Monica and her fiancé Charles Hemington have spent an afternoon together with lunch and shopping. They return to the drawing room of Lord Claverton’s London house. Charles wants reassurance from Monica that she loves him and her answer is cryptic.

It crept so softly on silent feet, and stood behind my Back, quietly, a long time, a long time before I felt its presence.⁵ CPP 529

Charles reaction is equally poetic and allusive: her words seem to have come from very far away. Yet very near; she is changing him and he is changing her. It is an allusion to Mary of The Family Reunion, Hyacinth girl in The Waste Land, and Isolde in the Tristan and Isolde Opera, yet it is the divine power of love that brings a change in persons. The love

has transported the lovers from the public world to a private world.

Earlier than this play, the basic premise and inspiration for Eliot’s plays had been the conviction that the barriers between one human being and the other were indestructible. No real relationship is possible between a man and a woman which is good. There was an awful separation between potential passion and actualisation of love which is thought to be impossible in life; and that barrier can be filled only by love God, Moody recalls:

That the void ... in the middle of all human happiness and all human relation could be filled by only one thing - Atonement with the Christ.  

The Elder Statesman breaks this pattern, and affirms the new pattern. It finds a new life in human union between a man and a woman in love. This is the affirmative path of life, propounded by Charles William, hither to Eliot considered it as inferior. The need for self transcendence in love can now be seen to have been the deepest and most consistent motive in all his life. When it seemed unattainable, frustration and failure grew and they were deliberately cultivated into the death of the motive[death of spirit: sterility], alienation, and the sense of sin; and then suffering and death embraced as the way of purgation into the realm of mystical, transcendental, and idea of perfect love. Yet all this pursuit of Absolute through negations is exposed, by his inexperience of love, because he was out of love, and he believed only so long as he remained in this state. When he found himself in love, he found the fullness of harmony for which he longed. ‘His poetry is supreme expression of negative phase of desire.’  

‘Eliot discovered that becoming a whole in life, with the love

---

7 Ibid, p, 285.
of another person is possible; and that is a wisdom derived from that love and he called it the wisdom of humanity’.\textsuperscript{8}

Eliot fell in love with his secretary Valerie Fletcher. At this stage he was writing *The Elder Statesman* and she was typing the script. In act I and III of the play, situation is similar to the event of evolution of love in the minds of these young lovers, where the discovery of love appear to be supreme upon action. It is conceived quite differently. This is to show the way of process of Lord Claverton’s purgation and finding the way to die in peace; the celebration of the love which unites his daughter and her fiancée is crowned upon it. The fulfilment of their love is attainment of salvation.

Love brings change in the lives of young lovers Monica and Charles. It transports them into a private world where every thing has a different meaning and feeling. They find their reality in love. This replicates the love of Antigone to her father, her brother Polynieces and her lover Hayamone. *The Elder statesman* deviates from this path; Claverton finds his end in dying, which Lucy Sean finds that this aspect is found disturbing by some critics. ‘When it is accepted that Claverton is Oedipus figure portrayed by Sophocles in *Oedipus at Colonus*, one does not find death disturbing but natural’.\textsuperscript{9}

Monica asks Charles to stay for tea; he complains that Lord Claverton is possessive of his daughter, he always interfere between them, for she belongs to him. This alludes to Antigone accompanying Oedipus during his last days at Colonus. Charles tries to get Monica alone to propose; but she teasingly keeps him at distance. She assures Charles that she loves him and ready to marry when she is free to do so. At present she has to accompany her father to the expensive hotel Badgley Court for indefinite period.

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid, p, 285.

Their conversation serves to introduce more serious dilemma of love and relationship between Monica and her father, which is chiefly responsible for keeping Charles and Monica apart. Antigone loved Hayamone yet she accompanied her father in his blind exile, keeping him behind. It was her filial obligation. Carroll Smith comments that ‘the role of love between Monica and Charles is Positive and beneficial, Lord Claverton’s un-awakened state before his acts of contrition exemplifies the destructive and malignant power of love, which is perverted and betrayed’.10

Monica explains to Charles three reasons for accompanying her father Claverton to Badgley Court. He dreads of being alone, so he always need some one else in his room. She is compelled to accompany her father because, Charles remarks, her brother Michael has never been of any use to any body. This is also an allusion to Oedipus myth. When Oedipus was expelled from his kingdom, his sons Etiocles and Polynieces were a party to the expulsion. Oedipus compared his sons to men in Egypt, who sit weaving in the house, but their wives go forth to win their daily bread. Obviously, Oedipus was blind and needed some one to guide him. Antigone, though not expected of this job being a girl, volunteered to do so. Here Monica is doing the same.

The second reason for her accompanying Claverton is his fear of being exposed to strangers. This is due to his inherent fear of meeting the old friends on whom he has done injustice. Oedipus also was afraid of strangers because they chid him for his patricide and incest; they also comment on Antigone, the maiden accompanying him, as both his sister and daughter at once.

The third reason is, he is more ill than he appears to be; he will never return from Badgley Court. Oedipus also

would never move from Colonus because he was destined to die and protect Athens from his unmarked tomb. Antigone left his lover behind to join her father while her brothers quarrelled over kingdom. Claverton will be accompanied by Monica to Badgley Court; her brother Michael is engaged in flirting with girls and gambling, while it is his duty to look after his father. So she wants to be with him through this short period. Charles may change his mind during the time she is not free. And such things have happened in the past. Charles benevolently assures that he will not do so. Monica’s comment on Claverton for being very hard on Michael indicates the anger of Oedipus on his sons who quarrelled for kingdom exiling their father. Claverton joins them for tea. Both Claverton and Monica inform Charles that they would like to see Charles in Badgley Court.

Claverton keeps his blank engagement book before them and pities for his own condition of contemplating on nothingness and horror of solitude. When Oedipus’ misfortune fell upon him he had lost everything. The things remained with him are his blindness, exile, poverty and wandering in his sightless dark world. Claverton’s blank engagement book represents the blindness of Oedipus. Oedipus was physically blind; while Claverton is blind towards his guilt and has lived in a spate of spiritual darkness. He expresses his spiritual state of solitude in the imagery of a passenger who is waiting in the waiting room in vain, after the last train has gone; doors and windows are shut, porters have gone home, for a train that will never come. ‘Eliot’s use of the imagery of trains and train stations to represent spiritual states and debased spiritual journey are found in the unpublished fragments of Sweeney Agonestes, East Coker and dry salvages’. Before going to take a visitor Claverton compares himself to a frightened

\[11\] Ibid, p. 221.
ghost, which is afraid of men and leaves their company to face another ghost like him.

Monica brings her lover Charles home so that her father may know of a kind of person with whom his daughter is in love. It is a standard social convention. The courting of lovers takes place with the consent and under supervision of parents. While her brother Michael does not intimate or bring his girl friends to his house because he is not sincere to them and he has no genuine love towards them.

There are two worlds in the play: the public and the private. Charles says that they have been transported to a private world and in that world the meanings are different. There is a necessity of a private world of personal life for focusing the self; without which there is neither the pretence of a public personality nor an isolation of a private life. Here it touches its source, *Oedipus at Colonus*.

Greek religion believes in the existence of two worlds, natural and supernatural, human and divine, separate yet often interpenetrating and at times united.12

Necessity of a private world is one of the themes of the play. When lovers meet they discover a private world in the midst of the public world. Love sustains life otherwise the way of the world becomes a burden. One must be able to possess a private world through love and affection. From there he must move to the public world. The quality, usefulness and purpose of public life must sustain private world. Inward and outward movement of both the worlds must be a natural process and it is the process of living; it is the life and its meaning. To love and be loved gives a meaning and a purpose to life. The life devoid of this breeds ghosts like Lord Claverton who in turn breeds other ghosts. The result will be loneliness, terror and fear. Love between Monica and Charles is healthy.

---

and normal. Claverton sacrificed his private world of personal relationships for public roles and has lost hold of both the worlds.

Eliot has attempted to evolve his predominant dramatic characteristic that, he portrays a surface action which is a dramatic fable for expression of Christian themes which, the author feels universal in human experience. No where the word 'Christianity' is expressed; so it can be only implied spiritual meaning to elevate the play as universal human experience. So that the play becomes relevant at all times and place. That is why his plays and poems are renowned worldwide. Claverton's dilemma is universal, because man faces continuously, the possibility of unavoidable death. Strangers, for whom he is afraid of, are not strangers, but they are his guilt. Strangers are the ones on whom he had imposed injustice, and betrayal; they are the persons whom he pretends to be not knowing them; and this is only a pretext to avoid them. At the same time he fears encountering other people without customary roles and masks of the elder statesman image; there by cuts himself off from the normal life. This lovelessness is sterility which has made him 'more ill than he is aware of'. It is also the condition of Oedipus; he blinded himself because he could not bear to see his own people staring at him with disgust because of his patricide, incest, a cause of the pestilence and famine in Thebes; they are his personal disasters. Man continually faces the possibility of imminent death, lives in fear of death and this malady is universal.

Claverton receives a visitor called Frederico Gomez. This meeting is referred to in Eliot's poem 'Little Gidding' of Four Quartets, (p, 53) where the protagonist meets 'The eyes of a familiar compound ghost, both intimate and

---

unidentifiable';\textsuperscript{14} his real name is Fred Culverwell. Claverton first pretends not to have known him but later identifies him and asks the reason for changing his name. Fred explains that Lord Claverton was only a Dick ferry when he was at Oxford with him. After marriage, Dick changed his name to Richard Claverton-Ferry and finally to Lord Claverton. Fred has followed Claverton's example. He too has taken a new name, after his wife: Gomez. Fred was convicted for forgery; he lives at San Marco ever since he completely suffered the punishment in England. He has come to England on a long holiday to take a rest-cure. Fred is now a highly respected citizen of a Central American Republic, San Marco. He has hoarded up wealth from a sort of activity from which he had lost his respect in England; he has engaged himself in illegal activities. He is bribing the politicians of both the political parties that may come to power; what he could not get from one he got it from the other.

He was away from home in an alien country for thirty five years; to be alone is almost a new life and the death of an old one. He is lost to himself. He has come to England; none of his friends and relatives wants to meet him. Only Lord Claverton can identify and accept him both as Fred and Gomez. That is why he wants to renew his friendship with Lord Claverton.

Fred Culverwell went to oxford as a poor brilliant boy securing a scholarship from a grammar school. Fred adored Dick Ferry then; he recollects he was flattered by the friendship of Dick. Fred learned from him expensive tastes; he was deviated from his studies; and he was thrown out of oxford. Dick's father managed to get him a clerk's job. Fred, who had learned expensive habits, could not manage with that meagre income. He used his intelligence, penmanship; indulged in defalcation, forgery, suffered sentence and left England.

Claverton helped him to buy his passage for San Marco; but Fred thinks Richard helped only to get rid of him. He got a lot of money from questionable profession in San Marco and spread his investments in various places and under different names. He can now buy over Claverton several times. His current account in Zurich and Stockholm could keep him comfortable for the rest of his life. He comes forward to offer any help to Claverton if any need arises. Fred would have become a Grammar school master if he had not met Dick Ferry and:

Taken up by Dick-Ferry and taught tastes and habits beyond his means.  

He surmises Claverton's long career in politics and business. Claverton was thrown from politics because of his frauds; so he entered into business. He became the Director of a city Bank and Chairman of companies. From business also he retired at sixty due to the same reasons. His frauds were hushed up. A politician would help another politician. So Claverton's wealth is ill-gotten like that of Fred's; his life also is as a failure as that of Fred's.

Now Fred comes to Claverton's private life which was a failure as his public life was. He married his wife for the sake of her family's name; he never loved her. Fred knew that Claverton had a heart stroke because his son Michael has followed his father's irresponsible undergraduate career without his father's protection.

He remembers that when he was in Oxford Claverton had run his car on an old man and did not stop to see the effect. Claverton could not intimate this to the police. Fred taunts Claverton that this secret will be safe with him; what he expects from Claverton is his friendship as long as he lived in England.

---

These two vices of Claverton are the analogies to two sinful acts of Oedipus. He picked a roadside quarrel with the king Lauis' body guards and killed them. One of the killed was his father. Claverton taught young Fred expensive tastes which led him to commit forgery and exile. Fred changed his country and changed his name. This is his metaphoric death; he holds Claverton responsible for his crime and his subsequent loss of country and loss of his personality. This is comparable to Oedipus' answering the wise riddles of sphinx. This meeting can also be compared to Creon's meeting of Oedipus at Colonus and asking him to return to Thebes.

According to Fred, the cause for Claverton's stroke is unhappy marriage and a son who undertook what Claverton had done during his days at Oxford. This is an analogy to the unhappy married life of Oedipus; he married his own mother and committed incest. So Gomez calls the life of Claverton as failure as his own life because both know that what their life actually is. He tells it rather glibly:

The worst thing of failure, in my opinion is the man who has kept on pretending himself that he is a success—the man who has to makeup his face before he looks into the mirror in the morning. CPP. 540.

Claverton and Culverwell both have prospered well in their lives: Culverwell through systematic corruption and Claverton by political mistakes. Both suffered from loss of self and the isolation. Culverwell had returned to England for a "rest cure" intended to restore his identity comparable to Claverton's spiritual rest at Badgley Court. Culverwell had lived in exile for thirty five years. Lord Claverton had lived as a spiritual exile; from himself in the same kind of isolation as Culverwell in order to "fabricate another personality"; he supplicated his name with his wife's name, first to Richard Claverton Ferry, then to Richard Claverton
and finally lord Claverton. 'Both have left behind their former selves'.

Eliot has used the imagery of the play and the actors to convey the idea of false roles and false conception of identity. Pretension of being a new person, while the person of the past was very much alive is an illusion. One is afraid to meet the one's old self; that is what evokes terror to be alone and fright before strangers as if one comes to know about the person one was in the past. Though Fred became a rich man he never forgot that he was a forger and a convict whom no one would receive him with love or respect in England; he could talk as Fred Culverwell with only Claverton. He envied Claverton's respectable position; as revenge he is trying to harass him by equating his own status with that of Claverton.

If Claverton denies his company he may reveal the secret to some of his friends which may embarrass Claverton. He warns that he will again meet Claverton to begin just where they have left and walks out.

The play at this stage resembles in basic structure to Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus, where, Oedipus visits Athens as a suppliant for shelter and protection. Those who give it will be put to harm. Fred approaches Claverton for renewal of friendship; whether granted or not, but it is going to harm Claverton.

The sin of Claverton is so reduced as compared to Oedipus' patricide, it is hardly recognisable; instead of killing his father for refusing to yield the right of a path at cross roads, Claverton had run over an old man who was already dead. It is not a sin but only a minor crime. These two characters seem to be poles apart; one as a noble one and the other as a mean; but on deeper analysis they converge into

---

one. They are the two faces of the same Lord Claverton; that can be traced in contemporary mafia and corrupt political elements, which thrive on each other and they are the diseases of the modern society.

Gomez’s role may be compared to that of Creon, who discloses before Theseus, the king of Athens, Oedipus’ past sins of parricide and incest and tries to lure him to expel Oedipus from Athens, so that he may take him back to Thebes.

Gomez likes to renew his old friendship with Claverton under threat and harassment, even though he knows that Claverton is ill; and that any further severe pressure on him may cause his death. Creon wants Oedipus for his country even though he is unwilling to do so; while Gomez’s purpose of seeking renewal of Claverton’s friendship is for selfish sadism. The principle behind their revenge and purpose resembles Greek convention of Odysseus that: ‘Where public success is in question, moral scruples are out of place’.\(^{17}\)

Fifth century Greeks are known for sentiment as explained by Euripides in his Hippolytus:

\[
\text{I say you should not respect the law more than necessary in times of risk.}\(^{18}\)
\]

And:

\[
\text{Men’s fortunes do not go by reverence, but by bold acts and hands that grasp too much are all, things hunted and made prisoner. Pity has no place in imperial matters.}\(^{19}\)
\]

Don’t yield to three things which are more disadvantageous to the empire - pity, sentiment, and reasonableness. In Greek wisdom there are philosophies for wicked also! Creon, Gomez and Claverton acted on this spirit. Gomez does not consider the illness of Claverton while taking revenge; he shows no pity and decency. Creon kidnapped his own nieces to take blind Oedipus back to Thebes. He forgot the


\(^{19}\) Ibid, p, 336.
favours received by Oedipus when he was the king of Thebes. He believes that:

'Strong do what they can do and the weak acquiesce'.

Lord Claverton has not yet recognized fully the cause of his spiritual illness. Culverwell suddenly transformed from himself to Gomez which is tragic; while Dick Ferry did so slowly to Claverton. Claverton never woke up to know that Dick Ferry died long ago. So he felt loneliness. The conversion of scholar Fred into criminal Gomez is an eye opener to modern Young men. The world has become a global village due to modern means of communication. Industrialisation, liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation have created a large number of middle class population who can afford the cost on their children’s education at World class institutions. World class institutions have dual admission policies; they reserve some percentage of seats to meritorious poor students who can not bear their exorbitant fees and award them Scholarships; rest of the seats are self financed and expensive. Now a days, the concept of social justice has brought further relaxation of required minimum educational standards to socially depressed classes. Thus campuses are not now homogenous collection of like minded young scholars but heterogeneous with armatures that have yet to define their interest, and aptitude and learn the art of concentrating on gaining knowledge. It is still difficult not to deviate from their coveted dream education amidst tempting sensual pleasures which are easily available. Company of the fairer sex, games, smoking, alcohol, drugs, picnics, parties, internet cafes and movies are all potential distracters of young innocent minds like the mind of Fred Culverwell. Rich have plenty of money; money has access to all vices. The rich students some time befriend poor scholars to

display their wealth; their company sometimes spoil the scholar. Once detracted it only leads to fall of character that leads to evil acts which render them expulsion from campus; thus their whole life becomes a waste. The play is a warning to modern students in higher reputed institutions, belonging to different classes to be vigilant of bad company, influence and their consequences. One should always make sure that the path that he is treading is the right one.

Act two opens on the terrace of Badgley court on a bright sunny morning, several days later than the first Act. Lord Claverton has come to Badgley Court, not only for a rest-cure, but also to do other important things that he is not aware of. They are hinted in Eliot's "The Little Gidding"

And what you thought you come for is only a shell, a husk of meaning, from which the purpose breaks only when it is, fulfilled. You are here to kneel, where the prayer has been valid. 21

They indicate the recollection of the past events and re-evaluation of his life before death. Lord Claverton and Monica go on the terrace of one of the buildings of the Badgley Court. Monica is satisfied with the way they are treated there:

'They let us alone. The beds are comfortable the hot water is hot; they give us a tolerable break fast'.

When Oedipus reached Attica of Colonus, he explains in plain words his requirement and receipt:

Who will entertain the wandering Oedipus, to day with scanty gifts, little crave I, and win less than that and there with am content. (OAC 613)

In Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus the exiled king has grown old expiating his youthful crimes of parricide and incest; has arrived at a state of reconciliation and acceptance with gods. He arrives at the Attica of Colonus near the groves of Eumenides where he is ordained to die. Oedipus

entreats Theseus, king of Athens, for shelter and protection; he grants it out of compassion.

The time of Lord Calverton’s arrival to Badgley Court is early spring, the season Eliot uses frequently to suggest annual fertility ceremony. The reference to water represents the cleansing rites performed by Oedipus at Colonus those attic law demands, when a homicide returns home after exile, to make him pure again. Olive twigs, honey and spring water are used for this cleansing which suggests a ritual cure and a cook doctor. Ismane performs certain rituals for treading on the holy groves of Eumenides on behalf of Oedipus.

Lord Claverton arrives at Badgley Court as per the advice of doctor. His illness has many dimensions. Physically it is old age, psychologically he has guilt, suppressed in his psyche, and spiritually he is sterile. What he needs is not treatment and rest but needs to confess and reconcile for his sins. For this he has to suffer, gain wisdom and attain bliss: the path that Zeus has ordained for men. ‘They give us a tolerable break fast’. This is an allusion to the way the people of Athens and king Theseus treated Oedipus. Lord Claverton’s feeling of contentment is akin to the description of plenitudes in Colonus by the Chorus. At Colonus the groves are rich in berries and fruits, and are joyous because it is the land where the reveller Dionysus ever walks on the ground. The land is rich with grey leafed olive, luxuriant laurels, vine, fruits and spring water. Claverton has the feeling of contentment, and sense of well being at Badgley Court.

I will admit to a feeling of contentment already. I only hope that it will last. The sense of well being! CPP 544

Oedipus has found at Colonus that he is filled with a new strength and confidence in the same way. Ismane, the younger daughter of Oedipus brings soothing news of new oracle from Delphi that gods are pleased with Oedipus. His body has
become pure and holy from his exile, suffering and prayer; and has become purged of the sins committed previously. Now gods have bestowed heroic status to his body; it shall protect the land of his friends and destroy its enemies. This has made Oedipus happy and contented.

Before coming to Badgley Court Claverton was ill but on reaching it, he felt a new joy and strength. There he learned to face the life boldly, where as earlier he was escaping it by putting on the mask of successful business man and an elder statesman. Antigone and Oedipus come out of their hiding place in the groves, only when the chorus of Athenian Elders gave them an assurance of safety. Lord Claverton hopes that this feeling of contentment and the sense of well being would last long. He hopes that the benignant sunshine will last for a few days more and doubts that the early summer is harbinger of frost on the fruit trees. This is a note of sadness which fore tells the moments of testing. Sophocles has crammed the last days of Oedipus with joy, sorrow, anguish, worry, crisis and final peace. He grants Oedipus a appropriate end: the noble life and a heroic death. Monica wisely intercedes and advises his father that one should make most of that weather while that lasts; she never remembers his father learning to be joyous:

I never remember you as other than occupied
With anxieties from which you wanted to escape. CPP. 544

Here is the wisdom of the mankind. Everyone wants to be happy; happiness is the chief motive of all lives on which life is sustained. But one can not be happy for ever. There is no happiness either in past or future. Happiness comes in present and in moments. Every moment can bring new happiness provided we want to. But the routine of the human mind is, that it always slips into the past and repents over it; it imagines the future and fears; and it fails to enjoy the pleasant moments of the present. Man never learns to convert
the present moment into the moment of joy. Now-a-days short
time courses are conducted based on psychology, yoga,
pranayama, observance of silence, fasting, philosophy, prayer
and religion to teach busy modern men the art of living
happily. Monica had seen her father always bothering about
the politics and business; in his preoccupied anxieties and he
was never happy. 'The Rock' rightly asks: 'Where is the life
that we have lost in living'? The line 'occupied with
anxieties from which you were longing to escape' is an
allusion to Oedipus parricide and incest with his mother. He
cannot die and meet his parents in Hades; he cannot live and
face the disgusting looks of the people. So he blinded himself
to be relieved from this dilemma. He wandered like a beggar
feeding on the crumbs of food that strangers offered him. Lord
Claverton confesses before Monica that he never enjoyed his
living even as much as a common man. At least they enjoy their
life though without knowing of it. But he was always bothered by:

Some dissatisfaction, with myself, I suspect, very
depth myself, has impelled me all my life to find
justification, not as much as to the world. CPP 544

These lines are actually key-notes for the enlightenment
of Lord Claverton to discover his own self. This is not merely
a disease coming from outside but that lies in his own self
and it is the product of his own making and his own actions.
This is an allusion to curse on the house of Lauis, in Oedipus
myth. Lauis, the king of Thebes was forbidden by oracles to
beget a son; if he did so, the son shall kill his father and
marry his own mother. This curse has justified the sin
committed by Oedipus, though unknowingly, yet world abhors it.
Thus Claverton feels something in himself which is responsible
for his ordeals that are terror to be alone and fear of

meeting strangers. The world outside is not responsible for his difficulties. This knowledge is gained through intuition.

Now Eliot comes back to the surface action of the play. After a few days of good rest in a new pleasant place, Claverton begins a healthy introspection of exploring his inner self and begins to analyse the causes of his own making for his malady. Rest and new place and pleasant nature have done well to Claverton. This is the true nature of retirement. At this juncture it is better to know what myths say about retirement. According to Robert frost’s desire:

In the magic of newness, the tired and bored life gets rid of its tiredness’; invigorate itself with new hope and desires [the old stem sprouts to new leaf] in mind and body. If this should happen one has to take resort in nature compulsorily.²³

This myth resembles vanaprastha Ashrama of the four ashrams that ancient Hindus practiced in India. A person after passing the middle age, retires from his job, and hands over his family responsibilities to his son. Then he would retire to forest huts with his wife and lived with sages to spend the rest of his old age in penance and prayer to God. This was practiced to redevelop love of nature as a concept of ancient philosophical practice and heritage. Many philosophers have been stressing the importance of solitude in human life. Their principle is temporary withdrawal from miseries of life, which is necessary for human health. Epicureans, Stoics, Horace, Virgil, Lucretus, Charvakas (Indian Atheists), and Meemamsakas (followers of the six types of visions of life), propound that to attain seclusion is universal phenomenon. Going back to natural country life is un-civilised practice in Christian belief; all philosophers and those who like to understand God in pagan way have selected this path. Those who see God in nature have pantheistic mental attitude, by worshipping nature

they have universally divined it. Hence it is called Animism. Myth of Retirement is included in this religion. Loneliness in retirement gives the transcendence. Further Claverton asks himself:

What is this self inside us, this silent observer, Severe and speechless critic, who can terrorise us?

Eliot called this inner self as guardian in *The Cocktail Party*, the guardian angel in *The Confidential Clerk*, who ‘will judge us severely for the error into which his reproach drove us’. This is an allusion to ‘dyke’ among Greeks: the divine retribution for the sin committed. The daemon (Alaster) drives the sinner to madness, to commit more sins. This is a Greek sentiment. Aeschylus has explained this in a simple term; ‘On to the doer, what he doeth’.

Sin committed kicks back the sinner in similar term and ferocity. It does not end with one generation. The wages of sin are hereditary; the sins of the father visit upon his children and they too will suffer. This will go on till the sin is expiated by pilgrimage and suffering. This Knowledge through suffering is the wisdom of the Greeks. Dwaitha philosophy of Indian Vedanta propounded by Acharya Madhwa of twelfth century, explains about this ‘self’ explicitly. Man’s composition is dual in nature; it consists of a physical body controlled by its own bye product, mind is called Jeeva; body can not sustain by itself; it is always accompanied by the divine self Athman or it is also called as paramathma. Jeeva tends to enslave body and mind to pursue sensual pleasures; while paramathma always advises the right path. It is left to mind to choose by free will. The silent observer and the severe critic inside us is paramathma: the divine entity.

This dual nature is explained in Mandooka Upanishad as 

\[ dwa\ suparna\ sayuja\ sakhaya\ samana\ vrukshe \]

---

parischashwajaye... there are two birds on a twig; one is eating the fruit; other one observing it.\textsuperscript{25}

Now we know that Claverton has committed one mistake with Fred. It they may be the causes of his suffering. Monica once again redirects the thoughts of Claverton to the present moment; he has admitted that he has found life at Badgley Court pleasant, restful and quiet. The matron of the Badgley Court has left them alone. But Claverton clarifies that she has left them with these words which very much imply that she will come back:

I am going to leave you alone; you want perfect peace; that is what Badgley Court is for. CPP 545.

The perfect peace has multiple meanings. Worldly peace is attained when one is free of all his guilt. In Greek it terms to be in peace with gods; that means obeying their laws. And in Christian terms it is the heavenly peace guaranteed by Jesus to his disciples. It is awarded after dooms day and judgement there on. It is awarded to one when all his sins are absolved. Person who wants heavenly peace will be tried as if in a Court. Badgley Court is a symbol of such Court. Interestingly, according to ancient Greeks, the stage is a Court: Agon, where the characters of the play argue their point of view as if a lawyer argues before a Court of law to win his case. Thus Badgley Court, contrary to its nature as a rest home for convalescents, becomes a trial Court, where peace is awarded to a confessor. It is like Oedipus who is deified and who found at peace with gods in Colonus. Oedipus had to argue his innocence while committing his two deadly sins before leader of the chorus and Athenian king Theseus for securing shelter there. Persuading others to accept one’s point of view is rhetoric to Greeks and communication skill to moderns. Greek myths give best skills of argument and

persuasion. There is going to be a lot of argument between the characters of the play at Badgley Court.

Medical imagery and presence of doctor is in overt form in *The Elder Statesman*. Lord Claverton is ill literally and figuratively with the disease of self and his cure is wrought by the spiritual agency of his daughter’s saving love which enables him to acknowledge the ghosts and his past inequity. Badgley Court is another instance of sanatorium where human condition is cured by grace. Mrs. Piggott is a comic version of a doctor’s Assistant, to show that spiritual problems are not solved by medicine. Lord Claverton comes to hospital to perform sacred ritual of Christian confession before his daughter. His apprehension that the Matron Mrs. Piggott, may return soon, is expressed in following words:

*When people talk like that, it indicates a latent desire to interfere.* CPP 545

Claverton’s fear for strangers is due to the latent guilt in his mind about his mistakes committed in his youth about which strangers may talk about, the persons who were harmed by his mistakes, may themselves visit as strangers to avenge the harm, or they may talk about it. Fear to be alone is due to the fact that this thought will haunt him when he is alone. That is why he hides his face behind the newspaper while sitting on the terrace of his room which is akin to Oedipus’ hiding behind the grooves of Colonus at the arrival of chorus of Theban elders. He did so because of two reasons; he did not know who they were and what their intention was; he made sure that they would not remove him from the grove against his will.

However Claverton could not avoid Mrs. Piggott’s, the matron, professional enquiries. Mrs. Piggott does not like the inmates calling her Matron. Because Badgley Court is not a hospital and its inmates are not sick but convalescents. They
are physically healthy but have the feeling of sickness. This idea clearly suits Claverton's condition.

However Claverton can not avoid the meeting of a Mrs. Carghill to that sunny corner of the terrace. She identifies Claverton; and she is the dreaded person whom he is afraid of. She wonders if Claverton remembers her; and explains some of the moments of joy that they had spent together in their youth. Claverton remembers her maiden name during their period of acquaintance. She was Maisy Montjoy then, but now a widow-Mrs. Carghill. She was a beautiful revue star in her youth; Claverton had loved her and later deserted her. She had filed a breach of trust case against him. Claverton's father had offered a huge sum of money, more than Court would have fixed to her and made an out of Court settlement of the case. It would have been harmful to Claverton's political ambition if he had lost that case. Thus they parted. He became a statesman and she became a famous singer. Claverton does not show a sign of friendship or pleasure to meet her again. She was his lover once. But being rich he thinks every thing in terms of money. Financial settlement, he thinks ended their relationship. And there was nothing to do for them now. He asks her in a callous note why she has come before him again. A word or two of kindness would have pleased her. But he has no love for any body. He behaves in a similar way in front of Fred. He bestowed his friendship on Fred, spent money on him. This attitude has enraged them as much as his posing as an elder statesman. His breach of trust with Maisie Montjoy amounts to incest. The lover and love letters always haunted him. This is the cause of his fear.

She accuses him that he wanted to pose ... as an elder statesman; he is still a silly Richard. She had his Love letters with her. 'And she intended to use them so that he may
not abandon her again; love had turned into hate'.\(^\text{26}\) Claverton married with a lady for her title and influence of her family to make his fortune in politics and business world. He lived with his wife without any love for her. He used her family name; changed his own name to Lord Claverton from Dick Ferry. He never told his wife about Maisie. 'Oedipus' incest is reduced to the minimum blunder of Lord Claverton thus, instead of marrying his mother as Oedipus did; he has taken a mistress refused to marry her and legally paid compensation for the act'.\(^\text{27}\)

The wheel in Greek wisdom is an embodiment of change over passing of time; it is a universal law of change. It is also, in essence, as old Pythagorean view on a circle of necessity that fortune goes round like wheel. This view has its significance for morality. Pythagorean view warns against attempting too much and appeals to circle of human affairs which do not allow men to prosper long. Based on the statement of Pindar, Sophocles in one of his lost works says that 'my fate circles on the shifting wheel of god's reversal and still suffers change'. And concludes that fortunes changes like the moon's orb:

> And once at her bright fairest - then forthwith Lapses and fades, comes to nothingness.\(^\text{28}\)

This change is actualised in the life of both Oedipus and Claverton. Once Fred and Maisie were his friend and beloved, now they have turned up as his tormentors. Once Michael was his loving son who gave him pleasure; now he has turned into a wicked person. Once Claverton was an elder statesman and a successful businessman; now he is like passenger in a waiting

room waiting for a train that will not arrive; afraid of being alone and fearing of expose to strangers, he hides his face behind a newspaper in a corner of a far off resort hospital.

Claverton’s greatness was a mask and a like a role in a play. But inside he was sinful, cruel and selfish man. He made use of Maisie for his pleasures and later deserted her. Of course she was not a noble lady. She only posed to have agreed to settlement; as if she did not want to break political ambition of Claverton but the money offered was twice as much Court would have provided her; but also because she really loved him and never forgot him. This guilt of fornication and deceiving a girl who loved him was the reason for his twin miseries: terror to be alone and fear of strangers. He never revealed about this guilt with anybody. So the guilt pent up inside his self and expressed in the form of disease of mind. This sickness of spirit in the form of guilt made him sicker than he appears to be. This is Claverton’s Waste Land. Maisie not only taunted him but also warned Richard that she never forgot him for:

He touched her soul and pawed it, she touched his soul. It is frightening that they are still together because ‘where their fires were not quenched’. CPP 553

Both are equally suffering. Lover is suffering psychosomatic terror because of his sin of betrayal; and the loved is suffering from revenge. It is suffering like Greeks ‘dyke’, retribution of sin as Aeschylus puts it, ‘on to the doer what he doeth’. To keep the fires of revenge unquenched she reads his love letters every night. Maisie Batterson and Dick Ferry loved each other when they were foolish and young. They were not suited for each other, and would have sought divorce, if Dick Ferry’s father had not made an out of Court settlement, like a coward. Why do they come back to haunt Lord Claverton who is on the verge of death? Helen Gardner explains:
They are of course objectifications of the trouble in the dying man's mind; reminders of two occasions, symbolic of his whole life, when he was coward and shirked his responsibilities.  

Mrs. Cargill's visiting Claverton is not accidental but deliberate action with the intention of harassing him. She has passionate love letters written by Claverton: originals with her lawyer and photo copies with her. She expresses her intention of using them now. Mrs. Piggott brings in Claverton's tipple and relieves him from Maisie. She tells Claverton about the once popular song sung by Maisie 'it is not too late for you to love me' suggesting Maisie's intention of establishing their relationship again in a different manner.

Both Maisie and Fred hold Claverton responsible for corrupting their natures and violating their love and both attempt a sort of moral blackmail where by in exchange for his company they agree to conceal the facts of Claverton's true nature from the world and from his children. Stripping the false mask of Claverton before his death makes up the chief dramatic action of the play. Claverton has another misfortune waiting for him; it is about his son Michael's; the news brought by Monica. This situation is also resembles Oedipus at Colonus. Oedipus' elder son Polynieces approaches him. Oedipus' younger son Etiocles has usurped Thebes' throne and has driven his elder brother out of state. Polynieces marries an Argos princess. He gather's a mighty army of soldiers led by his seven friends, and marches on to win Thebes back. Oracles have predicted that the side that has the blessings of Oedipus shall win. So Polynieces pleads for the blessings of Oedipus and promises that if he succeeds in gaining the throne of Thebes he can take his father there. But Oedipus is angry on his both sons, who did nothing to prevent

him when thrown away from Thebes. He curses both of his sons to die of each other.

Claverton has a son Michael. Claverton had an obsession that Michael would run his car over a man and would get trouble with woman; all are reflections of his own life, which have the same parallels in Oedipus' life running over a man (killing father) and trouble with some woman (Incest). Claverton fears that his son is moving in his path. Michael has gone on similar troubles. He has lost jobs he held for negligence often.

Michael borrows heavily and put the money on speculation and has lost it. He is on debt. And he was even blamed to be a gambler. Actually he never showed any interest in any job but he accused that he was given jobs that did not excite him.  

'The early draft of Eliot has details of his crime of miss appropriation of office funds; and he intends to exile himself before auditors find it and hand him over to police'. He requests Claverton to pay money and to hush up the matter. (Martine Browne). Now he has been dismissed by his employer accusing him of gambling and for being over friendly with one of the working girls:

She was not exciting. But it served to pass time.  
CPP. 558.

That was what Claverton did with Maisie Montjoy. Now he wants to go abroad, change his name, and do import and export business gaining profit either way which would make him rich in a short time. Claverton was pained to see that his son is treading a path trodden by him. Michael accused him, exactly as Gomez did, to be posing himself as successful but was pushed out of politics and business because he was useless there. Claverton thinks that Michael is running away from reality, he does not have an aim of high achievement, some

---

39 Martin E Brown, Making of T.S. Eliot Plays (Cambridge: Syndicate of OUP, 1969) p,
dream of excellence. He tries to convince Michael that those who flee from their past will always lose race.

When you reach your goal your imagined paradise of success and grand ... You will find your past failures waiting there to greet you. CPP. 561

The anxieties of Claverton are similar in nature as that of Oedipus. Here we find a parallel situation as in *Oedipus at Colonus*. Michael is dismissed from his job. Polynieces was already exiled. Michael hates his father because he cannot live up the stature of Clavertons. The angry argument between Michael and Claverton resembles similar exchange between Oedipus and Polynieces. Antigone pacifies them; here Monica interferes and asks Claverton to help Michel who is in distress and also diagnoses that the reason for the feud between the two is absence of family love. She also defines the role of love within a family:

... But there is no vocabulary for love within family; love is lived in but not at; love within the light of which everything is seen; love within which all other love finds speech. This love is silent. CPP 562

Meanwhile Mrs. Carghill again appears and recognises both Michael and Monica by name. Michael is perplexed at this. Mrs. Carghill explains the likeness of Michael to his father:

... Because you're so like your father when he was your age, he is the picture of you, Richard! Yet you are the image of what he was then. CPP 562

The statement reminds that Michael is looking and behaving like his father. Michael is also irresponsible, selfish and wanton. He never loved anybody nor is loved. Both father and his son lived in their Waste Lands. This is in tune with Greek sentiment that sins of father visit upon the son. Michael has to suffer for the sin of his father till it is expiated by suffering and knowledge. Gomez also joins their little party. He is introduced to Mrs. Carghill; they immediately begin to like each other and agree to share their
secret knowledge about Claverton. Sudden appearance of strangers and the shock they may cause to her father alarms Monica. She directs Michael to ask for excuses from the father politely and walks away with her father to their room.

Michael’s debtors chase him. His worldly desire for money and power is comparable to Polynieces’ exile. Michael’s intention to go to San Marco is comparable to Polynieces’ futile journey to ill fated, accursed, and pestilence ridden Thebes where death by his own brother awaits him. Monica seriously talks to her father that he should not live in Badgley Court any more:

Father! Those awful people, we must not stay here; I want you to escape from them. CPP 565

The word ‘escape’ enlightens Claverton. All his life he wanted to escape from his past like a coward. That cowardice has brought him to misery and to the Badgley Court. He advises Michael not to try to escape from his past failures. He himself has to start learning it. He is ready to learn his lesson with his son:

Michael and I shall go to school together; we will sit side by side, sit at ... suffer humiliations. (CPP 565)

Lord Claverton spent his life in selfish exploitation of others because of his inability to face the responsibilities of loving and being loved. He is visited by the ghosts of his guilty past. How will he learn to face his past failures, there is an example in Oedipus at Colonus. Oedipus underwent enormous suffering and gods were pleased with him and he was deified. He also confessed all his unintentional sins before the chorus of Athenian elders, and before Theseus—the king of Athens, gained their sympathy, confidence, security and shelter. There remained nothing to hide, hence nothing to haunt his conscience as well. There is a parallel situation in Oedipus at Colonus.
The trouble facing Michael has some lesson to young men. A man should study well in his young age and there after honestly work in a job that gives him pleasure and earn money and become self reliant. This is the way of the world. Michel does not like any job; actually he has not studied well. Instead of a job he likes to earn money quickly to spend it on his vices like gambling, drinks and flirting with girls. No amount of money will be enough for vices. Such persons are bound to resort to wicked ways of miss-appropriation of office fund and face arrest and jail. No body can save them. Such is his condition.

Monica can not manage double attack of Claverton’s ghosts; at this juncture Monica sends for Charles for help. Claverton’s condition is delicate, Michael is bent on going abroad, Maisie and Fred are after Claverton to increase his agony by almost blackmailing him with the knowledge of his dark past. Claverton is puzzled; yet he makes a bold and correct decision of resisting them. He makes correct evaluation of the situation. Maisie and Fred wield their power over Claverton as long as he wants to keep his dark secrets unknown. If he himself reveals them, they will disappear into thin air like ghosts before an exorcist. But before that he has to suffer humiliation.

In The Elder Statesman, Eliot resumes many of his earlier themes - man fleeing from his earlier sins has to turn back and face the consequences. He should accept the realities; to confess his sin before he can find peace. Consciously or unconsciously Lord Claverton has become a hollow man, a mere façade, a mask without a face. Unless the inner self has communion with another spirit (love and being loved) it will degenerate. Lord Claverton’s effort for position was a mask which had separated him from his family, and friends. He adored a public life: politics and business, where every one
wears a mask. When he retired from public life, he felt terrible isolation. He fails in the endeavours of life.

Instead of genuinely loving his daughter, he distorted the impulse of love in himself into possessiveness. His public success was only peripheral. So Claverton's life was a failure.31

Act III begins in the sunny corner, on the terrace of the Badgley Court; it is the late afternoon of the following day. When Charles Hemington arrives, Monica being alone is excited at his arrival and tells him that she needs him. Charles is relieved that at last she has felt the need of him. Monica declares that they may be called engaged persons now. Claverton enters unobserved, from a place under a great beech tree, which he felt drawn to the spot. In Oedipus at Colonus, Oedipus stood under a Pear tree, with a marble tomb on the day of his death.

Claverton had over heard the words 'guilty secrets'. He explains them that his guilts are not crimes, but only temporary failures, irrespective of aberrations, reckless surrenders, unexplainable impulses, moments of regrets and episodes that one tries to conceal from the world. They are with him. He asks Charles if he has any thing in his life which he wishes to forget, or which he wishes to keep unknown to Monica. Charles honestly tells him that he has nothing to conceal from Monica.

He analyses the general tendency of human mind; if one has nothing to conceal from any person and to conceal from the rest of the world, his soul is safe. If a man has one person, just one in his life, before whom he is willing to confess everything then he loves that person and his love will save him.

In The Elder statesman, the only way for complete salvation is through the recognition of human love as an

earthly image of divine love of God. Claverton confesses before the worthy lovers that he has never loved any person. It is impossible to be quite honest before his daughter, as he was never honest with any one. He could not confess before his daughter Monica when she was a child. When she becomes a grown up lady, she has been worshipping his false image of successful businessman and an elder statesman. Now he is tired of false pretences. She will know now what his father really is. He will be a broken hearted actor.

Monica assures him that she loves him better. Charles intervenes to ask Claverton if there is an attempt to blackmail him by the guests, as a lawyer he can help him. Claverton replies that they do not want to exhort money from him but only want his company, for which the law cannot touch them. Charles wonders why Claverton is submitting to them instead of leaving Badgley Court to escape from them.

Claverton explains that they are not real persons; they are merely ghosts, spectres from his own past, who had all along his life tormented him, only recently he has seen their living person. He confesses that he never knew his wife and she never knew him. They never understood each other. So they lived, with a deep silence between them. Claverton did not reveal these secrets to her because he was afraid that she would not pardon him. How could he make confession without a hope of absolution? This loveless married life had made her completely disinterested in life. Fred Culverwell, Maisie Mountjoy, Richard Ferry (himself before he took the name of Claverton) no more exist. They have changed their names. They are, in fact only memories haunting him, hence they are his ghosts, and One by one Claverton unveils his ghosts. Claverton was morally responsible to Fred’s ruin. Because he confesses:

---

Those who admire us will imitate our vices as well. (CPP. 571)

Maisie Batterson or Maisie Montjoy was a pretty revue star, who loved him. He should have respected her love, should not have abused her; that is where he failed. Now she threatens with love letters whom Claverton had written to her, for he had ditched her, by making an out of Court settlement for a breach of promise suit. Claverton had loved Maisie, they were mutually unsuitable to each other, and even if he had married, the marriage would have ended in divorce. His father was against marriage. So 'an out of Court settlement' was made. But her peculiar physical attraction still lingered in as a ghost. She has neither forgotten nor forgiven him.

Dick Ferry, had run over an old man while returning to Oxford after a wild party with two girls in the car, and he did not stop to report to police about the accident. He could not have revealed to the police about where he had gone or who those girls were and why they were in his car. The old man on the road did not die because of his hit. Because another man, a lorry driver ran over him again, he stopped and reported that fact to the police. He was arrested and released later because the old man had died his natural death. But Claverton suffered this guilt throughout his life; a voice whispered 'you did not stop'. It was the voice of Culverwell.

These are no more crimes in the eyes of law. But they are, in the form of sin; for the crime is in relation to law and the sin is in relation to sinner. (CPP. 573.)

He strongly resolves that he will stay at the Badgley Court, till the end; the place and time of liberation are pre determined. (CPP. 573). 'Ghosts returned only to prompt him to rediscover his real self; just as Creon and Polynieces come to realize Oedipus' daemonic power of a hero'.

---

are the blackmailers who come to harass the dying old Claverton; they are in reality ghosts of his youth and have been haunting him through out his life. They are unreal phantoms tormenting his conscience. ‘He must get rid of them from his path to bring harmony, unity, and purge his guilt before his death’.  

Claverton has not ruined their life at all; in fact they have done well. Gomez is a millionaire of san Marco. Maisie Batterson is a rich widow. And yet they are lost souls and they know it. They are also real persons seeking to avenge Claverton who they think has ruined them. They know it and they want to avenge. Claverton is haunted by ghosts of the past who can not be propitiated; they take revenge by separating his son from him to lead an ignoble life.

These ghosts never dared to seek vengeance when Claverton had political power and business; he would have crushed them to pulp. When he retired from politics and business due to illness, the elder statesman and the business man in him faded; what remained in him is old Dick Ferry. So his enemies returned to their forms, Fred and Maisie, to haunt and torment him.

Both Mrs. Carghill and Fred Culverwell vie for Claverton’s friendship, which is not of much use to them. Both know that he has retired from politics and business in which he was not so good and veiled any power. It is not only vengeance but something more than it. It is his good name which elevates him to a status in society. The roots for this yearning for his friendship can be found in Oedipus at Colonus. The second prophesy of Apollo revealed that Oedipus would be a hero and his body would save his friends and destroy the enemies. Greeks value the relics of the hero. This inherent desire for hero or hero’s relics is expressed in the

---

form of their desire for Claverton's friendship and continuation of their relationship with him. Mrs. Carghill tries to seduce him quoting 'it is not too late for you to love me' and 'the fires are not yet quenched'. Gomez tries to lure him with Cuban cigars and with money ready, enough to buy over Claverton several times.

Claverton rightly guesses that his adversaries are hatching a conspiracy. He sees Mrs Carghill is approaching them. Monica suggests to leave the place. Claverton is determined to stay and face the situation. Mrs Cargill indirectly discloses that she; Michael and Senor Gomez have come together and have decided that Michael should go to San Marco along with Gomez who has offered a job for him. Gomez and Michael confirm this. Claverton tries to reveal the real name and identity of Gomez; but Gomez interferes and says that he has explained everything to Michael. Now it seems he will catch hold of Michael and change him into another Gomez and he will be a custodian of Michael's moral; just as Claverton once used to be of Fred.

At that time Claverton tells that he has revealed every thing about their relation to Monica and Charles. Mrs Carghill offers to reveal about her intimate relationship between her and Claverton. Monica discourages her by telling that she is satisfied with what she has learned from her father. Claverton does his best to dissuade Michael from going with Gomez but Michael becomes adamant. Even Claverton confesses before Michael that he has committed many mistakes. He has attempted to correct the mistakes, by methods which are also proved to be mistakes. He has failed to understand Michael and asks him not to go abroad with strangers, leaving his country and family.

Everyone is searching for their true meaning. Michael, the son of Lord Claverton, sets out, to be escorted by his father’s past, to try to find his own identity by finding that
he can not live in England to match the reputation of his father. According to the Greek the sins of a father visit his son. This situation is comparable to similar situation in *Oedipus at Colonus*, where Polynieces comes to plead for the mercy and a blessing of his father; Oedipus actually curses both of his sons to be perished in their feud.

Michael and Monica had some love left between them. Michael asks her to receive him with love when he returns from San Marco. Both Charles and Monica promise to do their best to help him. In a similar situation Polynieces pleads Antigone to give him a decent burial when he dies in the battle. Even though Polynieces knows his tragic end, he determines to war against Thebes; Michael even after knowing the criminal background of Gomez decides to part with his family and to go with him. Monica is inquisitive 'Who will you be when I see you again', only indicates tragic future of Michael. Claverton does not curse his son as Oedipus does. Thus Michael and Claverton’s ghosts depart; Claverton is alone freed from confession.

In their first encounter Ghosts have an upper hand and they do know it, because they are not frauds. Gomez knew that he was Fred Culverwell and Mrs. Carghill knew that she was Maisie Montjoy, but Claverton is a fraud because he does not remember that he was once Dick Ferry and later posed for the world as Lord Claverton. 'They want revenge on public figure Claverton because he had killed them. Gomez was haunted by clever weak boy Freddy; Mrs. Carghill was haunted by Maisie Montjoy who loved and admires Dick Ferry.

On their second encounter they lost their power because Claverton accepted the fact that he was Dick Ferry once, he had damaged them, and the damages could not be undone. He abandoned the pretence that he had settled their accounts fairly. He is free because he has revealed the truth and is ready to die. He has attained the only wisdom:
The only wisdom we can acquire is the wisdom of humility; humility is endless.\(^{35}\)

His ghosts return and batten on his son, who against all warnings, repeat the mistakes of his father. They take malicious pleasure in separating son from his father. Gomez takes pleasure at an opportunity to change Michael into another Gomez. Gomez thus ironically repays the help received from Claverton in the past. No one can prevent Michael because like Polynieces, he is doomed in his fate. Thus the sin of the father is revisiting the son. Monica can only promise to treat Michael well when he returns:

> Whoever you are then I shall always pretend that it is the same Michael. CPP 579

In *Oedipus at Colonus*, Antigone promises to give Polynieces a decent burial, since he will die in the ensuing war against Thebes by his own brother Etiocles. Michael repeats his father's mistakes because of Claverton's unsympathetic treatment. Gomez points out this aspect to Claverton; Michael has followed his father's undergraduate career without the proper supervision that Claverton's father gave him; to tell him not to go too far. (CPP 539) Michael deserves his lesson because he has not done his duty towards his father and the house. He never came to help his father when he was ill. According to Greek laws those who maltreat their parents are liable to the curse of Zeus. Polynieces has offended Justice who sits with Zeus. Oedipus advances something stranger and more forbidding:

> May the hideous dark, of father Tartarus give you a home.\(^{36}\)

The father of Tartarus is the chaos which preceded creation of the world. Oedipus wishes his son to be in it so that he may be cut off from his home and family. Michael is

\(^{35}\) Ibid, p, 180.

going to the South American country which is dark chaos to the modern civilised world with its black-market, Mafia, drug dealing, illegal foreign currency, money laundering corrupt money, under world dons, gun runners, and slave runners, shelter for terrorists, corrupt cruel exiled dictators, former Nazi Criminals for a sum. Obviously he will be cut off from his country and family. Like Polynieces, Michael too has offended against the honour of his family by his gambling, flirtation, and insincerity in carrying out his responsibilities; he does not accept them; Out of greed for money he collaborates with enemies of his father and ready to abandon him with full knowledge that Claverton will not live longer. He accepts a job which is fraudulent by nature, which will make him another Gomez. Claverton tries his best to stop him but he does not relent.

Claverton denounces Michael and quarrels with him. This has roots in Oedipus at Colonus. A son should honour his parents. According to unwritten Greek laws and the law of Athens, it is the duty of a son to look after or to provide lodging to parents, failing which he looses rights of a citizen. Plato had thought to banish the offender after flogging for neglecting his parents.

Greek wisdom denounces the son who maltreats his parents:

His motives are dubious and his sincerity is suspicious ... a man guilty of it is unlikely to do right or honourable.\(^{37}\)

The sins of the father visit upon his sons also. This is explained in The Family reunion. The similar phenomenon is repeated in The Elder Statesman also; Michel confirms it thus: I was your son - that is to say, a kind of prolongation of your existence, a representative of carrying your business in your absence. CPP 559.

\(^{37}\)Ibid, p, 328.
Negligence of old parents by youth after their marriage is the growing menace of mistaken modernity. This is barbaric act; even an uneducated villager will not do this cruel act. Now a day couples wish to be alone so that they can live as they wish. They think that the presence of elders curtail their wanton behaviour. So the son under the viscous spell of his wife gradually alienates from them and finally abandons them. It has become accepted practice to send old parents to old age homes. In fact, the parents sacrifice their personal things for upbringing of their children. They spend their youth on their children’s upbringing and education. So it is son’s responsibility to look after them in their old age. It gives an unconscious education to his own young children how to treat him in his old age. Children don’t do as we say; but they do as we do. In the extreme case of inability to keep with him, he must arrange for their upbringing. It is better to remind our self that the Hindu tradition preaches to treat parents at par with gods; and teaches not to neglect or abandon them. Upanishads preach ‘Mathru devo bhava; pithru devo bhava; deva pithru karyabhyam napravadithavyam’. Mother is god, father is god; I will not neglect my duty towards god and my parents and ancestors. Badgley Court is not only a convalescent home but also becomes Claverton’s old age home since his son abandons him.

The presence of noble virgin in the form of Monica and a legal exorcist in the form of upcoming Barrister - politician Charles, and moral fortification of Lord Claverton in the form of confession, make the charm of ghosts weaker. They retreat; promising Claverton that within five years Michael will be in good position. Thus Gomez turns towards Michael and Maisie who turns her charm towards rich Gomez; they let Lord Claverton a free man to attain his peaceful death.

Greek hero blesses his friends; Lord Claverton blesses Monica and Charles; he will bestow his wealth, title and
nobility to them as inheritance which can be again be attributed the trait of the Greek hero to bless his friends. Oedipus, who turned a heroic figure by oracles, has to curse his adversaries and benefit his hosts. Claverton, has becomes down to Earth Samaritan after confession; forgives his son and asks Monica and Charles to treat Michael well and do all they can if he needs help. Now Monica suggests that they should leave Badgley Court and leave for home. Claverton refuses to leave Badgley Court because he says 'I feel peace now'.

It is the peace which ensues after contrition. When contrition ensues up on knowledge of truth. CPP 581

This is the peace that Oedipus enjoyed at Attica of Colonus. It is the hard earned peace of the Greek wisdom, the way of Zeus which is prescribed for human beings. 'On to the doer, what he doeth'; the doer must suffer. Suffering brings knowledge. Knowledge brings wisdom. Surrendering one's will to the will of god is the greatest wisdom and the wisdom brings bliss.

Claverton has learned his lesson. All his life he pretended to be someone, always wanted to dominate over his children. He showed a narrow path to Michael because he wanted to perpetuate himself in him. He wanted to keep Monica to himself because he wanted her to adore him his pretentious personality. Now having learned what it is to love and be loved is; he bestows blessing, love and happiness to young lovers: Monica and Charles. He is happy that Monica has found a real man who can love her. This is an allusion to the fact that blind Oedipus saw light before his death.

Claverton acknowledges his failure, faces the reality of his guilt and makes contact with reality and the real self; the self that sinned is revived. Claverton himself finds:

I see myself emerging from my spectral existence into something real. CPP 581
In case of Oedipus, his suffering, humility and confession made him once again acceptable to gods and the new Oedipus, the typical Greek hero emerged. In the same way Claverton confesses and repents for his guilt; and starts a new life of love and appreciation. The new Claverton, who can face reality boldly, is at once stoic and modern man.

It is only at the end Claverton discovers that his ghosts can be exorcised by his hard won recognition of what loving costs and its curative effects on the soul. The dramatic mask given by others, or assumed to protect our selves, must fall off, before love can be offered or received. Lord Claverton strips off his false mask as The Elder Statesman, and retired executive of companies and irreproachable father and husband, and accepts his real selfish nature and his shabby past. He confesses before his daughter and her fiancée. He experience peace and love in her forgiveness. Lord Claverton’s stripping off false mask makes up the chief dramatic action of the play.

The confession of Claverton brings better understanding and Monica loves Claverton more than her than she loved him before that knowledge. Claverton now loves even Michael who rejected and whom Michael rejected, Claverton’s other self, he rejected also. Claverton feels that he has been freed from the self that pretended to be some one. When he confessed his little sins before Monica he became an ordinary man. He expresses new found meaning, reason and fulfilment of life. He had kept Monica to praise his mask and prevented her from marrying with Charles. Now he releases her and addresses Monica:

And I love you daughter, more truly for knowing that there is someone you love more than your father that you love and is loved. CPP 582

The objective of life is to love and be loved. Hither to Claverton truly loved none; so nobody loved him. Claverton reveals his future course of action after he learned to love.
He makes a better start; he begins to love Michael, for the first time because it is only beginning in the practice of loving.

Oedipus relieves both of his daughters from the burden of caring him reminding that in turn:

One little word makes all those toil as nought; love you had from me, from none beside you. OaC 664.

Monica and Charles assure to help and treat Michael when he returns from San Marco. Oedipus extracts assurance from Theseus to look after his daughters before dying. So also Claverton takes assurance from Charles to look after Monica:

I leave Monica to you. Look after her, Charles, now and always. CPP 582.

He hands over the safety of Monica to Charles. He leaves for a stroll so that the young lovers can have a moment of privacy. Charles feels:

Claverton is a very different man from the man he used to be. CPP 582

This is an allusion to the old and blind Oedipus, in Sophocles’ Oedipus at Colonus; He is transformed into a Greek Hero, who is above an ordinary man, who can destroy his enemies by curse and help his friends; who is neither a man nor a god but both: a daemon.

Acts of bloodshed and impiety did not prevent a man from becoming a hero, if he had sufficient power and right kind of pre-eminence. But Eliot has transformed Claverton from Greek Hero to all loving Christian hero. This is like the myth of old god who has died to give place for new god. In Egyptian myths the deities of Amman and Osiris are immersed in water so that they come back again in the next season.

Monica sends for Charles to be with her and her father to save him from his enemies. In Oedipus at Colonus, Oedipus sends for king Theseus of Athens to show the place where he must be buried. His tomb will protect Athens from her enemies
and draught. Lord Claverton stops and stands beneath a great beach tree; Monica and Charles observe him from a distance. This is an allusion to the last day of Oedipus. He was last seen under a hollow pear tree with marble tomb beneath.

The messenger in *Oedipus at Colonus* describes the events of that day. Blind Oedipus saw light, guided his daughters, Theseus and other attendants without any help and stopped near a pear tree. He washed himself clean by spring water and offered gods the drink offering. He sent away every body except Theseus; only he would know the place of Oedipus’ rest. What would happen to him would be known only to Theseus. This he would divulge to none but his successor in confidence.

Monica and Charles felt extreme happiness because Charles said that the dead had poured out blessings on the living. Lord Claverton at that time was standing under a beach tree, what happened to him afterwards is not known. It is just like the end of *Oedipus at Colonus* and his death. It may assumed that Lord Claverton is dead because Charles precisely says the reason for their extreme happiness because the dead has showered blessings on them. The phenomenon of uncertainty of Lord Claverton’s death is not without reason. It is an allusion to the way of Oedipus’ death in the Greek classic. The messenger gives an account of it thus:

No thunderbolt, no whirlwind but either god took with him or the earth in its goodwill opened up its lightless caves.\(^{38}\)

Oedipus knows that his death is good to himself and a fortune to Athens: therefore he must be remembered with joy. Thus passing of Oedipus is a divine act, which recompense for his past sufferings and a promise of protection to Athens, and also to show that gods are just. Neither earth has swallowed him, nor has he been carried off to heaven. The actual passage is messenger’s hints that he has passed alive into earth and

\(^{38}\) Ibid, p. 341.
simply disappeared. That is why nothing is told about death or recovery of Lord Claverton. But death is irrelevant in the play. The events of confession, new knowledge of love, knowledge through suffering, play an important role in bringing transformation of Claverton's character. That is why the death of Claverton is symbolic and metaphorical.

Lovelessness is sterility—death in life while affirmative love is rebirth: regeneration. Thus old king is killed because of his impotency and sterility while the knowledge of affirmative love regenerated him. Thus Claverton's standing under a pear tree at the same time becomes a symbol of death and regeneration.

Claverton, the hero, finds salvation by purgation within the family. There is a new emphasis upon the efficacies of love; a re-acceptance of the world in a new spirit—moving from attachment (Possession) to detachment, to become renewed, transfigured in another pattern, towards greater tolerance of the life of man in time. It is the kind of love that Eliot explained in *The Family Reunion*, the love beyond any desire. Love induces the lovers into a new unity. Monica and Charles find such a new communion:

> The moment in the rose garden has become the common experience of the lovers.\(^{39}\)

The young people, Monica and Charles, are helped by the Claverton's purified moral vision to see into their own heart. They must prepare themselves to receive the illumination of love, stretching out to them from the resting place of *The Elder Statesman*.

In the first draft Eliot wrote about the death of Claverton. Claverton becomes relieved of his anxieties and gains confidence. He wants to take a short walk, goes out and dies of thunderclap off stage. The thunderclap suggests

incidents on the day Oedipus was destined to die. That is ‘peal after the peal of thunder and flash after flash of lightening’ were the clues to the day of his death.

After Eliot’s marriage with his secretary Valerie Fletcher the word thunder is replaced by the voices of the furies in the dusk taunting him and he has answered them; then he collapsed while his daughter and her fiancée are in a ‘love duet finale’. He joins with his truly loving daughter and his new son.

The characters of the Claverton, Monica, and Charles merge into Eliot himself. Moody describes the end of The Elder Statesman rather in a manner Eliot fuses personae and make it transparent. By the reversal of the mode of the sublimation practiced in ‘Marina, the daughter becomes his beloved, his real self brought into being at last in love’. 

According to Eliot old age is the recollection of old events. A man reviews his past and finds spiritual wholeness. Removal of the mask that he had been wearing, son repeating father’s mistakes and finally involves in the death of the old and the birth of the new Claverton. He is familiar compound ghost whom Eliot meets in the fire watching episode of “Little Gidding”; he is restored by that refining fire of purgatory: the fire of divine love.

The mistaken attempts to correct mistakes, by methods which proved to be equally mistaken

Claverton, Gomez and Mrs. Carghill, all are not real. To become real persons again, they need to contact with some one who can serve as a link between the two selves and the person who can do this is the one who is responsible for this division of selves in the first place. That is why Gomez desperately cries: ‘I need you, dick, to give the reality’, Mrs Carghill indicates that the fires are not yet quenched and

---

her number 'it is not too late for you to love me'. 'And to keep the old contact afresh she kept on reading Claverton's love letters'.

Claverton's possessiveness is a natural outcome of sterility: lovelessness. He wanted to keep Monica for himself because he wants her to adore the person whom he thinks he was. But Monica's strength of character and her own experience of love for Charles have allowed her to withstand the danger of this domination. She loved her father like Antigone, loved her brother, and also Charles. Her life is fertile because she is capable of loving hence is loved by others. This is the way to cross one's Waste Land.

Monica behaves exactly like Antigone, she does not hate or show any hostility towards Michael; but feels sorry for him and shows affection. Antigone acts like a loving sister, who wishes to save her brother from misfortune and mediate between him and his father. She moves in a human plane and in human world. Bawra's observance is equally applicable to both Antigone and Monica:

'Her nature is to join not in hate but in love'.

Martine Brown the producer of Eliot's play has explained various versions that Eliot wrote to depict the death of Claverton, which does not resemble that of Oedipus'. In the earlier drafts the thunder clap is used. In Oedipus at Colonus it is used only as a premonition to the day of his death:

The winged thunder of Zeus will lead me towards Hades. (Oates, OaC, 617.)

Lord Claverton comes to talk to Monica and Charles from beneath a great beech tree and after the talk, for the last time goes 'for a little walk' and he is found standing beneath

---

42 Ibid, p. 331.
the same great beech tree. In Edinburgh edition of the script there is some explanation for it.

Native Africans believe that the old elephants know about the time of their death and mark the place of death and invariably die there.\(^3\)

The dialogue about it is cut. But the scene is retained. Thus it can be inferred that Claverton selected the place of death, knew the time of death and died beneath the beech tree.

This is meant to show mysterious overtone which clearly derives from Oedipus myth. In *Oedipus at Colonus*, Oedipus stands beneath a hollow pear tree near a marble tomb where many roads diverge. Here Oedipus washes himself with fountain water and offers the drink offering for gods and sends everybody back except Theseus to show his place of rest. It is the place where Oedipus is seen last.

The means of redemption in both the plays emphasise on obedience to the will of God, and faithful observance of the bonds of love. Stress on quality of divine resolution and reconciliation to god’s will through human love are the key notes of Eliot’s new plays.

In Greek sentiment gods reward those who had been subjected to heavy trials. Pollution and bloodshed was no obstacle to heroize Oedipus. Thus the concept of reward for those who confess their sins according to Christianity has its root in Greek religion. The poet endorses the possibility of finding divine love in human love and marriage.

Lord Claverton is about to become married to god in his new purification and rebirth, he bestows his marriage blessing on the love of Charles and Monica.\(^4\)

Lord Claverton’s cure begins with his recognition of meaninglessness of his public triumph, insincerity of the


speeches at his farewell banquet, the parting gift bought with begrudged contributions and newspaper articles. He has nothing to look forward to but the usual obituary with an old portrait.

Claverton is ill with corruption of earth and self. He is purged through death of mortality and made ready for his rebirth as a spirit.\footnote{Ibid, p. 233-34.}

Lord Claverton re-enacts the final purgation of the Oedipus in his old age, laden with sins but purified and blessed by gods before death. The emphasis in both plays is on obedience to the will of God and faithful observance of the bonds of love as means of redemption. There is greater unity between human and divine love.

In The Elder Statesman Claverton’s love is directed not only towards young lovers but he also learns to love his son. Since Claverton needed not to become a daemon to protect Bagley Court he is brought down to earth, rather humanised out of his selfish nature. His love for his daughter is human but loving his disobedient dishonest and insincere son is the divine Christian love. In this way he is dehumanised; in a way it is similar to deification of Oedipus: off course in a Christian way.

A Greek hero will harm his foes whoever he may be. Lord Claverton could have prevented Michael following Gomez. But he did not strive for it much. He could have directly confessed to Fred and Maisie. He did not do so. This act also is due to inherent trait of Greek hero to curse his enemies. He denounced Michael because he was by nature wicked and brought disgrace to the family. He can not be a heir to Lord Claverton; Charles and Monica can do that role.

Monica and Charles repeatedly suggest to leave Badgley Court immediately because Claverton will not be safe there. But Claverton refuses to leave the place because it is the
place which gives him peace. The inherent desire of Claverton is to stay at a place where gods have ordained him. He did not return to Thebes. He stayed at Colonus because it was the place where gods have ordained him to die. By staying at Badgley Court Claverton can allow Charles and Monica to lead their happy life. There is another reason to stay alone at Badgley Court that is to spend his last phase of life: as a period of prayer and faith.

Sophocles turns old faults of Oedipus into his advantage. His elevated temper helps to deal with Creon and Polynieces. His violent force helps to save Athenians. His forbidden love of Jocusta has become an unbroken bond with his daughters. The old disorder and conflicts are replaced by New Harmony and reconciliation.\(^4^6\)

In the same way Claverton’s high handedness of running over an old man, and out of Court settlement of breach of trust case helps him to deal firmly with Fred and Maisie. His negligence with his dead wife has changed into unbroken bond of love with Monica.

Michael’s dishonesty, arrogance and irresponsibility remind him of his follies in his youth and invoke compassion and fear for Michael. Claverton’s confession makes him humane and he firmly deals with his adversaries. He becomes a normal human being. The old disorder and conflict are replaced by a new harmony and a new strength.

Oedipus seeks assurance for the safety of his daughters, and consoles them. He sends everybody away except Theseus. There was a great silence followed by a voice from sky calling Oedipus. It is known to Theseus only. After the voice from the sky Oedipus went deep into the holy part of the groves with Theseus, and there he was translocated, while Theseus remained standing, shading his eyes from unbearable vision of godhead.

Claverton delivers his last dialogue of the play and leaves the lovers for a few moments for themselves. Then voices of the lovers full of genuine love for each other, is heard, which is the symbolic of affirmative path of devotion. And he walks out for a small stroll. And he is reported to be standing near the great peach tree. This is the symbolic death of Claverton.

Both Oedipus and Claverton have suffered in their life. Their endurance of miseries is colossal and a paradigm to modern men. The message to them is loud and clear. The good comes with the evil, and that there is rhythmical law of change. We may welcome good that comes after so much evil and yet be prepared for further evil in the future.

Greek wisdom does not lack pessimistic view of life. One such view says that 'it is better not to be born.' But if a man has seen the light, he should return again straight away whence he arose first. In the gloom of misery some Greeks have felt that:

\[
\text{It is best for a man not to be born and failing that, to die as soon as possible.}\]

Oedipus has not sought death, even in his extreme suffering, but now gods send it, he welcomes it. Oedipus may be assailed by miseries but he endures them heroically like rocky promontories to which waves wash and winds beat from every quarter of the horizon; but it withstands firmly. Chorus changes from misery and shifts its importance to steadfastness and endurance of Oedipus. Homeric simile which describes the Achaean resistance to Hector:

\[
\text{Like a tower they held, firm, fastened, just as hard rock rising high in the air at the side of the silvery grey sea waits and endures the attack of the winds whistle against it. And the full bellied waves break into foam all about it.}\]

---

48 Ibid, p, 353-54
Just as these heroes resisted what looked like an overwhelming onslaughts on their peace and happiness. His endurance is heroic and worthy of admiration. Miseries in life call out greatness in Oedipus to resist them. Oedipus’ nobility in suffering is another sign of worthiness to be a hero. ‘The old man who doe not falter is made of more than mortal stuff’.\(^{49}\)

The endurance of misery and adversity entitles him honour and heroize Oedipus. They epitomise his honour and internal dignity. He over rides the encumbrances of the old age, troubles, from his family and country. This superior power is recognised and rewarded by gods who prolong it even in the grave and make it a means to protect Athens: gods have given him special powers. ‘It is based on the intimacy between the living and the dead; love that Oedipus had for Athens and the honour with which Athens hold for him’.\(^{50}\)

Monica is the most noble and strong character of the play. She is strong but not rough. Her strength comes from her nobility. She has courage during crises and has kind heart and sympathy for her father’s ruthless faults. Modernity needs many such women who can shoulder responsibility either in home or in any responsible vocation. She is the ideal lady who can withstand any stress, strain, challenge, and crisis that circumstance in these times of modernity may put forth.

Claverton departs leaving Monica and Charles in a romantic scene. It may be compared to an ode by the chorus which implies the lapse of certain period of time. It may be assumed that they revisit him at Badgley Court. The death of Lord Claverton is not shown at all in the play but he is reported by Monica and Charles to have been standing beneath the beech tree which had attracted him earlier.

\(^{49}\) Ibid, p, 353-54
\(^{50}\) Ibid, p, 353-54.
According to Greeks, the dead not only give life, nourishment, plenitude, fertility and other less tangible blessing, dead are believed to partake in the life of the living and those who are living owe a peculiar regard to the dead. With this spirit in mind towards the dead, Charles in *The Elder Statesman* says that the dead has showered blessings on the living. Heraclites concludes the relationship between the living and the dead thus:

Mortal are immortal and immortals are mortals;
Living other deaths and dying the other life.\(^{51}\)