

## Chapter One

### Tracing Upaniadic Vision in T. S. Eliot's Writings

#### The Context

This research attempts to analyze the quest for the Essence in Eliot's selected writings; namely, *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion* from the Upaniadic insights with special focus on non-duality in the given primary texts under study. To do so, four Upaniadic insights such as *karma* and rebirth, the spiritual quest theme, the existence and immortality of *Ātmā* and Brahma, and their oneness (non-duality), and the attainment of the Essence through knowledge and self-realization, and symbols such as the Wheel (*cakra*), water (including the river and the sea), and "the still point" (*śānta*) as expressed in the eleven primary Upaniads of the Hindu philosophy are employed. This study questions how the Essence (Brahma and *mokṣa*) can be attained in life time itself and discloses that It can be attained through self-knowledge (spiritual knowledge, self-enquiry) and self-realization (the inner transformation of ideas). This disclosure is the main argument/claim or thesis of this research.

Human beings have been searching for the Essence, the Ultimate Reality of the universe, to attain perpetual peace, unbound bliss, and permanent liberation since time immemorial. Eliot's spiritual odyssey through his writings is such an attempt to quest for the Essence and to seek oneness (identity) between the individual self and the Universal Self for attaining peace, bliss, and liberation.

Eliot's texts have a pattern of the spiritual quest. The search for "water" (the symbol of Brahma), "Shānti" (Peace), and human, moral, and spiritual values is in *The Waste Land*. The search for "the still point" (the symbol of "the Essence," Brahma) is in *Four Quartets*. The search for God is in *Murder in the Cathedral*. And the search for "the self" (*Ātmā*) is in *The Family Reunion*. Eliot's journey starts with

the negative, mystical, or transcendental insight, *neti neti*, in *The Waste Land* and ends with the positive, immanent, or holistic insight in “Little Gidding” in *Four Quartets* in the process of questing for the Essence.

The spiritual quest theme of the Upaniṣad is represented by the symbols of “the Wheel,” the “water” (including “the river” and “the sea”) and “the still point” in Eliot’s selected writings. “The Wheel” symbolizes the cycle of life (*karma* and rebirth); “the water” symbolizes the cycle of the river (the individual self, *jīvātman*) and the sea (the Supreme Self, *Paramātmā*, God) and their oneness (identity) with each other. Similarly, “the still point” represents the oneness (unity) between *Ātmā* and *Brahma*, and also spiritual unity in diversity among all the things of the world.

*The Waste Land* is about the problem of transitoriness, unreality, human suffering, the Wheel of life and death, and the desire to attain liberation (*mokṣa*) from bondage. The solution to the problem of human suffering and bondage, and the achievement of peace (“*Shānti*,” the Essence) are possible by observing the three commandments—“Datta, Dayadhvam, Dāmyata” or “Give, sympathise, control” (Eliot 54) as ordered by the Creator (*Prajapati*) to his three groups of disciples, human beings, demons, and gods, respectively.

*Four Quartets* is about the quest to attain “the still point” (*Brahma*) for permanent liberation, “eternity” of time, “immortality” of the Self, the oneness of the Self (*Ātmā*) with the Supreme Self (*Brahma*), and the joy of the self-realization through the non-dual knowledge of *Ātmā* and *Brahma*. Also, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s philosophy of *Bhagavad-Gītā*—selfless service, devotion, spiritual knowledge, right action, renunciation, and asceticism—is found in the poem.

*Murder in the Cathedral* is about the selfless action, service and devotion to God performed by Archbishop Thomas Becket, the hero of the play, as “the

instrument of God” (Eliot 199) to quest for the Essence and liberation. The play highlights that the result of action (*karma*) is inevitable suffering and rebirth.

*The Family Reunion* is about the principle of *karma* and rebirth (cause and its inevitable effect) and the need to be passionless to be free from "the Wheel" of "the universal bondage" (Eliot 242) through the knowledge of "the Essence" or the "Reality." Also, acting as a witness to the worldly phenomena is a way to liberation.

### *The Waste Land*

The epigraph of *The Waste Land* from Homer shows the helplessness of human desires. There is a story about the Cumean Sibyl, the famous ancient Greek prophetess. The story foreshadows the theme of the poem. Sri, in *T. S. Eliot: Vedanta and Buddhism*, comments that she asks Apollo for a life of as many years as she had grains of dust in her hand but forgets to ask for “eternal youth.” Then she shrinks away and hangs in a jar, and wants to die but cannot (23) until she exhausts the fruits of her actions done previously. Thus, she wishes helplessly for liberation from suffering. Similarly, the wastelanders wish for liberation from suffering. *The Waste Land* consists of five poems: “The Burial of the Dead,” “A Game of Chess,” “The Fire Sermon,” “Death by Water,” and “What the Thunder Said.” Brief critical summaries of these poems are presented below.

#### “The Burial of the Dead”

“The Burial of the Dead” is about the burial ceremony of the dead who died during the World War I (1914-18). The poem has four vignettes narrated by four different speakers. In the first vignette, Marie, an aristocratic woman, comments that “April is the cruellest month” (Eliot 37) because it arouses the sad memories and unfulfilled desires of the past. She remembers her autobiographical stories of her happy childhood in the mountains where anyone can feel free. In the second section, a

speaker meditates on death accompanied by the “fear in a handful of dust” (Eliot 38). He remembers his romantic encounter with a “hyacinth girl” in a “Hyacinth garden,” a symbol of his unquenchable sexual desire to fulfil. Now this memory makes him realize that all this desire is bleak and empty.

In the third section, Madame Sosostris, a famous but fake clairvoyant, reads the tarot cards of “the Wheel” and the other figures, and foretells the future of people. In the fourth section, a speaker encounters Stetson, a ghostly figure, in the “unreal city” of London, with whom he had fought in a battle during World War I, which was excessively destructive and futile. Modern people have lost their faith on morality, spirituality, and God. Therefore, the speaker asks Stetson, a representative of atheists, to “keep the dog [that is worshipped by those who do not believe in God] far” away (Eliot 39). Human beings become dead if they lose their sacred belief in God and in the moral and spiritual virtues of life as well.

#### “A Game of Chess”

“The game of chess [is] in Middleton’s *Women beware Women*” (Eliot 51). “A Game of Chess” connotes a dirty game of sexual activity. There are two sections about sexual love in the poem. In the first section, a wealthy couple of high fashionable society engages in a dull, routinized sexual activity without any passion in the beloved’s boudoir surrounded by exquisite furnishings. She is raped by her lover as Philomel, an Athenian princess, was raped by her brother-in-law Tereus. Then she utters emotionally dirty words, “‘Jug Jug’ to dirty ears” (Eliot 40). Her sexual partner is reluctant to speak to her, but she is badly in need of love and sex. She indicates this feeling to her lover by her neurotic comments, “My nerves are bad to-night. Yes, bad. Stay with me. / Speak to me” (Eliot 40).

The second section shows the stories of three women of lower class. In a London barroom at night, two women friends talk about a third woman Lil and her husband who is recently retired from the army service. One of the friends remembers her conversation with Lil. The friend advised Lil to maintain her beauty by buying some false teeth otherwise her husband would start loving other women. Lil has lost her beauty; she nearly died while giving birth to her fifth son, George, due to the heavy effect of the abortion pills. She does not want another child, but her husband Albert “won’t leave . . . [her] alone” (Eliot 42). The above discussion suggests that dirty games of love and sex are the causes that move the Wheel of universal bondage and suffering forever.

#### “The Fire Sermon”

The title “The Fire Sermon” is taken from Buddha’s Fire Sermon, which corresponds to the Christ’s Sermon on the Mount (Eliot 53). In the Fire Sermon, Buddha encourages his followers to give up earthly desires including sexual passions (symbolized by fire) and seek liberation from the Wheel of life and death. On the river of Thames, debased sexual activities happen. The summer night parties which take place on the riverside are now over. The tent of the river is damaged. The riverside is desolate and surrounded by rats and garbage. The river-song begins with “Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song” (Eliot 43). Mrs. Porter and her daughter are prostitutes who clean their feet in soda water on the moonlit night. A vulgar soldier sings: “Twit twit twit / Jug jug jug jug jug jug / So rudely forc’d.” (43). This is a reference back to Philomel of “A Game of Chess.” Mr. Eugenides proposes to the speaker for homosexual trysts at a hotel of “Unreal City” of London (Eliot 43).

The speaker declares himself to be Tiresias, who has both male and female features, “old man with wrinkled female breasts” (Eliot 43), and is blind but can “see”

into the future. He is *Dra t* (Seer) in terms of the Upani ad. Eliot notes that Tiresias is a mere spectator and not indeed a “character.” Yet he is the most significant personage; he sees and reports what all the characters do in the poem (52). In this sense, Tiresias is *S k i* (the Conscious Witness) while viewed from the vision of the Upani ad. What he “sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem” (Eliot 52). He sees a young typist girl, at home for tea, who awaits her lover, a slightly arrogant clerk. After getting signal for sexual activity from her, he “assaults [her] at once” (Eliot 44) and departs victorious. But she feels relieved from this kind of dull, routinized sexual activity and so thinks, “Well now that’s done: and I’m glad it’s over” (Eliot 44). Tiresias has “foresuffered all” (Eliot 44) of these passionless sexual activities in his past births. The three Thames-daughters sing a song of nothingness.

Tiresias observes an amorous encounter between Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester on a boat. The Earl could not satisfy her sexual demands and “He wept. He promised ‘a new start’” (Eliot 46). So, with her unhappy mood, she thinks, “On Margate Sands. / I can connect / nothing with nothing. / The fingernails of dirty hands” (Eliot 46). The scene suggests the meaninglessness of sexual promiscuity. Margaret’s thoughts reflect a universal experience of sorrow, pain, frustration, and failure originating from the deception of all worldly experience including false love. The last section of the poem is worth considering. It comes from a few lines from St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, “To Carthage [a name of place] then I came” (Eliot 52, 46) that ultimately led him to the path of asceticism, and Buddha’s Fire Sermon, “Burning burning burning burning / O Lord Thou pluckest me out / O Lord Thou pluckest” (Eliot 46) that is an allusion to Buddha as “the Fisherman, who draws fish [suffering creatures] from the ocean of Samsara to the light of Salvation” (Grover 91). “Death by Water”

“Death by Water” is a reflective poem that describes Phlebas, the Phoenician, who is a sea-trader. He dies by drowning into the sea. Now after death he forgets his worldly concerns as the sea creatures have picked his body apart. The speaker of the poem asks us to consider Phlebas “who was once handsome and tall” (Eliot 47) as we are. He dies to be reborn without knowing the Essence of life. His death forces us to recall “the Wheel” of our own mortality and futile attempts to amass property.

#### “What the Thunder Said”

“What the Thunder Said” is the final section of *The Waste Land*. This section reverberates the spiritual quest theme of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad*. The speaker of the poem is a pilgrim, perhaps Tiresias, who travels toward the “chapel” at night in search of “water,” symbolic of the Essence and spirituality, and describes what he sees on the way. His external journey to the chapel for water is symbolic of his internal journey to discover the forgotten Self and the lost human values of spirituality. On the way to the chapel, the pilgrim broods over a death imagery. He finds dead and dying persons, inviting us to contemplate on the mortality of the human body and the inevitability of death. There is no water. So, there is drought. Land is dry, barren, and waste. The hermit-thrush sings, “Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop” (Eliot 48) reminding us of the hermits in the Upani ad who would meditate near the fountain of the river in the jungle where the dripping- dropping sound of the waterfall was heard. People are suffering. The “unreal” cities of Jerusalem, Athens, Alexandria, Vienna, and London are destroyed, rebuilt, and destroyed again.

The chapel is empty and decaying, which suggests the chapel in the legend of the Holy Grail. On top of the chapel, a cock crows. And the rains come relieving the drought and bringing life back to the land. In the next scene, the sunken Gang (also

known as the Ganges, the most famous of all the sacred rivers) is waiting for the rain. Over Himavanta the thunder (Prajapati, the Creator) speaks three potent syllables, “DA-DA-DA,” meaning “Datta, Dayadhvam, Dmyata (Give, sympathise, control)” (Eliot 49, 54). The thunder’s powerful instructions make us contemplate on the human activities. In fact, we have given nothing at all or very little to others. Each is “in his prison,” unhappy and needs our sympathy. Each is struggling to come out of the prison (bondage) for liberation. John Fletcher and Andrew Benjamin remark that a Fisher King-type impotent figure (193-94) is sitting on the shore of the calm sea preparing to control his boat of life. The cheerfulness and peace of life depend upon the art of controlling one’s life and subduing desires with discipline.

The poem ends with a final cant of “Shanti Shanti Shanti”—a formal ending to the Upaniṣad. Eliot, in his notes to the poem, translates this chant as “the Peace which passeth understanding” (55). “Shanti” is the achievement of the quest for the Essence. In terms of the Upaniṣad, “Shanti” does not mean simply “peace.” Rather “Shanti” means the Essence, the Reality or Brahma Itself.

#### *Four Quartets*

The two epigraphs of *Four Quartets* anticipate the theme of the four quartets of the poem. The epigraphs contain the ideas of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. As translated by George Williamson, the first epigraph means that “Although the Law of Reason [Logos, Logic, Knowledge or Wisdom] is common, the majority of people live as though they had an understanding of their own” (264). Heraclitus might be suggesting that our own individual notion of knowledge may not be as rich, or as accurate, as the greatest knowledge of the great seers of the Upaniṣad. So, we should imitate their knowledge and put aside our personal ungrounded opinions. And the second epigraph means that “The way upward and the way downward are one and the



same” (264), suggesting a unified or the non-dual vision of the Reality in terms of the Upani ad.

Williamson remarks that these epigraphs are solutions to the problems of appearance and reality (264), suggesting that there is no difference between appearance and reality; both refer to the same Essence. *Four Quartets* consists of four poems: “Burnt Norton,” “East Coker,” “The Dry Salvages,” and “Little Gidding.” These titles are the names of actual places. Brief critical summaries of the four poems are presented below.

#### “Burnt Norton”

There are five sections in “Burnt Norton.” The first section presents time as an abstract principle. The first section hypothesizes that the past and the future are always contained in the present. So, we cannot be free from the time —past, present, and future. Children are hiding and laughing in a rose-garden. A higher bird leads the poet to the rose-garden and helps him to find the laughing children. Then the higher bird advises the poet to go away from there because “human kind / Cannot bear very much reality” (Eliot 118). Truth is bitter. The lower bird and the higher bird represent the individual self (*j v tm*) and the Universal Self (Param tm, God) respectively in *Mu aka Upani ad* (3.1.1-2). Eliot introduces this concept of the dual self to the Western world. The second section describes that “the still point” (the Essence) is neither this nor that. It is beyond description, i.e., out of the reach of the speech and the mind from the viewpoint of the Upani adic philosophy of “*neti neti*.” The permanent liberation follows “the inner freedom from the practical desire” (Eliot 119).

There are differences between being conscious and living in time. The poet asserts, “To be conscious is not to be in time” (119) but to be out of time. He suggests

that we should be conscious about consciousness or “the still point” of the Essence while time is characterized by a transient relativity (around the still point of the Essence that is always present). The third section describes a “place of disaffection”—perhaps the everyday world—which allows neither “darkness” (transcendence) nor “daylight” (the beauty of the moment). “The still point” can be attained only by the sacrifice of one’s property, desires, and passions. The fourth section describes the unattainable, “the still point,” around which time is organized. This point is present even among flowers and birds as in the rose-garden of the first section.

The final section describes the dying nature of words and music however apparently vital they are in the beginning. The children’s laughter in the garden scorns our enslavement to time and warns us to be “quick now” to attain the “the still point,” that is “always” present in everything and everywhere. The phrase “quick now” reminds us of the message in *Katha Upani ad* that commands us to wake up or to be conscious of our quest for the Essence (1.3.14).

“East Coker”

“East Coker” has five sections. The first section describes the cycle of construction and destruction. In the fields on summer midnight, sounds of simple rural life can be heard. Man and woman eat, drink, “couple,” “dung” and meet “death.” These words show Eliot’s obsession with sex and sin. The second section describes the cycle of seasons and presents the theme of change and impermanence intermixed with joy and pain. Eliot comments on his own poetry as “not very satisfactory: / ...worn-out poetical fashion” (125). “The knowledge derived from experience [e.g., the water in a mirage; appearance]” has “only a limited value” (125) because they can be unreliable; this implies that only the experiential knowledge is not sufficient; it

should be followed by discernment to be reliable. Humility is the only wisdom possible for humans.

The third section mentions those who have passed into the darkness of death invoking a sense of meaninglessness of human endeavors to achieve the life of prestige, power, prosperity, and pride. We need to wait patiently unless “thought” or the awareness of knowledge prevails. Thus, we can go from darkness to light and from misery to everlasting happiness. We need to forsake our pride, old ideas, things, and habit to get new knowledge.

The fourth section presents the clearest picture of war. There are a “wounded surgeon” and a “dying nurse” in a hospital where patients die without proper treatment. For liberation one must purify oneself in “purgatorial fires.” Good Friday, the day of Christ’s crucifixion, reminds us of Christ’s suffering, forbearance, and deferral to a higher authority to establish a new religion of Christianity. The final section highlights Eliot’s failure as a poet. He is “in the middle way” of his life. His youth and attempt to articulate ideas are no longer useful. He is struggling to “recover what has been lost” (Eliot 128). He has lost his touch with his “Home” (the Essence). He is searching the way back “Home” from where he had started his journey of life. Continuous effort and exploration are necessary to reach the “Home” through the vast “dark cold” ocean of the world in which he eventually finds that “In my end is my beginning” bringing back to “In my beginning is my end” of the first line in the first section of “East Coker.” The poet realizes that the attempt to describe the Inarticulate (the Essence) through poetry never ends.

“The Dry Salvages”

“The Dry Salvages” is a more philosophical poem. It has five sections. The first section reveals that Eliot “does not know much about gods” (Eliot 131), who are

the subject matters of mysticism. He describes the river as “a strong brown god [ Īva or Natar ĳa].” The river (Ātm ) is within us and the sea (Brahma) is all around us. It is difficult to cross and master the sea, an endless reservoir of mysteries. The second section makes us compromise with life’s reality that there is no end of human sufferings, anxieties, and dangers. As in the Upani ad, “renunciation” is the best means to avoid human sufferings. Working with good faith is also good. Time (Brahma) is both “the destroyer” ( Īva or Rudra) and the preserver” (Vi nu). We cannot easily escape from the cycle of life and death. The third section thinks over some words of Lord K ā as described in the second and eight chapters of *Bhagavad-G t* . Human beings attain the next life as per their last thoughts at the moment of their death (*G t* 8.5-6). One should go on working by fulfilling one's duty without thinking of “the fruit of action” (*G t* 2.47) to improve one's life.

Lord K ā advises humanity not to “fare well” but to “fare forward” without attachment. In the fourth section, the poet prays to the Virgin Mary asking her to pray for the welfare of sea voyagers and their loved ones, who are waiting for the voyagers at home without certainty and knowledge. The final section suggests that the saints can “apprehend / The point of intersection of the timeless / With time” (Eliot 136). This point is “Incarnation.” The saints can realize the bliss of their reunion with “Incarnation” forever. Nevertheless, even common people can sometimes realize the divine bliss for a moment, though with partial guess and understating. Eliot conveys this message through “you are the music / While the music lasts” (136). Finally, “right action” frees human beings from the Wheel of *karma* and rebirth and helps attain the Essence of life. Life becomes meaningful for our land if we go “on trying” for the higher purpose of life.

“Little Gidding”

“Little Gidding” has five sections. The first section describes a sunny winter’s day, everything dead yet glowing with the sun’s fire. Devotees come to the monastery, who come only “to kneel / Where prayer has been valid” (Eliot 139). It is here that man can feel the joy of the “intersection of the timeless” with the present moment. The words of the dead, who speak through burning fires of tongues, can often be heard. This is Eliot’s mysterious feeling at the monastery. The second section makes a connection between ash/dust and death. Everything changes into ash or dust after death. The four elements (air, earth, water, and fire) of nature are destroyed due to the war. The poet is walking at dawn. He meets a former “familiar compound ghost,” a representative master of the great tradition. Now the poet does not quite recognize him. The ghost shares his wisdom that he learnt from his life: a loss of perception of beauty, awareness of folly, and shame at one’s past deeds. The third section defines the terms “attachment,” “detachment,” and “indifference” with their differences. “All shall be well” by our good motive with our prayer to God (Eliot 143).

The fourth section is about a dove with a tongue of fire, which purifies through knowledge or destroys through physical love. Love is the chief “torment” of man and woman, which can liberate as well as torture. Eliot conveys the main message of “Little Gidding” and of the whole *Four Quartets* through the final section of the poem that reconciles all the differences and bears the theme of non-dualism. The spiritual and the sacred are reconciled with the aesthetic and the profane respectively. Poetry is a creation of perfect language. In it, every word and every phrase is “an end and a beginning.” There is no limit of poetry that expresses divine experiences. The time-bound (“the rose”) and the timeless (“the yew-tree”) are interchangeable (“in equal duration”), or the duality disappears into timelessness

when one attains the knowledge of the Essence. All shall be well when the fires of love/devotion and knowledge come together to form a “knot.” And “the fire and the rose” become one (Eliot 145). This suggests that the individual self (*jīva*) and the Universal Self (Brahma) become one and the same at the moment of revelation. That is, the Ultimate Essence is one. This kind of spiritual unity in diversity is the subject matter of the Upaniṣad.

### *Murder in the Cathedral*

*Murder in the Cathedral* is a verse drama of “saint and martyr” (Eliot 1.191) about Archbishop Thomas Becket’s unshakeable devotion to God written in 1935 for performance at the Canterbury Festival. Its plot is based on Greek tragedy, Christian liturgy, and biblical imagery. It describes the martyrdom of Becket, who returns to Canterbury in 1170 after a seven-year exile imposed by British King Henry II due to Becket’s refusal to curtail the rights of the church (Drabble 78, 703). At this point of Becket’s return from Catholic France begins the drama that anticipates further struggle between Becket and Henry II suggesting the conflict between flesh and spirit, between the secular and the spiritual, between free will and fate, and between the power of the state and the power of the church. There are two parts and one interlude scene in the play.

Part I takes place in Archbishop Thomas Becket’s hall on December 2, 1170. A Chorus of townswomen smell the disaster of Becket, who is just retiring from France, by Henry II. They want to send Becket back to France but cannot. Helplessly, they comment, “For us, the poor, there is no action, / But only to wait and witness” (Eliot 1.177). They do not act as characters but observe the events as *Śākṣi* (Witness) in terms of the Upaniṣad and comment on them. Three Priests enter and briefly discuss about the conflict between the temporal (i.e., worldly) power of the King and

the spiritual power of the Archbishop. The Third Priest suggests that they cannot stop the conflict. So, they should “let the Wheel turn” (Eliot 1.179). Meanwhile, Becket arrives. He is ready to die rather than submitting himself to the King. So, he concludes with his faith in the divine will, “End will be simple, sudden, God-given” and that “All things prepare the event” (Eliot 1.183).

Four Tempters visit Becket and try to lure him away from his devotion to the Church. But he rejects them just as Nachiket , a Brahmin boy, rejects the temptations offered to him by Yamar ja, the god of death, in *Katha Upani ad*. The Three Tempters offer Becket the glory of his friendship with the King, the post of the powerful Chancellorship and to “fight for liberty” against the King respectively. But Becket rejects all these temptations proclaiming that he “has good cause to trust none but God alone” (Eliot 1.189). The Fourth Tempter makes Becket realize that human beings get both action and suffering from God. He entices Becket to be a martyr for glory and fame. Becket criticizes such a martyrdom for glory as an act of “sinful pride.” After a short contemplation, he decides that to die for martyrdom (sainthood) is the right thing, but to do so for glory and retribution is the wrong reason. Really, the conflict between the Four Tempters and Becket is Becket’s own strife between his “shadows” and consciousness. The Four Tempters are the external personalities of his own shadows (temptations). Only if it is the will of God, he will allow himself to be a martyr.

In the Interlude, Becket preaches in the cathedral on Christmas morning, 1170. In his sermon, Becket resolves the meaning of some paradoxes. The first is that Christmas is celebrated to remember at once the Birth of Lord Christ and His Passion and death upon the Cross. Another paradox is that Christ’s peace is not the peace

brought by the sword after ending the war but the peace achieved through spiritual solace.

In his final paradox Becket explains the nature of martyrdom that is for both purposes to “rejoice and mourn in the death of martyrs.” Martyrdom “is never the design of man,” for “the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, and who no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of being a martyr” (Interlude 199-200). Now, Becket acts not as a doer but as a Seer or Witness. This kind of absence of self-sense of doership frees him from agonies of conscience that precede his own martyrdom. From the vision of the Upani ad, when one thinks that “I am an instrument of God,” the sense of undoership prevails, and one knows the Essence and is liberated from the Wheel. At the end of Part I, Becket closes his remarks noting that very soon he will be another martyr.

Part II begins after four days of Becket's sermon in the cathedral. Four Knights enter the Archbishop's Hall, visit the three Priests and charge Becket with being “in revolt against the King” (2.203). Becket refuses to absolve those bishops that he had previously excommunicated. The Chorus describes that it has recently witnessed the odd harbingers of evil in the natural world. It expresses its experiences of earlier births being born from the sea creatures to the ape. (It shows Eliot's belief in the transmigration of the soul, which moves on the Wheel of life as per its *karma*) The Priests drag Becket into the cathedral to save him from death while he protests, “all things / Proceed to a joyful consummation” (Eliot 2.209). Then, the Knights enter the cathedral and ask Becket to recant his former convictions or to renounce his former actions, but he refuses to do so.



Finally, the Four Knights stab him to death. Then they address the audience to defend their pompous, foolish deed pretending as acted in a “perfectly disinterested” manner by royal command. Then, they withdraw. The priests thank God for having “given us another Saint in Canterbury” (Eliot 2.220). And the Chorus wonders at the mysterious action of God that is beyond our power of understanding, “For all things exist only as seen by Thee, only as known by / Thee, all things exist / Only in Thy light” (2.220). The description of this kind of mysterious power of God is similar to the message of *Kena Upani ad* that describes Brahma as the inspiring source for all the actions of the individual souls.

### *The Family Reunion*

Like *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Family Reunion* portrays two different worlds—material and spiritual. *The Family Reunion* is Eliot’s verse paly of “sin and expiation” (Eliot 2.2.275) about *karma* and its role in human destiny and rebirth, and about Harry’s (the hero) journey from conscious guilt to redemption, from darkness (ignorance) to light (knowledge), and from the material world to the spiritual one for the quest of “the self,” the Essence, and liberation.

The play is in two parts. Each part has three scenes set in Wishwood, a stately home in the north of England. Harry, Lord Monchensey, returns his childhood home eight years after living abroad due to his wife’s mysterious death at sea a year ago. Symbolically, his wish to return to his childhood home (Wishwood) is actually his desire to be reunited with Brahma for liberation and everlasting peace. Now, the family members of his mother Amy, Lady Monchensey, are gathering for the birthday of Amy, imperious matriarch of the family, which includes her sisters Ivy, Violet, and Agatha, her brothers Gerald and Charles, her sons Harry, John, and Aurther, and Harry’s cousin Mary. Amy is very feeble now. She is living only by sheer willpower

“to keep the family alive” (Eliot 1.1.227) and has made every member of the house her living puppets ever since. So, there is no true love between the family members.

Harry is haunted by the guilt-ridden complex that he pushed his wife off the ship. It might be that he did not actually commit the crime but had just malice for her. Just wishing for someone's death is also a sin, a mental sin that matters more than the physical sin in Hindu philosophy. The play moves around Harry's feelings of guilt. He has returned to his childhood home to quest for inner peace, but he sees the shadows of the avenging spirits (the Eumenides) of his deceased wife. They are seen also by Downing, his servant and chauffeur, and his perceptive aunt Agatha. From the psychological viewpoint, the spirits are no more than the externalized figures of his guilt-ridden feelings that disturb him occasionally.

Due to Harry's psychological problem, Lady Monchensey asks her family doctor Warburton, a dinner guest, to observe Harry's schizophrenia. Harry thinks he is sane about it, but his aunts Ivy, Violet and Agatha are making a fuss out of Harry's blurted confession that he murdered his wife. That upsets Harry. Amy wants Mary to marry her son Harry in future, but Mary wishes to escape from the life at Wishwood. So, Mary's aunt Agatha cautions that Mary must wait, “You and I, Mary/ Are only watchers and waiters, not the easiest role” (Eliot 1.2.246). Actually, Agatha, Mary, and Harry are visionary characters that long to escape the turning Wheel of life (cycle of birth, death, and rebirth). This longing to transcend the material world is similar to the purpose of the Upaniṣad that tries to liberate the spiritual seekers through awareness and knowledge.

Through his aunt Agatha, Harry learns that his father had no true love for Amy, who had used him just for having children and home. Actually, Agatha is Harry's true mother. Harry's father tried to kill Amy while Harry was in her womb,

and Agatha stopped him. Nevertheless, Amy did not feel thankful to her. Rather she still resents Agatha's attempt to prevent her husband from killing her. Harry seems to have inherited his father's frustrated mood to murder his wife. Now, Sergeant Winchell reports the minor motor accidents of Amy's sons, reckless John and unlucky Aurthur, so they cannot join their mother's birthday party at night. Harry complains to her mother Amy that people "do not understand what it is to be awake, / To be living with several planes at once / Though one cannot speak with several voices at once" (Eliot 2.1.266).

Through these lines, Harry discloses three planes of reality: "the plane of *karma* and rebirth, the plane of self-awareness and duality, and the plane of ultimate grace and liberation" (Chandran291). These planes of reality are similar to the visions of the *Upani ad*. "To be awake" means "to remember your Self" in terms of *Katha Upani ad* (1.3.14). Harry and Mary are second cousins. They talk about their youth. Mary was the childhood companion to Harry. Harry sees the spirits (the ghosts that represent his dead wife) again, but Mary does not see them and feels sorry for him. Agatha gives spiritual insights to Harry and exorcises the ghosts or the shadows. Harry understands that the visible things of material life are "shadows" (unreal), but "private shadows" (the unseen or the invisible side of spirituality) are real (Eliot 2.2.276). Now he, due to his spiritual knowledge received from Agatha, finds the dead spirits as bright angles, and decides to follow them instead of fleeing from them.

Encouraged by Agatha, Harry proclaims his intention to go away from Wishwood for a pilgrimage leaving his younger brother John to take the responsibility of his home. Amy blames Agatha for taking her husband and now her son as well. Agatha advises her to leave the past behind them. Harry is disillusioned and leaves his prosperous home with his faithful servant and chauffeur Downing, to complete his

“pilgrimage of expiation”(Eliot 2.3.293). Harry’s disillusionment is similar to that of Maitreyi, who renounces material property to get the spiritual property from her husband when she realizes the importance of spiritual knowledge over the material assets in *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* (2.4.1-14). The shock of Harry’s renunciation of Wishwood kills his mother Amy. But for Harry, his separation leads to the initiation of a new life for the quest of the Essence and “liberty,” that “is a different kind of pain from prison” (Eliot 2.2.276). Indeed, the path of knowledge is painful but liberating.

In a nutshell, the search of the finite and transient human beings for the Infinite Self (the Essence) haunts much of Eliot's selected poems and plays. The *Waste Land* is a corrupted sexual land, which becomes free from sexual passion in *Four Quartets* through the knowledge of the "the still point" (Brahma). The central characters become free from human “folly” and worldly "attachment" in *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* through their dispassion, "renunciation," and "the unattached" devotion to God and “the self” as “watchers [witnesses] and waiters” (Eliot 1.2.246). The plays end with liberating effects on major characters prompted by decision and action that are directed toward the quest for the Essence.

### **Texts in Context**

Eliot "maintained that contemporary western culture was a mass of confusion; the decay of religion being the principal problem. In his quest for meaning, he found consolation in Anglicanism, but some have doubts about his conversion, which seems to have been more a matter of will than of faith" (Mackean 39). However, his consolation in Anglicanism could not satisfy his hunger for eternal knowledge, peace, and happiness. Therefore, according to P. S. Sri, "he [Eliot] studied Indian languages and philosophical and literary texts [at Harvard]. . . . “he deliberately reached out beyond the confines of his Anglo-Catholicism and Occidental personality in a genuine

attempt at East-West ideo-synthesis" (Abstract vi).

Eliot studied Eastern philosophy as his major subject in BA and MA courses "at Harvard between 1906-14" (Sanders 530). He was influenced by the spiritual and philosophical thoughts of the Hindu philosophy such as *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Patanjali Yoga Sūtras*, and the Upaniṣads (Dwivedi 47-58, 73). He started writing literature involving the fundamental concepts of the Hindu philosophy because of his interest in the Eastern philosophy, and his frustration with the dualistic Western philosophy, unhappy family ties with his parents, unsuccessful and broken relationship with his first wife Vivienne Haigh Wood, atheism, scientific materialism, modernity, hedonism, the devastating results of the World Wars I and II, and the declining moral, religious, and spiritual values of Christianity in the West.

Besides these reasons, the historical events such as the Disobedience of Waterloo Treaty of 1918, the Failure of League of Nations in 1919 due to 28<sup>th</sup> U.S. President Thomas Woodrow Wilson, the Great Depression during 1930s, and the Air-raids on Great Britain (1917- 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> Dec.1940) created myriads of desires that could not be fulfilled. Similarly, the new developments in sciences, arts, philosophy, and philology came to undermine the stable foundations of the spiritual world of the ancient past. As a result, western people became frustrated, depressed, and unrestful like the fish out of water.

Eliot did not find the intellectual solution to these problems in the Western values and philosophy. Therefore, he studied and used the Eastern thinking in his writings such as poems and plays to seek a permanent solution to all the problems caused by the unfavorable events, situations, and ideas in the West.

## Statement of the Problem

The quest for the Essence resonates in Eliot's selected writings. The quest for the Essence needs to be investigated in depth from the Upaniadic insights with special focus on non-duality. The quest for the Essence is the quest for enlightenment, Brahma, or liberation from the cycle of life, death, and suffering. Also, the ways of attaining the Essence need to be explored in his texts. Eliot's texts have not been explored from the viewpoint of the eleven principal Upaniads with special focus on non-duality. So, three research questions are formulated below to fulfil the research gap.

While reading Eliot's writings, the words of *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad* such as "DA," "Datta," "Dayadhvam," and "D myata" in *The Waste Land* were found. I could not properly understand their meaning (purpose and significance) in the context of the poem. This private problem to try to understand his writing from the viewpoint of the Upani ad triggered my mind to study the Upani ad, and his poems and plays thoroughly and simultaneously with a hope that I could better understand his writings in light of the Upani ad. As a result, some specific questions resulted from my private problem.

The research questions are:

- (a) What does "the Wheel" mean symbolically in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion*?
- (b) Why does Eliot use the symbol of "water" in his *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*? And
- (c) How does Eliot quest for  $\text{tm}$  and Brahma (the Essence) and establish their oneness in his *Four Quartets*?

## Research Objectives

Corresponding to the research questions, the objectives are:

- (a) To explore the symbolic meaning of “the Wheel” in Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion*.
- (b) To analyze the symbol of “water” in Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*.
- (c) To identify the quest for Ātmā and Brahma (the Essence) and establish their oneness through “the still point” in Eliot’s *Four Quartets*.

## Delimitations of the Research

In formulating methodology for analysis, the texts selected for the study are eleven principal Upaniṣads: *Ṛgveda*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Praṇa*, *Mundaka*, *Māṇḍūkya*, *Taittirīya*, *Aitareya*, *Chāndogya*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *vetāvatara*. Only four specific Upaniṣadic insights such as *karma* and rebirth, the spiritual quest theme, the existence of Ātmā and Brahma, and their oneness are used as the research tools. The translations from the Sanskrit language of the Upaniṣads and the other scriptures given throughout this thesis, unless otherwise mentioned, are by this researcher. The Sanskrit words of the Upaniṣads are transliterated into English using the internal alphabet.

For textual analysis, Eliot’s two poems are selected. First, Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922) consists of “The Burial of the Dead,” “A Game of Chess,” “The Fire Sermon,” “Death by Water,” and “What the Thunder Said.” Secondly, Eliot’s *Four Quartets* (1935-42) consists of “Burnt Norton” (1935), “East Coker” (1940), “The Dry Salvages” (1941), and “Little Gidding” (1942). Similarly, a couple of plays including *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) and *The Family Reunion* (1939) are selected. These poems and plays are taken from Eliot’s book *The Complete Poems*

*and Plays: 1909—1950* published by Harcourt Brace & Company, New York, 1967.

The interpretation of these texts is made only from the Upaniadic insights with special focus on non-duality.

### **Operational Definitions**

This researcher has used some important Sanskrit words of the Upaniadic in this dissertation. We cannot exactly translate those words into single English words. Though we may sometimes find their corresponding or equivalent single words in English, their connotative (spiritual, religious or cultural) meanings differ. In such cases, we need to define such words in detail. Among such words of the Sanskrit origin related to the Upaniadic that need to be defined are *cakra*, *karma*, *kriyam*, *nakarma* or *puruṣārtha*, *prarabdha karma* or *bhūya*, *punarjanma*, *jala*, *kāṣṭha*, *śrī*, *Brahma*, *jyotiḥ*, *OM (Aum)*, *ekam*, *Advaita*, *tattva*, and *mokṣa*.

Now, their definitions in terms of the Upaniadic go as follows:

*Cakra*: *Cakra*, also known as *bhavacakra* or *samsāra-cakra*, is the Wheel created by Brahma. All the individual selves die and are reborn again and again as per their past and present *karma* unless they gain spiritual knowledge just as the Wheel moves until it comes to the rest. In this sense, the term *cakra* is translated as the Wheel in English.

*Karma*: *Karma* means generally the selfish *karma* that is done with attachment for the fruits of actions. *Karma* is the action done in the past and present. A person gets new life after death according to his or her past and present *karma*. In this sense, the term *karma* is defined as action in English.

*Kriyam*, *nakarma* or *puruṣārtha*: *Kriyam*, *nakarma* or *puruṣārtha* means the action that is done now on purpose by the individuals. They can change their results created by their past actions of the previous lives with the help of their new actions done now.



In these sense the term *kriyam akarma* or *puru rtha* is translated as freewill in English.

*Pr rabdha karma* or *bh gya*: *Pr rabdha karma* or *bh gya* means the result of some of the past accumulated *karma* (*sancit karma*) which we experience now in this present life, unlike in Christianity. In Christianity, there is no principle of *karma*, rebirth and *pr rabdha*; a person is born once and dies once; gets this life by the grace of God; and a supernatural power controls his or her events of life. But from the aspect of the Upani adic philosophy, a person (past and present) *karma* controls his or her life and events; Brahma is just the manager of actions done by humans; a person is reborn as per his or her action if he or she does not attain the spiritual knowledge in this life. In this Upani adic sense, the term *pr rabdha karma* or *bh gya* is roughly translated as fate or destiny though fate or destiny means the life given by God as per His wish in Christianity. Thus, according to the Upani ad, a person gets this life as per his or her past actions but according to Christianity, a person gets this life as per the wish of God or a supernatural power.

*Punarjanma*: *Purnarjanma* means new life or rebirth that takes place due to one's past actions. After death, a human being may be born as a human being or any other creature on the ground of his or her good or bad actions. In this sense, the term *punarjanma* is translated as rebirth, reincarnation, metempsychosis or transmigration of the individual self.

*Jala*: *Jala* means water that is supposed to be the divine form of Brahma or the Universal Self. In this sense, the term *jala* is translated as water.

*K tastha*: *K tastha* means Brahma that does not undergo changes but changes others or causes actions, movements, and results in the universe. In this sense the term *k tastha* is translated as “the still point” or the Center Point.

*tm* : *tm* means Consciousness or the Immortal Divine Self that is Brahman Itself. There is only one *tm* in all the living creatures. In this sense the term *tm* is defined as the Self in English.

*Brahma*: *Brahma* means the All-Pervasive Consciousness. That is in formless. That is present in all living and non-living objects equally. That is the underlying reality or substratum of all existence. In this sense, the term *Brahma* is translated as the Universal Self.

*J v tm* : *J v tm* means the individual self that is reborn after death as per its *karma*. There are as many *j v tm* s as many individuals. *J v tm* is different from *tm* that is not reborn. In this sense, the term *j v tm* is translated as the soul in English.

Aum (OM) or ॐ: ॐ is the divine sound that is made of three sounds |a|, |u|, and |m|. The three letters represent three divine forces that create, sustain and destroy the universe. ॐ is another name of *Brahma*. In this sense, the divine sound ॐ is translated as Aum or OM in English.

*Ekam*: *Ekam* means only one. This word suggests that there is the presence of only one *Brahma* in this universe. In other words, the whole universe is one manifestation of *Brahma*. Everything is *Brahma*. In this sense the term *ekam* is translated as one or oneness.

*Advaita*: *Advaita* means not two. There are not two forces in the universe. Unlike the Western philosophy, there is only one Universal Power or Energy that creates and destroys the universe. Nothing is different from *Brahma*. Everything is *Brahma*. In this sense the term *Advaita* is translated as non-dual in English.

*Tattva*: *Tattva* means *tm* , Brahman, *moksha*, Truth, Reality, Immortality, Enlightenment, permanent Bliss, self-knowledge, self-realization or spiritual knowledge. In this sense, the term *tattva* is translated as the Essence in English.

*Mok a*: *Mok a* means liberation from the repeated cycle of life and death through the knowledge of Brahma. As a river becomes the sea after finding it so also an individual self becomes Brahma after finding it through the knowledge of its oneness or identity with Brahma. In this sense, the term *mok a* is translated as liberation or freedom in English. There is no concept of this type of liberation from the cycle of life and death through the knowledge of Brahma in Christianity.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Methods of Collecting the Materials/Data**

For the purpose of the theoretical/conceptual framework, the following ideas are utilized in this study. Interpretative qualitative research design is used as a research method to interpret Eliot's primary texts—*The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. Under this design, textual analysis is done. Sometimes comparative study as well is done to compare and contrast between the Upaniadic philosophy and the Western and/or Christian philosophy. By using purposive sampling method Eliot's four texts are selected among many because they contain the four fundamental concepts of the eleven principal Upaniads to a maximum level. Similarly, by using purposive sampling method, eleven Upaniads are selected out of two hundred and twenty ones because the selected Upaniads are supposed to be the principal Upaniads by

ankar charya, who had commented on those texts. The following pattern is used by this researcher to interpret the primary texts: topic/claim + theoretical insight(s) of the Upani ad + textual evidence(s) + objective reflection.

There are some writers who have written on the spiritual themes. For, example, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman are American transcendentalist poets. W. B. Yeats is an Irish poet who wrote on

spirituality and translated *The Ten Principal Upaniads* with Sri Purohit Swami.

William Somerset Maugham wrote a novel *The Razor's Edge* on the theme of *Katha Upani ad* (1.3.14). Allan Watts, a British writer and speaker, is known for interpreting and popularizing Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism in the West. Among these writers, Eliot is selected because his poems and plays are at once spiritual and modern. In other words, the subject matter of his writings is traditional and spiritual but written in modern style.

Therefore, Eliot is selected as the author of this study. He has written many poems and plays, but only two poems are selected as primary texts for the study purpose. They are *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*. Similarly, only two plays are selected as primary texts for the study purpose. They are *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. The reason of selecting these texts is that they contain the best representative visions of the Upani ad on the quest for the Essence, on *karma* and rebirth, and on the quest for Ātmā and Brahma, and their unity/identity (non-duality).

### **Conceptual Framework/ Philosophical Worldview**

The Upaniadic concepts of ontology (study of existence), metaphysics (study of reality), and epistemology (study of the way of gaining knowledge) are important to know the philosophical ancient worldview. The philosophical enquiry into "Who am I?" "What is life?" and "What is the world?" are related to ontology. Ontology deals with the complicated questions such as "what it appears to exist" and "what it actually exists." From the vision of the Upani ad, appearance and reality, falsity and truth, and all the dual aspects of the world are different aspects of the same Brahma. They all exist in Brahma. Or they all are Brahma alone. There is no existence of other things except that of Brahma in the cosmos. The philosophical enquiry into "What is real?" and "What is unreal?" is related to metaphysics. From the vision of the

Upani ad, nothing is unreal ultimately. Though the visible world seems to be unreal, it is real ultimately because it is the manifestation of Brahma alone. What is invisible or not seen (Brahma) is more real. The philosophical enquiry into “How can we gain spiritual knowledge?” is related to epistemology. From the vision of the Upani ad, we can know about the existence and reality of the Essence (Brahma) and gain Brahma and *mok a* through the study and regular practice of the wise, great non-dual sayings of the Upani ad in our daily life. The Upani ad gives importance to the epistemological liberation, i.e., liberation through knowledge rather than the *karmic* liberation that comes through the selfless *karma* done without attachment expecting no results of actions. The ultimate knowledge of the Upani ad is that human being is divine in nature, but not sinful or evil as envisioned by Christianity. Even all, animate and inanimate, are divine because all are Brahma from the spiritual eye of the Upani ad. This knowledge is a key to liberation and permanent pleasure.

As Ram Chandra Bhatta remarks, there is a difference between the ancient philosophical world view of the Upanishad of the East and the Western philosophical world view. The Eastern philosophers try to seek the Ultimate Essence to end the human suffering and attain the eternal, unbound happiness by knowing about the Reality whereas the Western philosophers try to seek the knowledge to understand their surrounding nature (physical or material world) and quench their thirst for knowledge intellectually only for the physical welfare of human beings. The Eastern philosophers try to understand even the subtle world of the Reality for both benefits, material and spiritual. They think that they can get permanent happiness through *mok a* (3-4).

### Theoretical Framework for Analyzing the Texts

For developing analytical tools/processes, Upaniṣadic vision as the research methodology of this research study is used. Since there are similarities between the Upaniṣadic vision expressed in eleven primary Upaniṣads and Eliot's ideas expressed in his poems and plays, this researcher has used the Upaniṣadic vision as the research methodology. There are underlying connections between the Upaniṣadic concepts and Eliot's ideas in his texts. Same metaphors or symbols are found in both the Upaniṣadic texts and Eliot's texts. These metaphors express some fundamental truths about life, *Ātmā*, Brahma, *mokṣa*, self-knowledge, self-realization, non-duality, peace, spiritual values, and *karma* and rebirth. These truths are useful for the upliftment of the modern society in the world. Since both the Upaniṣads and Eliot's texts share some spiritual values, it becomes easy to understand Eliot's texts if they are studied from the insights into the Upaniṣads. Therefore, Upaniṣadic insights or visions are used as my theoretical ground to read Eliot's works.

The Upaniṣadic vision claims that there is the existence of *Ātmā* and Brahma; both are the same from the angle of non-dualism. Non-dualism (the principal of *Advaita*) expresses that there are no two separate realities like *Ātmā* and Brahma, consciousness and inertness, or mind and matter in the universe; rather there is the presence of one, single Essence (monism). Therefore, everyone and everything is Brahma. *Karma* is the main cause of one's rebirth. The ultimate goal of life is to attain the Essence and liberation to be free from the Wheel of life and death. The Essence and liberation are achieved through knowledge and self-realization, the most important Upaniṣadic methods that are used to quest for the Essence.

The Upaniṣads were not created by any persons. Even Brahma or God did not create them. So, the Upaniṣads are called *apauruṣeya*. They came out of the

exhalation of Brahma (*Brihad ranyaka* 2.4.10, 4.5.12). Therefore, there is no author of the Upani ads. From this viewpoint, we cannot find any particular theoretical model associated with a particular author in the Upani ads. However, on the basis of the dialogue between the sages and spiritual seekers in the Upani ads, four models of the Upani adic vision can be developed. For example, Y jñavalkya in *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* and Sh ndilya in *C ndogya Upani ad* present the principle of *karma* and rebirth; they teach that one is born according to one's *karma* (4.4.5-6; 3.14.1). *Katha* and *Brihad ranyaka* Upani ads indicate that the ultimate goal of life is to attain the Essence that is known as Brahma (1.3.14, 1.3.28). The sage runi in *C ndogya Upani ad* and an anonymous sage in *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* present the principle about Ātm and Brahma, and non-dualism; they teach that both are one—Ātm is Brahma, and Brahma is Ātm (6.8.7; 1.4.10); the Ultimate Essence is only one, not two (*C ndogya* 6.2.1). Similarly, Y jñavalkya in *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* presents the principle of self-realization; he teaches that knowledge is important, but self-realization is more important to quest for the Essence and liberation (4.5.6). All these four models of the Upani adic vision discussed above are applied for the purpose of my theoretical/conceptual framework.

Among the four models of the Upani adic vision discussed above, non-dualism is the main vision to view Ātm , Brahma, and the world for the quest of the Essence. This non-dualism can be categorized into two trends: *neti neti*, the negative, mystical, or transcendental insight, and *vidhi v kya*, the positive, immanent, or holistic insight. Literally, the *neti neti* means that not this, not this, or neither this nor that. Advocating the insight into the *neti neti*, Y jñavalkya teaches that the Essence or Brahma is neither this nor that; It is beyond speech and mind; we cannot definitely define Brahma ; whatever is known about It is not complete but partial; the more we

know, the more remains to be known about It; and above all Brahma is transcendental (*Brihad ranyaka* 3.8.8, 3.9.26, 4.4.22, 4.5.15) because It cannot be known as an object but as the subject (I, the awareful witness, knower, the conscious being) only. It can be realized only. We must transcend everything of this material world to realize It. Brahma is impersonal. So, It can be described only in terms of what It is not. Vedānta prescribes us to adopt first the negative, mystical, or transcendental vision and then the positive, immanent, or holistic one to quest for the Essence.

Advocating the *vidhi vākya* (positive insight), Śāṇḍilya teaches that all of this world is Brahma (3.14.1). Similarly, a sage declares that “I am Brahma” (*Brihad ranyaka* 1.4.10). And, Ṛṣi instructs his son Svetaketu that “You are Brahma” (*Cāṇdogya* 6.8.7). The *vidhi vākya* stresses that Brahma is immanent. Ultimately, both trends of the non-dualism conclude that there is only one existence of Brahma everywhere all the time. Besides the four models of the Upaniṣadic vision concerning *karma* and rebirth, the spiritual quest theme, the existence of Ātman and Brahma, and their non-duality, and the attainment of the Essence and liberation through self-realization as mentioned above, the two trends (negative and positive) of the non-dualism as well are applied for my theoretical framework. The major insights of my theoretical framework are elaborated under “Review on the Basic Concepts of the Upaniṣad” in the pages to follow.

In a nutshell, the theoretical framework of this study is an Upaniṣadic reading. That reading is limited to the four fundamental ideas of the Upaniṣad: *karma* and rebirth, the spiritual quest theme, the existence of Ātman and Brahma, and their oneness/unity or identity (non-duality), and the attainment of the Essence through self-knowledge and self-realization.



### Preview of the Dissertation

Regarding the scope of this study, it has six chapters. The first chapter states the overall plan of the research, offers substantive narratives and brief critical summaries of Eliot's four primary texts, especially from the Upaniadic vision, formulates research questions, sets objectives, and sets its delimitations. Also, this chapter gives the operational definitions of some important Sanskrit terms of the Upani ad and spells out its key theoretical assumptions. The second chapter reviews relevant literature, offers the definitions of the key terms from the aspect of the Upanishad, establishes the gap, and finally sketches the chapter plan. The third chapter deals with Eliot's *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* and explores the symbolic meaning of "the Wheel." It also explores the ways how *karma* and rebirth become the cause of one another unless the attainment of spiritual knowledge.

The fourth chapter analyzes the symbolic use of "water" in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets* to find out how the symbol of "water" represents the quest for the Essence and liberation, the ultimate goal of life. The fifth chapter establishes the oneness (identity) between Ātm and Brahma through the symbol of "the still point" in Eliot's *Four Quartets* and concludes that everyone and everything is Brahma. The final chapter restates the established and generalized concluding ideas drawn from the analyses presented in the earlier chapters and recommends some lines for future research.

## Chapter Two

### Review of Literature

As the title of the study, its research questions, and objectives guide the scope (directions and destination) of the research, this study confines its review of literature (secondary and primary) to basically a three-pronged area: the literature related to the theoretical framework/modality of the Upaniṣad, the literature related to the basic concepts of the Upaniṣad such as “the Wheel,” “*karma*,” “rebirth,” “water,” “the still point,” “oneness,” “Ātmā,” “Brahma,” and “the Essence,” and the literature of the primary texts, that is, Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. Primarily, the arrangement of the elements in this section is made thematically, however, information is arranged logically, from particular to general, and chronologically under “Review on Eliot’s Primary Texts.” The review is limited to the extent of its scope, that is, an Upaniṣadic examination/reading of the basic concepts of the Upaniṣad that are found in Eliot’s selected poems and plays. This is the research area of this project.

#### Review on the Upaniṣad

The Upaniṣads are supposed to be divine words as seen by the ancient Hindu seers, who later uttered them to their disciples as part of their illumined or revealed experience about the Ultimate Essence (Bhatta 22-23). The seers saw the *mantras* (religious saying or prayer that devotees chant) of the Upaniṣad. The verb “saw” means the sages realized the *mantras* through both mediums—sight and sound. The knowledge of the *mantras* leads to spiritual emancipation.

The Upaniṣad has two meanings: etymological and semantic. Etymologically, as defined by Śaṅkarācārya in his commentaries on *Katha Upaniṣad* (1), the word “Upaniṣad” is made of prefixes “*upa*” and “*ni*” by adding “*kwip*” suffix to the root

verb “*sad*.” The root verb “*sad*” has three meanings: to loosen(*bi arana*), to destroy (*avas dana*) and to conduct/to lead/to reach (*gati*) ( *di Nau Upani ad*196). Thus, the Upani ad is that knowledge that loosens and destroys our ignorance (*avidy* ), its functioning world, and all the seeds of worldly existence along with latent desires/impressions, and finally leads us to Brahma. Similarly,

R dh krishnanexamines, "The word 'Upani ad' is derived from *upa* (near), *ni* (down) and *sad* (to sit), i.e., sitting down near" the spiritual teacher to learn the secret doctrine of Brahma (19). Hence, the “Upani ad” is the subject of the students, eager to learn, sitting beside the teacher to acquire knowledge and truth.

Semantically, the Upani ad is a secret, esoteric knowledge of Brahma (R dh krishnan19). The Upani ad also means a philosophical text dealing with Ātm , Brahma, and the universe. Regarding this, Swam Samarpan acknowledges that the Upani ads are about “the nature of Ātm , world, and God. However, their central theme is the supreme reality, Brahma” (36). Thus, the Upani ad can be viewed either as a secret, divine knowledge about Brahma or as a philosophical text dealing with the nature of Brahma.

r R samohana Chakravart argues that the main aim of the Upani ad is to make us free bodily, mentally, and spiritually. It is only the Upani ad in the whole world which teaches not about salvation but *mukti* (liberation). It gives strength to be free from bondage and weakness (108). Chakravart makes a difference between “salvation,” a concept of Christianity, and “*mukti*,” a concept of the Upani ad. Salvation means deliverance from sin and its results to be brought about by faith in Christ. *Mukti* means liberation from the Wheel of life and death through the knowledge of Ātm and Brahma.

Similarly, S. R. dh krishnandiscerns that the main purpose of the Upani ad is "to lead the mind of the sacrificer away from the outer ceremonial to its inner meaning. All true sacrifice is inward" (513). This suggests that the Upani ads came against the rituals of the Vedic period when animals were sacrificed to appease gods and goddesses; the Upani ads gave importance to the knowledge not *karma*.

R dh krishnancriticizes "the empty and barren ritualistic religion" that has an inferior position. Sacrifices do not lead to final liberation. All things are God's, so there is no need to offer to him anything, except one's will, or one's self. One attains the Essence or spiritual freedom by the renunciation of the world (49-50). The Upani ads teach us these core meanings of spirituality. Clearly, the Upani ads are against blood sacrifice and violence of any type, either physical or mental.

Robert Ernest Hume comments that the Upani ads discredit "the popular polytheistic religion by philosophical reasoning. . . . Knowledge . . . [is] the one object of supreme value, the irresistible means of obtaining one's ends" (53). The knowledge has practical, speculative, and ethical values. Practically, the person who knows "Brahma as the real, as knowledge, as the infinite . . . obtains all desires" and becomes free from ignorance. Speculatively, the knowledge is useful "for attainment of the ideal unity with the Real" (53). Hume suggests that the Upani ad is against the pluralistic and theistic rituals of the Veda (the oldest and most important Hindu sacred writings). Knowledge alone, not *karma*, is a means to attain the Essence. By the meditation on Brahma or OM (Aum) as the Ultimate Reality, one can obtain all desires, either physical or spiritual.

Similarly, Swam Vivek nanda argues that "The one central idea throughout all the Upani ads is that of [self-] realization . . . We must have our own experiences, must have our full run" (vol. 2, 367). He gives importance to the firsthand experience

of the Essence over the second hand or vicarious experience obtained through reading scriptures or hearing discourses. One can never know about the Essence truly without one's direct experience.

Sri Aurobindo discovers that the Upaniads are erected on these four grand truths: "*nityo nitya nityam*" [Brahma is the Eternal of eternals], "*chetanas chetan nityam*" [Brahma is the Conscious of all conscious], "*so'ham*" [That is me], "*aham Brahmāsmi*" [I am Brahma]" (357). He adds that Brahma is "*satyam jñānam anantam*" [Existence, Knowledge and Endless] (*Advaita and the Other Upaniads* 371). Thus, Aurobindo describes impersonal (having neither personal qualities nor form) aspect of Brahma.

From Swami Ramananda Giri's insight, there is no any other scripture or philosophy except the Upani ad in any religion, community, or tradition, which could make the *jiva* (an individual self) Brahma (9). He suggests that the dualistic religion cannot unite the *jiva* with Brahma. Only the non-dualistic religion of the Upani ad can do so.

Eliot, in *After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy*, appreciates the complexity and importance of the Indian philosophy including the Upani ad that "most of the great European philosophers look like schoolboys" (40) in comparison to the Western philosophers. He suggests that the Western philosophy gives only the elementary and partial knowledge about the Essence of the Universe. And Ātmā (the Self) and Brahma (the Absolute) are new concepts for the Western mind.

Therefore, F. Max Muller recommends without hesitation, "The greatest contribution of Indian philosophy to the world is the concept of 'Brahma' and since 'Ātmā' is present in every human being the unification of 'Ātmā' with 'Brahma' is the ultimate goal of every living being" (19). From these concepts of Ātmā and Brahma,

we can infer that each one of us is Brahma. The aim of the Upaniṣad is to make us realize this truth.

Similarly, Arthur Anthony MacDonnell adds, “Brahma or Absolute is grasped and definitely expressed for the first time in the history of human thought in the *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad*” (qtd. in Chattopadhyaya). The quotation “*aham Brahmāsmi*” [I am Brahma] of *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad* (1.4.10) is popular. That quotation supposes that Ātmā is Brahma and Brahma is Ātmā.

Highlighting the importance of Ātmā in *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, Paul Deussen, a German Professor of Philosophy, accepts that “Eternal Philosophical truth has seldom found more decisive and striking expression than in the doctrine of the emancipating knowledge of Ātmā” (qtd. in Chattopadhyaya 88). In the Upaniṣads, the terms “Ātmā” and “Brahma” are used for each other. Ātmā is eternal and true. So, this philosophy of Ātmā is known as eternal philosophy.

Estimating the importance of the Upaniṣads, Arthur Schopenhauer, German philosopher, remarks, “[the Upaniṣads are] almost superhuman conceptions whose originators can hardly be said to be mere men” (qtd. in Chattopadhyaya 87). The Upaniṣads are supposed to be created by God but not by any human being. Therefore, they are eternal. They are in existence since the existence of God.

The German scholar Fredrick Schlegel asserts boldly, “Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans appears in comparison with the abundant light of oriental idealism like a feeble promethean spark in the full flood of the heavenly glory of the noonday sun, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished” (qtd. in Chattopadhyaya 88). Schlegel suggests that the idealism of the Upaniṣads is unique in the world. Its light is like the light of the midday sun before the weak light of the loftiest philosophy of Europe that can extinguish any time.

Annie Besant asserts, “Personally I regard the Upani ads as the highest product of the human mind, the crystallized wisdom of divinely illumined men” (qtd. in Chakravart 107). In fact, the wisdom imparted by the Upani ads is like the cream of milk. The wisdom helps us come in touch with the divine light.

Schopenhauer asserts, “In the whole world, there is no study so elevating as that of the Upani ads. It has been the solace of my life. It will be the solace of my death” (qtd. in Chattop dhy ya 87). Confirming his assertion, Muller responds that his life-long study proves Schopenhauer’s statement to be true (87). Finally, Schopenhauer concludes, “It [the Upani ad-led Ved ntic religion] is destined sooner or later to become the faith of the [Western] people” (107). This discussion suggests that the German thinkers had understood the importance of the knowledge of the Upani ads for the benefit of the human kind. In this sense, the Upani ads hold the global importance and could be a world religion one day.

Similarly, commenting on the spreading influence of the Upani ad on the West, Sarra Bull, an American disciple of Vivek nanda, writes in her letter that the Ved ntic thoughts have really influenced “The German school, the English Orientalists and our own Emerson” of the Western world (qtd. in Chakravart 107). This testimony illustrates how the Western thought is influenced by the thoughts of the Upani ads today. Vivek nanda was a great philosopher to influence the Western mind with his Ved ntic thoughts.

Vivek nanda comments:

The Upani ads are the Bible of India. They occupy the same place as the New Testament does. The Upani ads do not reveal the life of any teacher but simply teach principles. The origin of ancient Sanskrit is 5000 BC; the

Upani ads [are at least] two thousand years before that. Nobody knows [exactly] how old they are. (Vol. 1, 89)

The Upani ads are anonymous texts. They are not autobiographies or biographies of the sages. They simply convey their spiritual message to us. The Upani ads were written in around 7000 BC. Before that, they were in oral form since time immemorial.

Vivek nanda reviews the important aspects of the Upani ads as such that “the Upani ads believe in God, the creator of the universe, its ruler,” the law of *karma* and its way out to go beyond the law (vol. 1, 241). The goal of man is not enjoyment. Enjoyment is the goal of animals only in nature. The goal of man is not happiness but to be a master or source of that happiness. “The Upani ads condemn all rituals, especially those that involve the killing of animals. They declare those all nonsense” (vol. 1, 241-42). Thus, Vivek nanda clearly holds that the ultimate goal of life is to realize the Essence of oneself. That Essence can be realized only through the sacrifice of physical pleasures, the lures of materialism.

Highlighting the unifying message of the Upani ads, Vivek nanda, in a lecture delivered at the Sesame Club, London, speaks that the Upani ads, the Buddhas, and Christs, all other great preachers of religion, politicians, and proletariats till today have advocated the “the idea of oneness” throughout all times (vol. 1, 347). Vivek nanda reveals that the demand for oneness and equality is the motto of all philosophy, religion, and politics. Thus, the aim of the Upani ads is to end discrimination and establish spiritual unity among all.

Regarding the influence of the philosophy of the Upani ads on the West, Sri Aurobindo remarks in his *Kena and the Other Upani ads* that the philosophy of the Upani ads has deeply affected "the thought of West at first through Pythagoras and



other Greek philosophers, then through Buddhism working into Essene, Gnostic and Roman Christianity and once again in our own times through German metaphysics, Theosophy, and a hundred strange and irregular channels" (345). The salient features of today's science such as the principals of the unity of things, evolution, physical laws were already discovered by the ancient sages in the Upani ads. But Vedic Evolution and Monism are very different from European science's Evolution and Monism (345-47). Modern science claims that creatures developed from matter, but the Upani ads claim that creatures developed from spirit and that Brahma or God is present in every process of evolution. Modern science argues that evolution is the gradual and natural development of the universe over a long period of time and there is no hand of God in it whereas the Upani ad assert that there is the hand of Brahma in every process of evolution. Vedic monism declares that there is the existence of only Brahma in the universe whereas European science's Monism hypothesizes that there is the existence of only matter or energy in the universe.

Refuting the ideas of those who hold that the Upani ads are contrary to the Vedic rituals, Aurobindo argues:

The Upani ads are not a revolutionary departure from the Vedic mind and its temperament and fundamental ideas, but a continuation and development and to a certain extent an enlarging transformation in the sense of bringing out into open expression all that was held covered in the symbolic Vedic speech as a mystery and a secret. (*The Upani ads: Translations and Commentary by Sri Aurobindo* 345-47)

Aurobindo reveals that the Upani ads are the explanations of the mysterious and secret matters of the Vedas. There is no radical difference between the Vedic and the Upani adic thoughts.

In a nutshell, some Eastern and Western writers' opinions on the definition and importance of the Upaniṣad are reviewed. They all agree that the Upaniṣad is a spiritual knowledge of the Self or Brahman, or a store of the ancient sacred utterances of mystical/spiritual truth or wisdoms. The wisdom of the Upaniṣad helps us know about Ātman (the Self), Brahman (the Ultimate Essence), and their oneness (identity).

### **Review on the Basic Concepts of the Upaniṣad**

The terms "the Wheel," "*karma*," and "rebirth" are related to each other in the Upaniṣads. The Wheel means the cycle of *karma* (action) and rebirth. *vet vatara Upaniṣad* presents the theory of the Wheel of Brahman (*Brahmacakra*). Brahman moves the Wheel of the creatures as per their *karma* (1.6, 6.1). The spokes of the Wheel are one's bad and good qualities, right and wrong actions, vices and virtues, and attachment and delusion (1.3). This hints that *karma* and rebirth repeat endlessly till one is attached to the worldly actions just as the Wheel moves, or just as a tree comes out of a seed and the seed out of the tree. Rebirth happens to quest for the better life of pleasure or to quest for the attainment of the higher purpose of life.

Generally, the term "*karma*" means actions, works or behavior. *Karma* also means the consequences of action. *Karma* can be physical, mental, and spiritual as well. The selfish and passionate *karma* done with attachment is the main cause of our rebirth. *Karma* traps into bondage whereas knowledge liberates from the Wheel of life and death permanently. *Karma* and rebirth continue one after another unless one attains Brahman. *Mundaka Upaniṣad* proclaims that one cannot attain Brahman by *karma* and *tapa* (austerity) but by the purity of knowledge (1.2.12, 3.1.8). The selfless and detached *karma* can serve only as a secondary aid to the highest truth. Unless otherwise mentioned, the term *karma* means the worldly actions done for fulfilling one's physical or material desires of selfish motive in this research study.

*Pra na, Mu aka, C ndogya* and *vet vatara Upani ad*s show the role of the impact of the present wishes and *karma* in one's next life. An individual self is reborn according to the person's last thinking at the time of death. When an individual dies with an unfulfilled desire, that person is born again to fulfill it (3.10; 3.2.2; 3.14.1; 5.11-12). So, cravings are the seeds of one's rebirth. It is necessary to destroy the seeds first, then the *karma* disappears automatically.

*Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* presents the principle of *karma*. It declares that a human being becomes good by good action, and bad by bad one (3.2.13). Similarly, the human being becomes as he or she works or forms habits. The individual becomes virtuous by virtuous or good deeds, and vicious or sinful by evil or sinful deeds. In fact, an individual is occupied by desires. We are what our deep driving desire is. As our desire is, so is our determination (will). As our determination is, so is our action. As our action is, so is our results. Finally, actions determine destiny (4.4.5). Thus, desires lead to determination; determination leads to actions; and actions lead to results or fate. This exhibits that desires, thoughts, and actions play a great role in creating or determining one's destiny. Destiny is simply the consequence of one's *karma*.

Similarly, *vet vatara Upani ad* presents the principle of *karma*. Accordingly, if we dedicate all our works to *vara* (God), we will not be subject to the law of *karma*. That is, we will be free from the Wheel of life and death once for all. Besides, even the *karma* done in the past (*sancit karma*, accumulated action) will be destroyed (6.4). If one does *karma* with the hope of fruits, one gets them certainly and which causes one's rebirth in the bodies of different creatures again and over again (5.7-10). The Self-evident Eternal Brahma cannot be attained by the *karma*, which is done with the hope of fruits (*Mu aka* 1.2.12). Without having the self-

realization of Brahma, one cannot attain liberation. So, it is necessary to work selflessly and detachedly to be free from rebirth.

The world is the play of mind. Where there is mind, there is the world. Where there is no mind, there is no world. In this regard, *vet vatara* and *Katha Upani ad* suggest that it is indeed the mind that is the cause of men's bondage and liberation (1.5, 1.9; 1.3.2-8). The living creatures can become free from all types of fetters by knowing Brahma (1.8). So, the mind attached to the world is a cause of one's bondage, but the mind attached to Brahma is a cause of liberation. Actually, physical matters do not bind an individual, but the attitude towards them binds the person.

*Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* maintains that all the sufferings in the world are caused by ignorance; therefore, its cure is knowledge. The fire of knowledge can destroy the darkness of ignorance (1.3.28). This knowledge comes from the study of the Upani ads. Therefore, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* instructs us to pray to Brahma for knowledge to fulfil our quest for the Essence: "Lead me from untruth to truth, from darkness to light and from death to immortality" (1.3.28). We need not to be afraid of untruth, Darkness, and death because life's journey starts right from these initial stages. Journey passes through the graduated or progressive paths from ignorance through knowledge to self-realization, or from duality to non-duality.

*Kena Upani ad* expresses that austerity, self-restraint, alms-giving, and sacrifice (*tapa, dāna* and *yajña*) are the preliminary conditions (*prati th*) for the revelation of Brahma (4.8). Similarly, *Katha Upani ad* expresses that all the Vedas, all the practices of austerity and celibacy are means by which the Indestructible "OM" (Brahma) can be sought as the final aim (2.15). Really, self-control, generosity, sacrifice, and celibacy play a great role in quest for the Essence. Above all, the

sacrifice of *karma* is necessary because the Essence is not found by *karma* but by knowledge.

Those persons who work for self-motives or self-interest attain the world of the moon, live there for some time and return to this earth. This is the *ak hin yana m rga* or *pitriy na* (*Pra na* 1.9). However, those who live their life by austerity and chastity with faith and who discover Brahma by spiritual knowledge attain the world of the sun and an immortal life. They are not born again in this mortal world (*Pra na* 1.10). Thus, we find two ways of staying after death—a sojourn and a permanent stay—being described in the Upani ad. The wise choose the permanent stay because they are born no more in this world after attaining this state.

The term “water” includes the terms “the river” and “the sea” as well in the Upani ads. *C ndogya Upani ad* asserts that water is Brahma (7.10.2).

*vet vatar Upani ad* presents the theory of the river. It describes the flow of human life and the world as a river having fifty different types that are made of five senses, all types of sufferings, ignorance, ego, passion, aversion, the fear of death and so on (1.5). *Mu aka* and *Pra na* Upani ads indirectly compare the *j v tm* and Brahma with the river and the sea respectively (3.2.8; 6.5). Just as the goal of rivers is to attain the sea, so also the goal of the *j v tm* is to attain Brahma, the source of eternal bliss and perpetual peace. When a drop of water falls into the sea, the drop of water becomes the sea. In this sense also, a drop of “water” symbolizes a particular *jiva* that becomes Brahma when it achieves Brahma. Thus, the Upani ads present the image of the water or the river as the spiritual journey of the individual creatures that are running ahead to mix into the sea-like Brahma.

Metaphorically, the quest for water is the quest for the Essence. The cycle of the river and the sea suggests that both the river and the sea are water; there is no

essential difference between them. Likewise, there is no essential difference between Ātm , which is present in the individual body, and Brahma that is present everywhere from the viewpoint of non-dualism.

The terms “the still point,” “Ātm ,” “Brahma,” and “the Essence” are used interchangeably in this research work. The word “oneness” is related to these terms. “The still point” is known as Ātm and/or Brahma (*Brihad ranyaka* 4.4.20), “*k tastha*” (the Unchangeable, the Changeless) or “*dhruva*”—the Fixed/Constant (*Brihad ranyaka* 4.4.20; *vet vatara* 2.15; *Katha* 1.2.10; *C ndogya* 7.26.2), “*stambha*” (the Cosmic Pillar), “*acala*” (the Unchangeable), “*n bhi*”—the Central Point (*Brihad ranyaka* 2.5.15, 1.5.15; *Mu aka* 2.2.6; *Pra na* 6.6), “*Kendra*” (the Focal Point), “*nitya*”—the Eternal (*Katha* 2.2.13), “*ak ara*”—the Immutable (*M ukya* 1) in the Upani ads. “The still point” is similar to a hub, which remains fixed while its Wheel continues to move around it. Here, the Wheel symbolizes the cycle of life and the world that moves around the Wheel of Brahma.

The term “oneness” means that there is the identity between Ātm and Brahma. It also means the identity between Ātm , Brahma, and *jagat* (the world). In other words, everyone and everything is one or Brahma. They are interconnected. In *C ndogya Upani ad*, Sh ndilya argues that this whole world is Brahma because it was created by Brahma, will dissolve into Brahma, and is sustained by Brahma (3.14.1). Brahma is the smallest among small things as well as the greatest among great things. The universe is a treasure chest of Brahma (3.14.3, 3.15.1). These ideas of Sh ndilya justify that there is the presence of only one Brahma everywhere and all the time. This principle of the identity of everything with Brahma is called monism. Monism is related to non-dualism that argues that there are not two Realities or Essence in the universe. That is, there is only Brahma without a second.

Ātm is the eternal consciousness due to which we are in existence. Ātm is the real, innermost Self that is divine. Ātm is different from *ling tm* , *linga ar ra,s k ma ar ra* or *j v tm* meaning soul, mind, subtle body, or an individual self (the self in an individual). There is only one Ātm (the True Self) or Brahma but many souls. As many creatures, so many souls. But the same Ātm or Brahma is present in all the souls. There is no concept of Ātm or Brahma but that of a soul in Christianity. In terms of the Upani ad, Brahma /Ātm is like electricity; a soul is like a software of a computer; and a body is like the hardware of the computer. The software operates the computer. As there are many types of hardware of a computer, so are many bodies. As there are many kinds of software, so are souls. As a software operates a computer, so a soul operates a body. As hardware cannot function without a software, so a body cannot function without a soul. As varieties of hardware and software of a computer are powered by the same electricity in a room, so also different bodies and their souls are powered by Brahma or Ātm . That is, as the same kind of electricity remains in different kinds of software and hardware, so the same Brahma or Ātm remains in different kinds of bodies and souls. Without electricity, neither the software nor the hardware can function.

Thus, Ātm (the Self) is different from the soul. It is the soul that transmigrates after death and appears as reincarnation to enjoy the fruits of its prior *karma* (*Brihad ranyaka* 4.4.2-6). However, Ātm does not transmigrate or travel even after the death of body. Ātm has neither birth nor death. The concept of Ātm and Brahma is not found in any religion except Hindu. Literally, the word Ātm means "essence or breath." Actually, Ātm is Brahma. This is supported by the Upani ad's Four Great Sayings that are given below.

- (a) “*Prajñ nam Brahma*”—Intelligence or consciousness is Brahma (*Aitareya* 3.3).
- (b) “*Aham Brahm smi*”—I am Brahma (*Brihad ranyaka* 1.4.10).
- (c) “*Tat tvam asi*”—That [Brahma] thou art (*C ndogya* 6.8.7).
- (d) “*Ayam tm brahma*”—This Ātm is Brahma (*M ukya* 2).

The Ātm that remains inside a body is called *jiva* or *j v tm* (an individual self). Regarding this, *M ukya Upani ad* expresses that Ātm, if it supposes itself to be a doer and experiencer, becomes *j v tm* (3). This suggests that if Ātm supposes itself to be Brahma, it is not called *j v tm*; rather it is called Brahma. Brahma is the Supreme Godhead, beyond all distinctions or forms. In terms of *Katha Upani ad*, the *j v tm* that remains with a body, senses and mind is an experiencer or *bhokt* (1.3.4). Thus, *jiva* is a compound entity of Brahma / Ātm (consciousness), *j v tm* (subtle body) and ignorance.

*Taittir ya Upani ad* defines that Brahma is real, knowledge and the Infinite, situated in the secret place of the heart and in the highest heaven. Those who know this get all their desires fulfilled and finally reach the Supreme (2.1.2).<sup>1</sup> Likewise, *Kena* and *Katha Upani ads* declare that that by whose power our five senses—eye, ear, nose, tongue, and skin—sees sight, hears sound, smells scent, tastes flavor, and feels soft or rough respectively—is Brahma (1.1.1-8; 1.2.14, 2.1.3). In fact, Brahma is unseen but seeing everything and everyone. Brahma is the central source of power due to which all are functioning in the universe.

The Essence means *tattva* in the Upani ad. Concerning the Essence, *Taittir ya Upani ad* declares that *tattva* is Brahma from which creatures are born, by which they live and into which they enter (3.1.1). *vet vatar Upani ad* proclaims that *tattva* is Brahma which cannot be illumined by the sun, nor by the moon nor by the stars, nor



by lightings, what to speak of the fire! In reality, it is Brahma by whose light all these shining objects (the sun, the moon, the stars, lightings, fire) shine (6.14). Similarly, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* argues that Ātm or Brahma is *neti, neti*—neither this nor that. It is uncatchable or incomprehensible, indestructible, unattached, unfettered, unaffiliated, and indeclinable (4.5.15). Thus, the Essence means the nature of the Reality or the Ultimate Indestructible Reality Itself. The Essence is undividable.

*Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* philosophizes that Brahma has two forms: the formed (*m rta*) and the formless (*am rta*). The formed is physical, mortal, limited or circumscribed, and defined. The formless is subtle, immortal, unlimited, or all-pervading, undefined, and timeless. The formed is the unreal and the formless is the real (2.3.1).<sup>2</sup> This expression establishes the truth that ultimately everything is Brahma. The different forms are nothing but the Ultimate Essence Itself just as milk, yoghurt, butter, and ghee are nothing but milk.

The major Upani ads speak for the unity and interrelationship among everything and everyone in the whole universe and in the whole nature as well. There is the presence of Brahma in all of them. To say more directly, everyone and everything are nothing but Brahma. This argument is supported by *C ndogya* (3.14.1), *Katha* (2.2.10, 2.2.12), *Taittir ya* (2.6.4), *vet vatara* (1.12, 6.2), and

*v sya* (1) Upani ads. They indicate that materiality and the Essence (Brahma) have relationship with each other. They are inseparable, like the two parts of the same coin.

*Katha Upani ad* declares that what is here is there, what is there is here. Those who see differences such as between human beings, creatures, natural things, and Brahma go from death to death (2.1.10). There are no varieties in Brahma. Those who see varieties in Brahma go from death to death (*Brihad ranyaka* 4.4.19). Those who see varieties and differences meet downfall and catastrophe. With this knowledge of

non-duality or monism, everything is known automatically (*C ndogya* 6.4.1-7) and nothing remains to be known ( *vet vatara* 1.12) just as when we know clay, then we can identify every pot made of clay as a product of clay (*C ndogya* 6.1.4).

Thus, some basic terms of the Upani ad such as “the Wheel,” “*karma*,” “rebirth,” “water” including the river and the sea, “the still point,” “oneness,” “*Ātm*,” “Brahma” and “the Essence” (*tattva*) are reviewed. These terms help us know about the fundamental thoughts of the Upani ad to some extent.

### **Review on Eliot’s Primary Texts**

Different writers, scholars, critics, and creative geniuses have expressed their remarks on Eliot’s texts such as *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion*. Among them, I have reviewed those remarks that are relevant to the scope of this study.

Ken Bush remarks that *The Waste Land* is “T. S. Eliot’s famous poem [which] links the moral and spiritual barrenness of modern life with a series of disjointed visions of wasteland locations from both past and present” (173). *The Waste Land* is a metaphor, which suggests that the land of the West is a waste land. It is a sexually wasteland, where there is no pure love between male and female characters. They adhere to promiscuity and prostitution. They are materialistically rich, but morally and spiritually bankrupt and sexually debased. Actually, life becomes desert and waste if sexual purity is not maintained. The poem intends to regain the sexual purity that the wastelanders have lost.

Indicating sex as a game of chess, C. J. Ackerley argues that Eliot’s poem “A Game of Chess” represents a game of degraded sexual activity, in which the move of playing chess is made to seduce a woman (52). In the poem, the lovers and beloveds of higher and lower classes move around filthy love regardless of sexual and moral

norms of behavior. Men love women to fulfill their sexual passions, and women love men either for sexual passions or for money.

*The Waste Land* exposes the crisis of belief and existence not only of Eliot but also of the whole Westerners. It is a "social satire. . . . it describes a human soul tormented by eternal problems which the historical situation only served to actualize" (Smidt 116). The bondage, suffering and pains of life and death are eternal problems. These problems arise due to human beings' insatiable desires.

Kateřina Straková claims that *The Waste Land* is a mythical poem. Eliot has used several archetypes (motifs, primordial images), literary references and myths of the past ranging from the myth of the Holy Grail Quest, the Vegetation and Fertility myths of Greece, the Hindu myth of the thunder related to the Upaniṣad, the Philomela myth, the Fisher King myth, the Petronius' Satyricon myth, the Tiresias myth, the Adonis myth, and the Sibyl myth related to the Arthurian legend. In this poem, Eliot unfolds modern time problems, complexities, and helplessness of the present-day Westerners with the help of those myths and allusions (1-43). *The Waste Land* is a "modern myth of a dying land, a fallen civilization, and their expected revitalization" (43) created by Eliot. Symbolically, *The Waste Land* as a myth tells us not only about the value crisis of the Westerners but also of the whole human kind.

Those myths of the past as mentioned above provide Eliot with the recurring motif of universal suffering that describes the modern pessimistic situation of the wretched wastelanders. Among the myths and allusions mentioned in the poem, the Hindu myth of the thunder is more powerful in its meaning and effect. That myth comes at the end of the poem as its conclusion. The myth suggests that the wasteland of Europe should be regenerated with the teachings of the Upaniṣad of the Eastern philosophy to quest for the Essence.

Pointing out the lack of a stable ideology in *The Waste Land*, Kristian Smidt remarks that the poem "is a criticism of life from the Christian, Hindu and Buddhist point of view but without the faith of any of these religions, or rather with the faith of them all but with still more powerful skepticism" (115). Scholars agree in one point that the poem criticizes modern civilization and post-World War I (1914-18) society that lost its stable belief in religion, morality, and spirituality. The quest for the Essence became a victim of skepticism.

Smidt further comments that "The despair of *The Waste Land* is a despair of metaphysics, and the horror of life has its source in its despair" (115). Eliot expresses disgust with humanity, which points to the meaninglessness of existence. He is worried since human beings have lost their connection with their spirit. Here, he shows his concerns about the scarcity of spiritual knowledge, the struggle for spirituality, and the need to include spirituality in our daily life to quest for the Essence.

Commenting on the theme of *The Waste Land* (1922), James D. Hart estimates that the theme of the poem is about the "sterility and chaos of the contemporary world" (426). The poem contains myths, which are symbolic. Fertility myths and the Christian Grail legend are working as a structural framework behind this poem. *The Waste Land* is desolate and sterile due to the ruling of an impotent king (426). The king is related to the myth of the Fisher King. His sterile land becomes fertile when a knight appears in search of the Holy Grail or Cup. The Grail is symbolic of spirituality that the wastelanders have lost and due to which the wasteland produces neither vegetables nor animals. This suggests that the restoration of peace and happiness is possible only through the restoration of spirituality.

Similarly, Hart highlights that *The Waste Land* has five parts. "The Burial of the Dead" stands for the rebirth of land after the barren winter; "The Game of the Chess" represents a contrast between the splendor of the past and the sordidness of modern life; "The Fire Sermon" represents "vignettes" of the squalor of modern life; "Death by Water" shows how a drowned Phoenician sailor dies by water (because of his boat adrift with a leak), but not by thirst; and "What the Thunder Said" represents "the decay of modern Europe through symbols of the Grail legend" concluding "with quotations from the Upaniads" (426). This illustration shows that the five parts of the poem are related to *The Waste Land* thematically. The integral parts of the poem move from pessimism to optimism ending with the wise sayings of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad*.

Analyzing the place names of the sub-titles of *Four Quartets*, Hart clarifies that the *Quartets* is a cycle of four poems. They have "religious and philosophical meditations, a musical structure implied by their title." They are long lyrics with place names as titles: "Burnt Norton" is "the site of an English country house"; "East Coker" is "the English village that was the Eliot family's ancestral home"; "The Dry Salvages" is a group of rocks off Cape Ann, Massachusetts"; and "Little Gidding" is "the British site of a 17th-century Anglican community" (140). This illustration clarifies that the four parts of *Four Quartets* are historical place names scattered in different parts of Britain and America. Eliot was in these places and was, therefore, familiar with them.

Revealing the dominant themes of the poem, Hart further clarifies that *Four Quartets* is about "time present, time past, time future, timelessness, identity, memory, consciousness, and place" (140). And "he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature [especially for his *Four Quartets*] and the OM (Drabble 322). *Four Quartets*

is the most outstanding work of an idealistic tendency. Eliot deals with the ideal concepts related to the spiritual and philosophical areas in this poem. The “OM,” a concept of idealism, means Brahma or the Essence in the Upani ad.

Examining the concept of the circular time of Hindu philosophy, Wendy Doniger elaborates that the concept of circular time is unlike that of Greece, which is a linear concept of time. Time in Hindu philosophy is not only linear but cyclical as well. The principles of the dissolution and recreation of the cosmos, and the recurring death and rebirth (reincarnation) of the individual soul are the principles of circular cosmic time of Hindu philosophy. The concept of the circular time is found in Eliot’s “The ending precedes the beginning, but the end and the beginning were always there from the start, before the beginning and after the end” (58). However, time is linear if it does not begin again after it ends. For example, if an individual gets liberation, time for that person is linear. If the individual is born again, time is circular for that person. Furthermore, Doniger exposes that the Western philosophy has no concept of the circular concept of time.

Indicating the influence of Buddhist and Hindu philosophies in Eliot’s writings, Sri, in his article “Upani adic Perceptions,” remarks that Eliot refers to the Buddha's Fire Sermon in the third section of *The Waste Land* and presents the common renunciation theme of the Buddha and St. Augustine together in the poem. Eliot alludes to the lotus, a symbol of the ultimate reality in Hindu-Buddhist thought in “Burnt Norton.” He presents a typical example of the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the third poem of “The Dry Salvages”; at the climax, he even includes an almost literal translation of a passage (8.5)<sup>3</sup> from the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Such direct references cannot be regarded as mere “window-dressing” or dismissed as sheer exoticism because of the context in which they occur; they must be understood as indispensable

parts of an organic whole (34). These examples of direct references are the proofs of Eliot's attachment to the Eastern philosophy represented largely by Hindu and Buddhist thoughts. More than others, the teachings of *Bhagavad-Gītā* seem to have overwhelmed his texts.

Contemplating on the Vedantic influence in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Sri, in his article "Upaniadic Perceptions," notes that Tiresias witnesses, like the Lama in *Kim*, the sufferings of his fellow beings bound on the Wheel and is sensitive to the sufferings of those who inhabit the unreal cities of the world characterized by appearance or *Māyā* (36-37). The concept of appearance or *Māyā* is a subject matter of Śaṅkarācārya's principle of *vivarta vāda* that the world is false, just a reflection of the Ultimate Essence. This principle is influenced by the *neti neti* (not this, not this) principle of the Upaniṣad.

In 1943, Eliot collected *Four Quartets*, poetic considerations of time and place, memory, and consciousness (Hart 121). Regarding this, Terry L. Fairchild remarks that *Four Quartets* is the greatest philosophical poem of this century, more important than his earlier epic *The Waste Land*. Time, eternity, and immortality are the subject matters of *Four Quartets*. The poem "considers the relationship between life in time, a life of bondage and suffering, and life in eternity, freedom, and happiness" (Abstract 51). In fact, the subject matter of *Four Quartets* is not colored by suffering, pessimism, sexual insatiety and frustration of *The Waste Land*. The material aspects of this life depicted in *The Waste Land* are replaced by the spiritual aspects of yonder life in *Four Quartets*.

Critiquing from the Christian viewpoint, Grover Smith argues that the first *Quartet*, "Burnt Norton," presents God the Father, as the unmoved Mover; the second *Quartet*, "East Coker," presents God the Son as Redeemer; the third *Quartet*, "The

Dry Salvages," presents the Virgin as Intercessor; and the fourth *Quartet*, " Little Gidding," presents God the Holy Ghost as the voice and power of Love (253). The four allusions to the Bible make *Four Quartets* a praiseworthy Christian poem. The four biblical allusions contribute to make the poem an organic whole praising the glory of God.

Eliot presents time as both changing and changeless. The concept of "time" may have several philosophical meanings. Eliot tries to attain the changeless time, termed as Time, Eternity, or Immortality, in the process of his quest for Eternity. "Thus, the central theme of *Four Quartets*," is "the union of the flux of time with the stillness of eternity" (G. Smith 253). Here, Eliot reveals two important types of time—temporary time and permanent time. The temporary time is related to materiality whereas the permanent, endless time (eternity) is related to spirituality. But in reality, both kinds of time are two different manifestations of the same Brahma. From a higher level of wisdom, there is no difference between them.

Sonia Chumber deduces from her analysis that Eliot's "The Fire Sermon" is largely inspired by his tragic first marriage to Vivienne Haigh-Wood. "Inspired by his own misfortunes in marriage, Eliot explores the themes of life, death, indulgence, sex and so on and asks the reader to explore these themes with him" to make his poem a true cosmopolitan significant piece of the literary world (83, 87). In Eliot's poem, the clerk, and the typist, who love each other, represent Eliot and his first wife. The love stories of both fiction and reality are frustrating.

Interpreting the meaning of "the Wheel" and "peace" in Eliot's writings, Chumber clarifies that the concept of the Wheel is one of the main images recurring in Eliot's poems and plays. His characters are trapped by the Wheel, a symbol of life and death as recognized in both Hinduism and Buddhism. The Wheel is a symbol of



time and worldly actions. The goal of life is to attain peace as indicated in the final line of *The Waste Land*. "Peace is not accepting death. It is in knowing that life and death are transient; the eternal self can never die . . . all people suffer, but their suffering can end" (96). The concept of the Wheel is dominant in Eliot's *The Waste Land*. And peace follows after gaining the spiritual knowledge that body dies but not the Self. This knowledge makes one free from the Wheel (*bhava-samsara*).

Chumbar further remarks that Eliot is ahead of his time because till today "it seems no one has been able to craft such a complex and beautiful poem [*The Waste Land*]. In the poem, Eliot "seems to convey the message of harmony as implied by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-Gītā* (6.7): "When . . . [the] soul is in peace . . . [one] is in peace, and then his soul is in God. In cold or in heat, in pleasure or pain, in glory or disgrace, he is ever with Him" (97).<sup>4</sup> This analysis clearly shows that Eliot's *The Waste Land* is influenced by the message of *Bhagavad-Gītā*. *Bhagavad-Gītā* persuades us to remain calm, composed and in harmony even at odd times.

Exploring the fundamental concepts of time, Siew-Yue Killingley underlines that Eliot's poetry displays two manifestations of Time as dynamic in the phenomenal world and as static in a timeless eternal world. The first type of time in flux—impermanence in change—is symbolized by a turning Wheel such as in *Four Quartets* and *Murder in the Cathedral* or by allusion to winding as in *Murder in the Cathedral* (1.191). The second type of Time in eternity is represented by the still point such as in *Four Quartets* and in *Murder in the Cathedral*. The point which is at the center of the moving Wheel is the still point, a fixed point of quiet and nothingness as well as wholeness. *Māyā* (power of God) takes effect in the form of the cyclic time, causing death and birth. There are some meeting points between Eastern mysticism and Christian philosophy in Eliot's works. For example, there is a parallel idea

"between the Hindu doctrine of *Māyā* and the theory of appearance and reality held by Bradley, whose ideas Eliot studied for a doctorate in philosophy at Harvard" (68). Here, Killingley clearly notices two dimensions of Time around which Eliot's work move. The main concern of the poet seems to be how to be free from the transitory time of the world and how to attain the Eternal Time.

Debunking those critics who evaluate that Eliot's writings are exotic, romantic, or idealistic, A. David Moody acknowledges that Eliot's use of the Upaniṣads and *Bhagavad-Gītā* in his poetry is neither Westernized nor eroticized:

In Eliot's poetry the Upaniṣads, and the *Gītā* especially, are not Westernized—their function in the poetry is precisely to represent a non-Western and wholly other tradition. Nor to my sense are they eroticized, attended to simply for their strangeness and curiosity-value. For they introduce into Eliot's 'European' poetry a primitive wisdom which he found still valid, though superseded, for him, by the Christian revelation. He turned to it, in *The Waste Land* and *The Dry Salvages*, as a way of reapproaching and rediscovering the basis of a Christian vision in a secularized Western society. (19)

Here, Moody suggests that Christianity has lost its value because of the secularism of the Western society. The lost values could be strengthened by applying the spiritual principles of "the Upaniṣads" and "*Gītā*" as the fundamental principles of the Christian philosophy.

Narsingh Srivastava remarks that desires ensnare us in the changing reality, but spiritual love redeems us from it. In Eliot's own opinion, detachment is "not less of love but expanding / Of love beyond desire, and so liberation / From the future as well as the past" ("Little Gidding" 142). In fact, "Eliot is concerned with the search of a unified vision of reality as much as he aims at a synthesis of culture and thought,

and his remarkable synthesis imparts to *Four Quartets* an unparalleled universality of vision" (80). In fact, the Reality cannot be two; the Reality is only one, though it has different names and forms. Eliot tries to present this non-dual (not two) principle of the Reality in his *Four Quartets*. According to the non-dual principle, everything is nothing but Brahma, the Ultimate Reality of the universe.

Brooding over the cause of human suffering, N. Eakambaram posits that in Hinduism both physical and mental actions are responsible for the movement of the suffering on the Wheel of life and death. As far as one works selfishly for one's glory and others' shame, one suffers not only in this life with experiences of "pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat" but also in the life to come in an endless cycle of *karma* (178). For example, in Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* characters move around the Wheel image and undergo the dualities of life such as pain and pleasure. In fact, freedom from the dualities ensues not from the consumption of the world but from its renunciation.

Arundhati Bhuyan mentions that there is a direct echo of *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad* in Eliot's "What the Thunder Said" in *The Waste Land*. He uses seven Sanskrit words in it: Gang , Himavanta, and five others from *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad* such as Da, Datta, Dayadhvam, D myata and Sh nti . If he had translated them, they would have lost their scriptural identity and the air of specific origin of a great tradition. *The Waste Land* is Eliot's masterpiece of his first phase, which explicitly "shows the impact of Buddhism and Hindu Upani adic myths" (387). Really, *The Waste Land* is Eliot's synthesis of Buddhist and Hindu ideas. In the beginning of the poem, the Buddhist elements are dominant. And later on, the Hindu precepts lead the concluding section of the poem.

G. Nageswara Rao notices three meanings associated with “Gang ”—a divine consort of Shiva, a holy river and sacred water. “Himavanta” is the source of Gang . In this context, the Hindu mythology informs that Himavanta is the abode of the divine couple iva and P rvati. The word Himavanta is also used as the name of the father of P rvati, the Divine Mother (533). This illustration suggests Eliot’s fascination with the Sanskrit words of Hindu mythology. The Hindu mythology is at the heart of his poem, *The Waste Land*.

Commenting on the nature of Eliot’s writings, Harold E. McCarthy clarifies that Eliot’s poems and plays move around the universal theme of human bondage and the possibility of human freedom, which is a common theme in both East and West. The problem of man is how to be free from the bondage of the Wheel for eternity. Eliot suggests through his writings that the possible solution to this human problem can be sought “in Spinoza’s Ethics and in Buddha’s ‘Fire Sermon,’ in the writings of St. Augustine and in the *Bhagavad-G t* , in the ‘Sermon on the Mount’ and in the *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad*. . . . In the end, of course, it is the vision that counts and what one does about the vision” (54-55). Here, McCarthy shows how Eliot’s writings are influenced by the multiple disciplines of philosophy ranging from Spinoza through Buddha to St. Augustine and to the Upani ad. They all indicate that setting the spiritual goal and doing according to that goal is important in the process of searching for the Essence.

G. Atkins remarks that Eliot’s plays and poems reveal “the vanity of human wishes” (1). Similarly, Grover Smith remarks, “The themes of dejection in solitude and grief for the unattainability of an ideal are common to Eliot’s early work” (25). Eliot’s poem *The Waste Land* and his plays *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* are the examples of human follies trying to hold the fleeting and unattainable

desires of life. When desires are not fulfilled, it leads to the mood of dejection and rejection.

Tracing out the cause of man's suffering, Prajna Pani comments that Eliot is occupied by "man's existential crisis—his confusion and despair over his existence." Eliot hopes that his philosophical and existential insight could solve the despair and hopelessness of modern era. Liberation of mankind starts with a total knowledge of man by himself (301). This comment highlights one's inability to understand his own spiritual nature. Once one knows about oneself, the crisis of human despair ends.

Jack Hebner explores that Eliot takes inspiration from "Dante, Shakespeare, the Bible, St. John of the Cross and other Christian mystics, the Greek dramatists, Baudelaire, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*." This influence is clearly noticeable in his *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, *Ash Wednesday*, and *Murder in the Cathedral* (82). In fact, Eliot's texts are full of allusions and references to the wise sayings of different writers belonging to the different parts of the globe. The assimilation of different writers' inspirational ideas establishes his texts as landmarks of modernity having both modern literary technique and content.

Showing the influence of the Hindu philosophy in Eliot's texts, Steven Rosen informs that when Eliot was a twenty-three-year-old student at Harvard, he first came across Eastern philosophy and religion. It is not known what kindled his interest in Vedic thought, but it is known that he started studying Sanskrit, Pali, and the metaphysics of Pāṇinī. He read *Bhagavad-Gītā*, and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. "But it is the *Gītā* that evidently made a more permanent imprint on Eliot's mind" (152) and on his works such as *The Waste Land*, *The Four Quartets*, and *The Family Reunion*. The message of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is tolerance, which is reflected in his use of imagery drawn from several religions. Also, his "message is the message of the

essential utility of all activity," preached by the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Eliot follows Emerson, Thoreau, and the early Transcendentalists, who were impressed by the Hindu philosophy, especially the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (153). Here, Rosen highlights the influence of *Bhagavad-Gītā* more than other scriptures in shaping Eliot's ideas for his texts. Also, the Transcendentalist American poets become a source of inspiration for Eliot's spiritual creativity.

Kristian Smidt suggests that Eliot's works should not be viewed only from the side of either the Western or the Eastern mysticism. Actually, his works are the confluence of two thoughts—the Western and the Eastern. Nevertheless, it is not always easy to draw differences between the Eastern and Western mysticism. The two currents of the Eastern and Western thoughts are found in the New Testament (142). Though Smidt mentions the influence of the Eastern philosophy on Eliot, he seems to give a secondary importance to the influence of the Eastern philosophy in Eliot's poetry in his discussion on "Oriental Mysticism" in his *Poetry and Belief in the Work of T. S. Eliot*.

Showing connection between Eliot's writings with the Eastern religion and mysticism, Smidt evaluates that in Eliot's poem *The Waste Land*, we find the Buddha, who is equal to St. Augustine, a representative of Western asceticism. In "Burnt Norton," we find a lotus which is floating on the water of the empty pool. Its meaning may be phallic (referring to the *linga* [Linga], Brahma, God, pure consciousness, or masculine principle—the fabric of existence), but it has Buddhist connotations. In "The Dry Salvages," Time is presented as a preserver and a destroyer whose role is played by *Vishnu* and *Isha* respectively in the Hindu religion. Its third section has quotations from Lord Krishna's admonitions to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (142). Here, Smidt shows the interconnection between Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu

mysticism. For Christians, time is simply a time, but for Hindus, time is Time, the representation of the Essence Itself.

Huston Smith expresses that our spiritual life has a destination that is to reach God, who is *Sat-Cit- nanda* (Real, Consciousness, and Bliss). This point is found in Eliot's writings such as in "East Coker," where Eliot acknowledges, "Our end is in our beginning" (Foreword xviii). Our beginning is our Essence from which we are emanated. The Essence is beginningless and endless.

It is Deussen's Upaniadic thought, which brings to Eliot's attention certain impressive passages in the Upaniads and a kārikā's work by introducing him to the principal concepts of Vedānta, primarily the esoteric and exoteric paths to truth, each with its own realm, laws, and validity (Kearns 45). Eliot's *The Waste Land* is a clear example of the amalgamation of the ideas of *Bṛhad āraṇyaka Upaniśad* and a kārikā.

Cleo McNelly Kearns gives more information on what Eliot learnt from the Upaniads. She judges that the Upaniads helped him understand his theism and philosophical rigor with a deeper comprehension. He takes from the Upaniads certain clues for the practice of meditation, an elaborate stock of imagery and literary trope, a refinement of that sense of the role of sound breath, and silence as verbal formulas as in "Shānti, Shānti, Shānti." The Upaniadic tropes that influenced him are "the classic figures of light and dark, the lotus, the lightning bolt, the ocean of life, and the boat of salvation to the paradoxical assertions of identity in oppositions—old man and boy, maiden and youth, night and Day, fire and fat, knife and wound" (36-37). Eliot seems to be oscillating between two opposite values. Most of them are from the Upaniśad.

Eliot's interest is on such concepts as "between states" after death, states in which the disembodied soul comes to understand the laws of good and evil that governed its time on earth, the dual (both empirical and transcendental) nature of the self, and the need for withdrawal from sensual life to realize oneness with Brahma. An "in-between" state is an intermediate zone in which the soul is bound "either to wake to full freedom and immortality or to be reborn in some form" according to its good and bad actions (Kearns 36, 37, 39). The "in-between" state is the state just after death and before another birth. This is the state when the soul gets a chance to review his past activities on the basis of which he gets another life. This concept is found in *Bṛihad ranyaka* (4.3.8-9), *vet vātara* (5.11-12), and *Mu āka* (1.2.7, 1.2.9-10) Upani ads.

Eliot's concern is to draw from sensual life to realize the oneness with Brahma in his writings. This concern is analogous to the Christian and Antique Classical tradition of "contemptus mundi" (contempt of the world and worldly concerns) for attaining God (Kearns 42). The concept of "contemptus mundi" is concerned with the path of knowledge. The mainstream Christian tradition is orthodox. It does not approve the mystical path of the knowledge of a minority of saints belonging to the Christian tradition.

Matthew Joseph Fairman unravels the possible cause of Eliot's studying the Indic texts as a reaction to his dissatisfaction with the courses of philosophy without religion offered by the department of Philosophy. He never quite finds most desired answers in his typical philosophy classes, and as a result, he starts to depend more heavily on religion. He craves to learn wisdom, insight, revelation. Hence, he starts to study important Eastern philosophical portions such as Upani ads and *Bhagavad-Gītā* to satisfy his craving (16, 19). The Western philosophy tries to enquire into the



mysteries of nature for physical or worldly rise giving importance to the materialistic, waking world just for the sake of knowledge, but the Eastern philosophy tries to enquire into nature, human beings, and the Essence to end the human suffering permanently for eternal bliss and liberation. For the Eastern philosophy, the attainment of the physical and worldly rise is a simple goal but the attainment of liberation is the supreme goal.

Jeffrey M. Perl and Andrew P. Tuck go into depth to find out the cause of Eliot's dissatisfaction with the Western philosophy. Eliot calls into question the validity of the Western philosophy and its methodology, its results and even its assumptions, which make inquiry possible in philosophy. Eliot objects to the Western Philosophy's distinction between appearance and reality. He writes his PhD thesis on Francis Herbert Bradley's philosophical book *Appearance and Reality*, which discusses many important aspects of Bradley's Absolute Idealism (116). From the viewpoint of a kar c rya's principle of *M y v d*, there is difference between appearance and the Reality. Accordingly, the world is just an appearance of the Reality. From the viewpoint of the Upani ad, there is no difference between appearance and the Reality. Even appearance is also the Reality.

Eliot studies the *Mah -V gga*, a central text of early Buddhism. The text is a basis of Eliot's "The Fire Sermon" in *The Waste Land*. The concept of Fire is a trope used throughout the Upani ads, the Vedas, and in *Bhagavad-G t* , but it has a particular importance to the Buddhist tradition—which refers both to the pain of worldly experience and to the process of purification by which that pain can be overcome. The concepts of Hinduism and Buddhism modify Eliot's early belief in Christianity, but finally he does not come back to Indic (Eastern or Indian) studies because of the sophisticated problems in both—Western and Eastern philosophy

(Kearns 75). Here, Kearns claims that Eliot adopts the Hindu and Buddhist ideas and incorporates them into his earlier texts along with his Christian belief system. But I find the Hindu and Buddhist ideas present to some extent in his later texts as well.

Perl and Tuck explore the influence of M dhyamika Sh nya V da of N g rjuna over Eliot's mind. For N g rjuna, M dhyamika is the middle way. M dhyamika tries to find a path between the rejection of existence and the hypothetical ultimate existence which goes beyond daily reality. In his philosophical essays, Eliot self-consciously chooses the middle way ("So here I am, in the middle way") between the absolute and the relative in his poem "East Coker" (120). N g rjuna argues that there is no Essence or Brahma; everything is void; since there is no Essence, our existence does not depend upon the Essence; so, we should not reject our physical existence of our daily life to attain the hypothetical Essence that is practically not in existence.

Analyzing the Eastern religious behavior of people, Perl and Tuck argue that there is a high value of daily behavior, rituals, or duties in Asia (Nepal, India, China, and Japan). Even the philosophers follow them. Both Lord K a and Buddha give importance to *karma* (actions) or one's duty. The importance of *karma* (action) or duty is indicated in Eliot's "The Dry Salvages" in *Four Quartets* in which Lord K a admonishes Arjuna to "fare forward." Eliot finds unity in diversity in *Four Quartets*. Buddhist schools place a high value on daily behavior and ritual practice—on "prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action." Eliot likes the "'Oriental' notion of the relation between truth and history" than "the relatively crude Western constructs of progress and reaction, liberalism and conservatism" (126). This discussion indicates that the quest for truth is more important than the quest for material progress in Eliot's

works. To attain the truth, he emphasizes on *karma*, devotion, and knowledge as in the scriptures.

Contrary to Perl and Tuck's critical remarks as said earlier, Moody remarks that there is not much influence of Buddhism in Eliot's poetry other than that of Hindu philosophy. The word "lotos" used in Eliot's "Burnt Norton" does not have a Buddhist allusion. The "lotos" that rises quietly in "Burnt Norton" might be the lotus of the lotus ponds of a large Botanical Garden, of which his father was a Trustee in 1902-3. "A few years later after 1929, Eliot declares," I am not a Buddhist, but some of the early Buddhist scriptures affect me as part of the Old Testament do" (Moody 19-21). Eliot wrote *The Waste Land* in 1922. In the poem, Eliot seems to be a Buddhist. But the influences of Buddhist ideas often reappear in his later texts as well.

Moody comments that the Eastern asceticism in Eliot's "The Fire Sermon" is used as a subordinate to the explicit Christian asceticism" (23). Eliot's "The Dry Salvages" runs after the Upaniads quite closely before coming to a particularly Christian conception (26). Here, Moody comments with a Christian voice on the use of Eliot's Eastern philosophy in his writings. Therefore, his comments do not give a high place to the ideas of the Upaniads in Eliot's texts.

Differentiating between the dualism of the Western philosophy and the Non-dualism of the Eastern philosophy, Moody interprets that the Western philosophy supposes time to be both destroyer and preserver. But in *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the Lord Himself is Time, both destroyer and preserver. Eliot expresses this principal in "The Dry Salvages: "Time the destroyer is time the preserver" (26). For the non-dualist Hindus, destruction (death) and creation (life) are not two different processes but one—"a single alternating current of being." More remarkably, duality itself is the Supreme Being. Deliverance from *Samsara* (transmigration of the soul; the cycle of

birth, death, and rebirth; reincarnation) is possible when one exists in "full awareness of the total process" of duality and non-duality (27). Here, Moody suggests that Eliot's ideas are more influenced by the non-dual principle of the Eastern philosophy rather than the dual one of the Western one.

Duality claims that there are two different powers; one power creates and another power destroys whereas non-duality claims that it is the same power that creates, destroys, and unites again. The Christian thought is dualistic that believes that God is not within the body; it is beyond; it is transcendent; it is outside and above the earth; and the soul is separate from the body and that it (the Christian thought) excludes the Whole from the part, but the Hindu thought is particularly non-dualistic that believes that God is within the body of everyone and everything; He is immanent.

With a Christian tone, Moody comments that *Four Quartets*, especially "The Dry Salvages" is not a Hindu poem though there is the Hindu wisdom of *Bhagavad-Gītā* (28). But it seems to me that the tone of Hinduism is more dominant than that of Christianity in the poem due to the direct references to *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the indirect references to the Upaniṣads. Obviously, the elements of *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the Upaniṣads are found not only in "The Dry Salvages" but also in the other three parts of *Four Quartets*.

With a European mind, Moody examines the final section of Eliot's poem "The Dry Salvages," which has a direct reference to the philosophy of *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The poem is about incarnation, reincarnation, liberation, demonic and divine powers, and difficulty in realizing God (esotericism). "Those who act without attachment, conscious of the all-pervading Spirit, will be at one with the Supreme Spirit" (32). This is the philosophy of *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which is used by Eliot in his poem "The Dry Salvages."

Quashing the commonly held belief by the Indian critics that there is the predominant voice of the Eastern scriptures in Eliot's major works, Moody argues that Eliot has given priority to the Christian religion as it is expressed by Eliot's own words, "For us, religion is Christianity" (Moody 35). Obviously, Eliot is a Christian, but he does not hesitate to adopt the eternal values of the Eastern scriptures and philosophy in his works. Religion and philosophy are not exactly the same. Though Eliot does not follow the Hindu religion, he follows the Hindu philosophy at least in his works.

Interpreting the meaning and importance of "Incarnation" in Eliot's "The Dry Salvages," Moody reflects that deliverance happens not by going beyond the world but living within the world with "the altered state of mind." It is because everything or every process is the manifestation of God and "there is no other realm of being." This sort of revelation of knowledge is "Incarnation," which is "the impossible union" of separate and discontinuous realms of being in terms of Eliot in "The Dry Salvages." Incarnation is "the impossible union within our actual sphere of existence, rather than attempting the usual direct approach to the divine." (27-28, 32). In other words, incarnation is a union of divine and human natures. When the immortal knowledge dawns on an individual, the person becomes an "Incarnation." This idea is similar to that of the Upaniṣad that teaches that an individual can become Brahma or God with the non-dual knowledge of one's divine existence.

Contrary to Lyndall Gordon's labeling of Eliot's mystical writings as hallucinations (153), David Garrett Izzo traces the mystical vision of Eliot, influenced by his studies of Sanskrit and Pali for two years (1910-11) for a purpose to be able to read *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the Upaniṣads, and Buddhism as well in their original texts to gain their mystical vision. Besides, he studies the Western philosophy to quench his

thirst for the knowledge of mysticism (104). It shows that Eliot could read original Hindu scriptures and Buddhist text books written in original Sanskrit and Pali languages respectively. Reading the books in their original form renders the firsthand knowledge to the readers.

Showing the affinity between Eliot's plays and the Greek drama on the ground of their themes and structure, R. G. Tanner describes Eliot as a "staunch and resolute advocate of the Greek tradition in our modern literature." His five verse plays have affinity with the Greek tradition. His plays have their Greek models (1). His play *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* use choruses, which are the features of the Greek drama. Similarly, in his another play *The Family Reunion*, the Eumenides (avenging spirits, Greek deities of vengeance) appear as characters to make Harry, the protagonist, aware of his past sin so that he would regret it and atone for it.

From Shubha Tiwari and Maneesha Tiwari's viewpoint, Eliot's *The Family Reunion* presents the modern life in the framework of ritual. Greek and Christian rituals are hidden in the structure of the play. The scaffold of the drama is Christian ritual of sin and redemption. The fabric of its plot and designs is the Greek (pagan) myth of the *Oresteia*. The subject of the play is sin and expiation. It shows the absurdities of life and dramatizes the struggle of Harry (a penitent) going from the filthy world to the world of "the rose garden" of his soul's dream. On the one hand, Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* dramatizes the spiritual life of Thomas Becket (a Christian saint). On the other hand, *The Family Reunion* depicts the spiritual rebirth of Harry (an ordinary man), who is our representative (107-8). This description shows that Eliot's plays allude to the Greek content and form in some respect. Hence, his

plays could be understood better with the background knowledge of the Greek tradition.

Examining the disharmony between religion and politics, Naser Maleki and Majid Farahian disclose that Eliot in his play *Murder in the Cathedral* shows the danger of the political institutions without religion. Secular politics, if handled by power-mongering people, leads to disaster. So, politics should be guided by religious people and their religious institutions (39). In the play, the purpose of Eliot is to defend the religion and Church. The power-mongering people are also money-hungry; they could do anything bad against the perennial assumptions of religion to protect their politics in secular societies.

Commenting on the theme of the play *Murder in the Cathedral*, Ramji Lallargues that the play is written “as a protest against totalitarianism” by Eliot. (24). “The whole clash has been between two orders, one spiritual, and the other temporal” (194). On one hand the state wants to keep the church under its control, on the other hand, the church wants to keep the state under its control. This struggle compels Thomas Becket to become a saint. Regarding this, Lal adds that “*Murder in the Cathedral* is a record of Thomas Becket’s struggle to sainthood . . . . The struggle within Becket is concentrated and given visible shape in his talks with the Four Tempters. This kind of personification was common feature of the morality plays of the medieval ages” (194). In fact, the individual who can defeat others but cannot control oneself cannot be called a real winner or a saint. Though Becket could not defeat the King, he could defeat the urges of his body and mind, and the Four Tempters’ temptations. Therefore, he is honored as a martyr saint.

Similarly, *Murder in the Cathedral* has the features of the Greek drama, which reminds us of the conception of Fate and the presence of the Chorus. The Greek

drama gives little emphasis on individual character. From the Chorus Tempters, we learn about Archbishop Thomas Becket's earlier life and of his previous conflict with the evils outside and inside him (Lall 195-97) and his struggle to achieve self-purification. Thus, it is known that there is a great influence of the morality plays and the Greek drama in Eliot's play *Murder in the Cathedral*. In the play, the Four Tempters, the Three Knights and the Chorus, the women of Canterbury, have no names. The Archbishop depends upon the will of God, the unseen force just as characters depend upon the Fate, the unseen force of life in morality plays.

Associating Eliot's play *The Family Reunion* with the Greek and Shakespeare's drama, Lall comments that in *The Family Reunion*, there are "dead shadows and living puppets" (24). The dead shadows are the ghost of Harry's dead wife. The living puppets are the family members who are controlled by Amy, Harry's mother, at Wishwood. Harry's mind is disturbed due to his wife's death. Harry's "ironic wit, his torments, the nature of his relations with his mother are reminiscent not only of Orestes, but of Hamlet. There is no way in which Harry can communicate the nature of his inner suffering or even recognize it, and Eliot noted this as a characteristic of Hamlet" (25).

In the above discussion alluded to Greek mythology, Orestes kills his mother and is haunted by the Furies. Likewise, in *Family Reunion*, Harry's malice towards his wife kills her and is haunted by the Eumenides. As Hamlet finds it difficult to express his feelings of pain after his father's death and becomes indecisive as to how to take revenge against his murderous uncle, Harry finds it difficult to express his feelings of guilt after his wife's death and becomes indecisive for some time as to how to atone his sin. Harry's decision to remain separate from his mother by going on a pilgrimage is an unseen revenge against his mother, who was the silent cause behind



his father's death thirty-five years ago. Thus, the influence of the Greek drama *Oresteia* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is found in Eliot's *The Family Reunion*.

Discussing the themes of Eliot's two plays, Hart remarks that in his first verse drama known as a morality play *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935), Eliot portrays the assassination of Thomas Becket by affirming the value of the Church as a medium for social action. In his next verse play *The Family Reunion* (1939), he presents the theme of sin and expiation (121). This portrayal, on the one hand, shows the importance of the Church for society as displayed in the dramatization of Becket's struggle to preserve the values of the Church through his martyrdom, and, on the other hand, shows the hero Harry's mental problem of his guilt of murder and his desire to atone the sin as well. Sin and expiation are the common subject matters of Christianity that are discussed in Eliot's play.

Commenting on Buddhist theme of *The Murder in the Cathedral*, A. N. Dwivedi argues that the play was written to the needs of the Catholic Church. In the play, Eliot used the "characteristically Christian phraseology and paraphernalia to articulate his deep feelings of the universal necessity for spiritual regeneration" (178). The Buddhist teaching of renunciation is clearly seen in the conflicting play. Becket, the protagonist, abandons his desire for self-glory and self-security. "In his Christian guise, he verily lives through the Buddhist concept of renunciation" by rejecting temptations. "Becket thinks that both the means and the end must be equally pure . . . Like a Buddhist, he does not want to commit suicide." He faces his murder calmly. As Dwivedi further argues, Becket attains "the Void ( *nyā*) as explained in the *Mahāyāna* texts." The Void is similar to *neti neti*, negative way of describing Brahma in the Upaniads (179). Thus, Dwivedi interprets the play particularly from the Buddhist belief in which attaining *Nirvāṇa*, liberation, means attaining the state of

nothingness resulted from the selfless and unattached desires and passions for the world.

Commenting on *The Family Reunion* from the vision of *Advaita Vedanta*, Dwivedi holds that in the play, Harry gives importance to purity of mind than to purity of body to attain the Essence, similar to “the Void” of Buddhism. He further holds that Harry’s perception of reality is different from its normal sense. Harry illumines his doctor Warburton that “nothing can happen” to “real” and nothing can happen to “not real” either (179). This means that there is no scarcity of the reality and no presence of the unreality. It is not necessary that those things which are seen must be real. “To be real,” it must be free from “any contradictions” (*ab dhita*). Moreover, the “real is simply to be felt intuitively, not to be perceived by the senses” (180). Thus, in the play, “the playwright treats of the problem of real existence” (181).

The above discussion explains the nature of reality and unreality. The meaning of reality that we use in our normal sense is different from the Upaniadic sense. What our five senses perceive and suppose to be real may not be real in the realm of spirituality that is largely an area of the unseen or hidden part of the Self or the Essence.

Terry Eagleton considers Eliot to be an elite in his literary practice. Eliot’s writings are mostly for high class people. “The historical marginality and spiritual centrality of *Scrutiny* resolve themselves in single category: elitism” (Eagleton 14). Eliot’s *The Waste Land* raises modern problems, but they are hindered by the peculiar result of its mythological forms (86). Eagleton suggests that Eliot’s esoteric writings could be understood mostly by the elite class that are educated and have a taste for literature. The ordinary people cannot easily understand Eliot’s writings that are full

of different scriptural, biblical, mythical, classical, and Upaniadic allusions and ideas of different writers or books.

Eagleton critically remarks that like Pound, Joyce, Lawrence and Yeats, Eliot is "tangentially" concerned with the hegemonic bourgeois ideology of his time. He uses certain mythologies at his disposal (179). Like for Hardy, Joyce, and Lawrence, for Eliot also the aesthetic problem is how to express his ideology through his text in his social condition (181). Eagleton discloses the secret purpose of Eliot's writings that are meant for the promotion of the capitalist people that try to dominate the proletarians through their elitist culture and literature.

Eagleton further comments that Eliot had dominance in his society and intellectual circle. He was the center of "the organic consciousness of the European mind" (145). He comes to London from America with his historical mission to redefine "the organic unity of Europe's cultural traditions" (146). He subordinates personality to order, reason, authority, and tradition in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (146). That essay later guides his succeeding writings. They try to seek and establish harmony and unity in disparity prevailing in the European intellectual circle.

Further commenting on Eliot and his writings, Eagleton judges that Eliot is scholarly esoteric holding to the radical anti-intellectual view. The form and content of *The Waste Land* are in contradiction. Its fragmentary content is a listless imitation of "the experience of cultural disintegration," but "its totalizing mythological forms" go beyond the disintegration (147-48). *The Waste Land* creates "an ideology," which is itself a product of another ideology. Its ideology is concerned with "cultural knowledge" (148-49). *The Waste Land* is a product of elitism. Elitists' new experiments with like-minded literary figures suit the conservative values of a ruling

minority. This type of elitist experiment makes Eliot to become a royalist Anglican conservative. His *Four Quartets* gives a spiritual totality, which goes beyond futile phenomenal world, but his later drama counterpoints this metaphysics (150-51). Eliot seems to be promoting a high culture of class superiority. And the phenomenal ideas of his later plays *The Elder Statesman* and *The Confidential Clerk* go against the noumenal ideas of his earlier works.

Pankaj K. Singh critiques that there is a sexist bias in Eliot's poetry. Eliot is a misogynist. The attitude, behavior, and relationship of men towards women in his poems are not positive. "There is an unfortunate but unmistakable sexist dichotomy between the male and the female figures in his poetry" (71). *The Waste Land* unravels the theme of emotional sterility and nihilism. Men's voices are distinguished from women's as being worthless, "un-self-aware kind." Eliot ignores the social questions in "A Game of Chess," and "The Fire Sermon" in *The Waste Land* (71-72). In "A Game of Chess," the women are raped as in the Greek story of Philomel. In "The Fire Sermon," the lover exploits his beloved to satisfy his wild sexual desire but ignores her feelings. Very interestingly, Eliot had no children either from his two wives. It probably shows his physical infertility or sterility, which is exhibited in *The Waste Land* in which male and female lovers are not successful to maintain a satisfactory physical relationship. Eliot's plays, too, are not free from sexist bias. In his *The Family Reunion*, *The Cocktail Party* and *The Confidential Clerk*, women are subordinated to the male voice, desire, and decision.

Revealing the shared concepts of both the Eastern and the Western philosophies in Eliot's writings, McCarthy underscores our human problems in Eliot's narratives:

The general problem which determines the deeper design of Eliot's poetical reflections—the problem of man's relationship to both time and eternity within the context of the fact of human bondage and the possibility of human freedom—is absolutely universal and has been given expression in the philosophical and religious traditions of both the East and the West. (54-55)

Ephemerality and immortality, and bondage and liberation are universal themes in the literature both in the East and the West. The deeper design of human misery and bondage is universal. These concerns are common in Eliot's writings.

Pointing out the influence of the Hindu philosophy on Eliot, Harry Oldmeadow remarks, "Eliot himself explicitly acknowledged his poetic debt to 'Indian thought and sensibility'" (30). Eliot's works, especially poetry and drama, resonate with the recurring motifs and allusions from the Eastern philosophy. Though critics have doubted about the effectiveness and precise meaning of Eliot's use of the Eastern imagery and scriptural references, there is little doubt that they contribute significantly to his sharply distinctive method and poetic vision (30). Eliot's poems such as *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets* and the plays such as *Murder in the Cathedral* and *Family Reunion* are really unforgettable because they carry the universal themes of the Upaniṣad on life, death, rebirth, bondage, the Essence, and liberation.

In a nutshell, the critical opinions of the authors on the Upaniṣads reveal that the Upaniṣads are sacred Hindu texts that reveal the Ultimate Essence and whose knowledge leads to spiritual liberation. Likewise, the basic terms of the Upaniṣad help us know about the essence of the Upaniṣad to some extent. There are various scholars and critics who have interpreted Eliot's primary texts from the insights of *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the Upaniṣad, Buddhism, Christianity, humanity, morality, myth, biography,

existentialism, feminism, and Marxism. But to the best of my knowledge, this researcher has not found so far anyone who has studied Eliot's four primary texts by applying the Upaniadic insights with special focus on non-duality in depth. Therefore, this researcher's departing point (the starting point) in this dissertation is to use the non-dual vision of the Upaniṣad wherever possible while analyzing Eliot's selected texts.

After having established the research territory in this chapter, this study attempts to step onto the uniquely combined territory with three symbols: *karma* and rebirth represented by the symbol of “the Wheel” in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and *Murder in the Cathedral*, the quest for the Essence represented by the symbol of “water” in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*, and the quest for Ātmā and Brahma and their oneness represented by the symbol of “the still point” in Eliot's *Four Quartets*.

## Chapter Three

### The Symbolic Meaning of “the Wheel” in Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*

This chapter explores the symbolic meaning of “the Wheel” in Eliot’s poems and plays and shows how *karma* and rebirth and their function are represented by the symbol of “the Wheel.” He employs the terms "the cycle," "the chain," and "a ring" including “the Wheel” to represent the eternal process of circular cosmic time (birth and death, creation and dissolution of the material existence, change of the seasons). Similarly, these terms represent bondage, suffering, transitoriness of the human life, and impermanence of the world. *vet vatara Upani ad* describes “the Wheel” as *Brahmacakra*—the Wheel of life and the world created by Brahma—(1.4, 1.6, 6.1) which is moved by Brahma as per the *karma* of human beings.

Eliot's two poems *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, and two plays *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* present the theory of *karma* and rebirth. The theory is expounded in light of the Upaniadic vision in this chapter.

An individual’s *karma* (actions and thoughts) determines the person’s rebirth and results. This is called the *karmic* theory or the law of *karma*. The laws of *karma* and nature are Brahma’s or God’s laws that govern how the universe works. Brahma’s infinite intelligence is the basis for these laws. Regarding the *karmic* theory, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* theorizes that we become as per our deeds and habits; we become good by good works and bad by bad works; as our desire is, so becomes our determination; as our determination is, so becomes our *karma*; and we get results as per our *karma* (4.4.5). Obviously, our thoughts influence our words; our words influence our actions; our actions influence our habits; our habits influence our characters; and our characters influence our destiny. So, we must watch our thoughts,

words, actions, habits, and characters because we get results as per our *karma*. In *The Waste Land*, Eliot uses the word "the Wheel" (38, 47), "in a ring" (39) and "ringed by" (48) to suggest the role of *karma* in one's life, which brings about good and bad consequences, and birth and death as per one's *karma* and worldly desires.

Life is mortal and the worldly glories are meaningless. *Katha Upaniśad* reminds us of the mortality of human life and futility of the worldly glories and pleasures (1.1.6, 1.1.26-28). "The Wheel" in "Death by Water" shows how Phlebas, a sea-trader, once proud of his youth, dies by drowning into the sea of the world and becomes destined to be reborn as per his *karma* without realizing the Essence of life: "O you who turn the Wheel [circumstance of life] and look to windward, / Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you" (47). Here, Eliot asks us to consider Phlebas and reflect seriously on our own mortality. This reflection on the mortality of life through death imagery continues in "He who was living is now dead / We who were living are now dying / with a little patience ("Thunder Said" 47). This suggests that death is inevitable, but it should be meaningful. If we spend our life to quest for the Essence with "patience," life and death become meaningful. Otherwise, we have to move around "the Wheel" of life and death as "Phlebas" did. Thus, we can transcend physical death only through spiritual transformation.

Like Phlebas, the empirical selves (*jīvaātmas*) of all passionate and worldly characters—the Phoenician Sailor, Belladonna, the man with three staves (the Fisher King), and the one-eyed merchant who has lost his spiritual eye—are bound to "the Wheel" in Eliot's "Burial of the Dead" (38). Madame Sosostris warns them "to fear death by water" because she sees "crowds of people, walking round in a ring (Wheel) while interpreting the Tarot cards (39). Eliot uses "a ring" to suggest the cyclical process of birth, copulation, and death. Besides, the ring suggests that the world is in



the selfish pursuit of pleasure, comfort, and excitement, which is the cause of moving on the cycle of life and death.

Similarly, human misery is an outcome of *karma*. The theory of *karma* in *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* explains why one gets good or bad results (3.2.13, 4.4.5). Indicating the human misery as the outcome of *karma*, the pilgrim (Tiresias) in "What the Thunder Said" describes the suffering figures thus:

What is that sound high in the air  
Murmur of maternal lamentation  
Who are those hooded hordes swarming  
Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth  
Ringed by the flat horizon only. . . . (48).

Mothers and others are in search of water on the way to the chapel. They are "ringed by" endless troubles, emptiness, and spiritual dryness. The pilgrim, as a conscious observer (*Upani adicDra t* or the Seer who observes events but is not affected by them), portrays the sufferings of his fellow beings bound on the Wheel.

Reality is not what we see. What we see (the apparent, substantial thing) is unreal (*mithy* ). What we do not see (the incorporeal, insubstantial thing) is real. Regarding this reality and unreality, *C ndogya Upani ad* asserts that truth is covered with untruth (8.3.1) or with a golden disc of *M y* —ignorance ( *v sya* 15). The pilgrim in "What the Thunder Said" is attentive to the role of *karma* in the sufferings of the modern people living in the famous but unreal and waste capital cities of the world:

What is the city over the mountains  
Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air  
Falling towers

Jerusalem Athens Alexandria

Vienna London

Unreal. (Eliot 48)

Cities are destroyed, rebuilt, and destroyed in a cycle, suggesting the cyclical downfall of cultures. Jerusalem, Athens, Alexandria, Vienna, and London are the capital cities of Israel, Greece, Egypt, Austria, and Britain respectively. The inhabitants of these powerful cities are all suffering from the lack of water, spiritual dryness as a result of the World War I (1914-18). Before the power of *karma*, even the mightiest are powerless. Thus, the word “unreal” suggests a sense of foolishness and meaninglessness of human effort to wage war against each in order to establish imperialism or supremacy due to ignorance. Moreover, the word “unreal” suggests the transitoriness of the material world from the Upaniadic philosophy. So, the “unreal” cities of the world mean regions of impermanence and ignorance. The *netineti* principle of the Upaniads explains that everything is *mithyā* (unreal) except Brahma. In the Upaniads, such as in the *Bṛihadāranyaka* one, *mithyā* does not strictly mean absolutely false; *mithyā* means transitory. More precisely, *mithyā* is that which cannot exist independently of the underlying substratum, i.e., Brahma.

Eliot shows his interest in metempsychosis or reincarnation. Tiresias, in *The Waste Land*, is an example of its proof. He is a celebrated blind soothsayer of Apollo in Thebes in Greek mythology. He has the experience of the sexual activities of both sexes, male and female: “I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives, / Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see” (43). He is famous for his clairvoyance. As narrated in the poem of the Roman poet Ovid, once he comes across coupling snakes, strikes them with his staff, and is transformed into a woman for seven years. At the end of this period, he again encounters the two snakes coupling, strikes them,

and regains his male form (Eliot 52). The story of *The Waste Land* is actually the story of Tiresias, who remembers his past lives and his different roles as different characters as men and women.

Tiresias himself is these characters: "And I Tiresias have foresuffered all / Enacted on the same divan or bed" ("Fire Sermon" 44). This clearly shows his many past births. He has been moving on the Wheel with suffering, listlessness, and dissatisfaction from the beginning to now. Tiresias and Stetson are associated with each other. In the past life, Stetson was Tiresias. Now, Stetson is the reincarnation of Tiresias. Therefore, Tiresias wonders to see Stetson as a "hypocrite" reader in London: "'Stetson!. . . 'You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!. . . 'You! Hypocrite lecteur! —mon semblable, —mon frère!'" ("The Burial of the Dead" 39). As Michael North comments, the line, "You! Hypocrite. . . mon frère!" is from Charles Baudelaire's "Au Lecteur" ("To the Reader"), the introductory poem in "*Les Fleurs du Mal* [The Flowers of Evil]". The English translation of the line from French is: "You! Hypocrite reader! —my likeness, —my brother!" (7, 42-43). In this context, Eliot is personally satirizing the man of science as a hypocrite reader who has lost his faith and belief in God.

Fate (*pr rabdha*) is one crucial aspect of the *karmic* theory. Fate is the result of one's deeds done in the past. In this connection, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* confirms that deeds determine fate (4.4.5). This kind of belief in fate is found in Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* in which the First Tempter tries to dissuade Thomas Becket, an Archbishop, from going against King Henry, but Becket does not agree. Therefore, the Tempter warns Becket to face its consequences (as in higher punishment for higher vices) as per his fate: "Then I leave you to your fate. / I leave you to the pleasures of your higher vices, / Which will have to be paid for at higher

prices” (1.184). This suggests that “fate” is unavoidable. One gets punishment or reward as per one’s deed. For example, the individual who commits “higher vices” (sexual offense) will deserve “higher” punishment. Contrastingly, in Christian philosophy, fate is predetermined by a supernatural power that controls one’s events to come in one’s life.

Cosmic time is circular. Both—the processes of the beginning and the ending—start from Brahma. The concept of the circular cosmic time is found in *vet vataraUpani ad* that describes the vast universe as the Wheel (1.4) and the river (1.5). Eliot suggests the cosmic circularity of time in the form of destruction after creation, or death after life in "East Coker" whose very first line begins with "In my beginning is my end" (123), and whose very last line ends with "In my end is my beginning" (129). Thus, beginning and ending are one eternal, circular process of the material world.

The ending is no ending but the “beginning” of another process of life or activity. Death is no death but the beginning of another life. An individual is reborn after death, and a universe is reborn after its dissolution. Actually, the Wheel of creation and destruction is moving eternally. No one can escape from this Wheel unless one gets liberation through knowledge. From the Upani adic vision of *Brahmacakra* (the Wheel of Brahma), nothing is destroyed at all times. During dissolution, the manifest becomes unmanifest and during creation, the unmanifest becomes manifest. During creation, when the unmanifest becomes manifest, Brahma appears Itself as the universe (time, space, matter, and energy), and the universe remains in existence until the Great Dissolution. During the Great Dissolution, when the manifest becomes unmanifest, the universe withdraws into Brahma and remains within It just as the whole tree with its roots, branches, leaves, and fruits remains

within a seed. This justifies that both the beginning and ending is Brahma. This is the non-dual philosophy of the Upaniṣad.

The Wheel of Brahma is eternal. Here, the Wheel means the cycle of creation and destruction or the cycle of time. Supporting this idea of the eternity of the Wheel, *Cāṇdogya Upaniṣad* expresses that the world was in existence before the creation (6.2.1). Regarding the circularity and eternity of time, Eliot writes further in "The Dry Salvages" III that "the way up is the way down, the way forward is the way back" (134). This suggests that the process of "the way up" (life or creation) and "the way down" (death or destruction) continues for ever as the Wheel of four seasons does. The words "up" and "down" include many other antithetical pairs of words, and Eliot, here, seems to reconcile all of them as a single, not two, action or process whose originator is the same Brahma. This reconciliatory approach is based upon the non-dual principle of the Upaniṣad.

One is one's own creator of destiny. *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad* confirms this truth (4.4.5). Henceforth, the Fourth Tempter asks Thomas Becket to "wind / The thread of eternal life and death. You hold this power, hold it" (1.191). "To wind" means to spin round or to withdraw. Here, the Tempter is enticing Becket to stop the latter's Wheel of "eternal life and death" and create his new destiny. Indirectly, the Tempter is provoking Becket to be a martyr. In Christianity, martyrs are conferred the title of sainthood to recognize them as being especially holy and dedicated to God while alive.

One's *karma*, knowledge, and experiences cannot be destroyed. They go along with the soul after death. They reappear in the next birth. This idea of the indestructibility of one's *karma* is confirmed by *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.2) and found in *The Family Reunion* in the expression of Agatha, who comments, "When the

loop in time comes—and it does not come for everybody— / The hidden is revealed, and the specters show themselves” (1.1.229). Here, "the loop" is symbolic of bondage or the cycle of life and death. Those who have attained knowledge and self-realization become free from rebirth. But those who are not enlightened become the victim of death again.

"The specters" is symbolic of death or fear of death. When one is reborn, his or her “hidden” life with previous experiences or knowledge comes to play, and the “specters” (fear of death, illusion, ghosts of one’s previous guilt, etc.) trouble him or her again. In the context of the play, Harry is troubled by the ghosts of his dead wife who died young in a mysterious surrounding on the sea while they were together in the ship a year ago. The couple had no true love for each other. Now, the ghosts appear and disappear in his vision time to time.

Creatures move in an endless cycle of births and deaths due to their *karma*. Each creature is born as many times as 8.4 million species of life and goes on evolving biologically and spiritually in each succeeding birth. This idea of endless reincarnation is found in the concept of the Wheel and the river in

*vet vātaraUpani ad* (1.4, 1.5, 1.6). In *The Family Reunion*, the Chorus of townswomen expresses the mundane experience of her previous lives in the sea of the world. She remembers her many past births from the marine life to the life of the ape:

CHORUS. I have lain on the floor of the sea and breathed with the breathing  
of the sea-anemone, swallowed with ingurgitation of the sponge. I have  
lain in the soil and criticized the worm.

.....

I have seen

Rings of light coiling downwards, descending

To the horror of the ape. (2.207-8)

Eliot expresses his belief in metempsychosis through the play. He evokes the imaginative force and moral implications of the theory of *karma* and rebirth through the Chorus. In the play, the Chorus of townswomen represents the ones who are conscious of their ritual observance and works but lack the deeper insights into wisdom. In the subconscious mind of the Chorus, the experiences of her past lives are laid down deep from which she cannot escape. The Chorus remembers the sufferings of her earlier lives, such as being born from “the sea-anemone” to “the worm” and to “the ape.”

The people, like the Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral*, having no spiritual insight or wisdom, cannot be liberated from the cycle of life and death. They are, as *Mu āka Upani ad* remarks, the fools who hold the wrong belief system—unstable and unsafe boats—to cross the sea of *Samsara* (life and death) in which so many drown and lose their lives (1.2.7). Making the idea of the cause of rebirth clear, *Mu āka Upani ad* further highlights that even good deeds, if they are done with the fruit of actions, become the cause of rebirth (1.2.10).

With reference to the above citation, the characters except Thomas Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* and the characters except Agatha, Mary, and Harry in *The Family Reunion* fall under this illusion that worldly achievement is the all that they need to accomplish, but they are not aware that the desire for the worldly progress is a main cause of the death-and-rebirth.

The experiences of the present life are the *v āsan s* (unfulfilled desires, experiences, and *karma* hidden in the subconscious mind; smell) of the past lives. The past experiences cannot be deleted. The *karmic* theory of the *Upani ads* is based on

the cause-and-effect principle. The cause of the present life is the many lives of the past. Realizing this truth, Eliot, in "The Dry Salvages," II critiques:

I have said before  
That the past experience revived in the meaning  
Is not the experience of one life only  
But of many generations—not forgetting  
Something that is probably quite ineffable. . . . (133)

With an expectation for a better life or for a higher purpose to fulfil, one experiences endless rebirths. Yet one does not forget the experiences of his “many generations” hidden inside his unconscious mind. Those past experiences guide one’s present life. Thus, the *karmic* theory is mysteriously “ineffable.” Here somebody may criticize this *karmic* theory as being based on fatalism, determinism, and passivity, which maintains that our present destiny, fate, or luck is determined by our actions of previous life and so we cannot change our present life. But it is equally remarkable that our present life is made by both—the deeds of our past and present lives. Our present and future life can be changed by our conscious efforts, positive thoughts, beliefs, faith, will power, determination and auto-suggestion. This concept is related to the concept of Free Will or self-effort (*sv dhina k* or *pur rtha*).

It is God who gives fruits to the embodied self (*j v tm*) as per its actions. The embodied self is not free to choose the fruits of its actions. It is not free to take rebirth according to its desire. Regarding this, *vet vataraUpani ad* confirms that it is God who connects the embodied self to its next life—“*tesh m samyoga-hetur aparo'pi dri ta*” (5.12). Similar idea is presented by the Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral*: “Destiny waits in the hand of God, shaping the still unshapen: / I have seen these things in a shaft of sunlight” (1.176). The Chorus in its mystical expression suggests



that God is the manager who calculates our good or bad deeds and gives us fruits accordingly. This reveals that “destiny,” still unknown, depends on “God.”

Submitting one’s desires to God is ensuring one’s liberation. As mentioned by *vet vātaraUpani ad*, a fool person is deluded by egoism and thinks, “I am the experiencer or enjoyer.” Such a fool one suffers from agonies (1.8). This implies that the person who is free from the sense of doership becomes free from the Wheel of life and death and attains the Essence. Understanding this truth, Archbishop Thomas Becket gives up every worldly desire, even the pride of being a martyr while preaching in the Cathedral on Christmas Morning:

THE ARCHBISHOP. A martyrdom is never the design of man; for the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, not lost it but found it, for he has found freedom in submission to God. The martyr no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of martyrdom. (Interlude 199-200)

Thomas Becket is in dilemma regarding whether he should resist Four Tempters' attempts to kill him or he should be allowed to be killed as a martyr. Finally, he understands that he is not an experiencer. Nor is he a doer. He is just “the instrument of God” or an agent of God. He knows that martyrdom is always “the design” of God. Therefore, he surrenders himself to the Will of God, which frees him from the agonies of conscience, and becomes a martyr saint later on. Here, Becket reveals a paradoxical argument that by being a slave to God’s desires, one can find “freedom.” Becket’s spiritual path is a path of devotion in which a devotee can become an owner of God but by first being a slave to Him. Precisely, one is a slave to God from the sense of body; a part of Him from the sense of *j v tm* ; and God or Brahma from the sense of *Ātm* .

Submission to the desire of God is one way to liberation. This theme of submission to God's desire for liberation is found in *vet vataraUpani ad* (6.18). The ironical thing is that everyone desires peace and happiness, but no one is ready to follow religion and practice spirituality. Peace and happiness follow not from materiality, miserliness, insensitiveness, blind surrender to desire, sexual freedom, and secularism but from religion, spirituality, and discipline. Therefore, the Chorus comments, "The peace of this world is always uncertain, unless men keep the peace of God" (*Murder in the Cathedral* 2.201). Besides, as the Chorus concludes, "the surrender [to God is] required" (2.220) for the grace of God by which we can get peace. Becket, too, trusts God. He does not trust the King. Therefore, he argues, "He has good cause to trust none but God alone" (1.189) and "God's grace" (1.182). The terms "trust" and "grace" indicate Becket's uttermost devotion to God who is the Ultimate Power of the universe. He challenges the king's stately power with the power of his divine trust.

No one can escape from the punishment of one's wrongdoings at all though it may take several years of life. Today we are getting the result of the past, and tomorrow we will certainly get the result of today. This idea is supported by the *karmic* theory of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* (4.4.5). In this line of argument, Thomas Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* states his conviction that wrongdoing invites bad results:

THOMAS. I know the history at all times draws

The strangest consequence from remotest cause.

But for every evil, every sacrilege,

Crime, wrong, oppression and the axe's edge,

Indifference, exploitation, you, and you,

And you, must all be punished. (1.197)

One may not get the punishment of one's present actions immediately. In other words, the deeds of the "remotest" past are likely to bear fruits in the present or in the future. Suppose we did not do anything bad in this life. Despite this fact, we may get bad results. It is due to the "remotest cause" (actions done in earlier lives). This principle of the latent remotest cause bearing fruits unexpectedly in the future seems strange outwardly. However, it is true. From the viewpoint of the *karmic* theory, those who committed evil of any sort whether it be blasphemy, false activity, offence, persecution, maltreatment, unsympathy or abuse in the past are certainly "punished" now. There is no chance to escape; "the history" is the proof of this argument.

In this line of argument, Eliot is serious about "the strangest consequence from remotest cause." People may forget their bad, wrong, immoral, or criminal work. But their *karma* does not forget it. In fact, no one can escape from the consequences of good and evil. Both the good and the evil are mixed up at the end and give the result. With regard to this argument, Thomas Becket argues in *Murder in the Cathedral*:

THOMAS. For every life and every act

Consequence of good and evil can be shown.

And as in time results of many deeds are blended

So good and evil at the end are confounded. (2.212)

This citation clarifies that we have both results in life, good and bad because we have done both good and bad works. People may not expect to get bad results of their bad work, but the bad result of bad work is inevitable. The term "confounded" means *sa cita karma*, i.e., the combined consequences of a person's thoughts and actions, which are carried over from one lifetime to another. Due to the *sa cita karma*, bad things happen to good people. Also, good things happen to bad people.

Unless the Wheel of life stops, one has to be born and die repeatedly. This idea of the cycle of life is posited as *Brahmacakra* (the Wheel of Brahma) in *vet vataraUpani ad* (1.6, 6.1). This image of endless round of unredeemed life and death is found in *The Family Reunion*:

HARRY. To and fro, dragging my feet  
 Among inner shadows in the smoky wilderness,  
 Trying to avoid the clasping branches  
 And the giant lizard. To and fro.  
 Until the chain breaks. (2.2.277)

This conversation is concerned with the death-and-rebirth cycle as said above. Here, Harry mystically narrates to Agatha about his previous experiences of life and death with the images of "dragging my feet," "the clasping branches," "the giant lizard," and "the chain." They describe a sense of hopelessness. The clasping branches symbolize fetters. The great giant lizard or chameleon symbolizes changeability, impermanence (*anityat* ) and rebirth. Similarly, Harry uses the idiom "to and fro," which symbolizes the cycle of life and death moving again and over again. The sufferings and troubles of life are evoked by the imagery of "smoky wilderness," the dark jungle.

Metaphorically, the world is like the jungle. Thus, revealing his experiences to Agatha, Harry recalls that he has moved with difficulty here and there among the inner darkness of the smoky jungle attempting to keep away from the trapping branches and the terrifying, obstructing lizard. He is helpless to free himself from the bondage of life because he knows that until the chain (connection between life and death, the knots of the heart) breaks, one has to move "to and fro," here and there, or up and down between life and death.



2).The *karma yoga* teaches that a spiritual aspirant should act as per his *dharma* (religion, religious duty, righteousness) selflessly and disinterestedly. Keeping this theory of *karma yoga* in mind, Eliot directly picks up the admonitions of Lord Krishna to Arjuna standing on the battlefield— “*karma yev dhik raste m phale u kad cana. . .*” —you have right to work only, but never to its fruits. You should not be attached to the fruit of action. Then you will be free from the bonds of action. Also, you should never be inclined to inaction (*Gītā* 2.47) and writes them as, "do not think of the fruit of action. / Fare forward" ("Dry Salvages" III 134). Eliot advises the humanity to work unselfishly without a stoppage. From the viewpoint of the selfless *karma yoga* in *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the human soul can transcend the desire for worldly objects even by using them but without attachment.

In *Bhagavad-Gītā*, there are three paths to quest for the Essence: *karma*, devotion, and knowledge. The path of selfless *karma* accepts the world and tries to attain God through this path. Contrastingly, the path of pure knowledge renounces *karma* and the world, and tries to attain Brahma through this path of knowledge. Actually, *karma*, devotion, and knowledge are progressive steps of the spiritual ladder to reach the room of Brahma.

In a similar vein of *karma yoga*, Eliot advises us to try and work but without expecting any result of advantage or disadvantage: "But perhaps neither gain nor loss. / For us there is only the trying. The rest is not our business" ("East Coker" V 128). The same message of desireless action is given in "The East Coker" III: "I said to my soul, be still and wait without hope / For hope would be hope for the wrong things" (126). Hope for the wrong things becomes the cause of rebirth. Thus, *karma* determines everyone's life. And the actions done without any hope cannot bind them. Those who work certainly get the result of their work. In case their expectations are

not met, even then they do not become hopeless if they are detached and have no sense of doership over their work.

Freedom ensues from right action. Right action means doing good works according to the scriptures without attachment as indicated in *svasya Upani ad* (1-2), which anticipates the message of the selfless action (*karma yoga*) propounded by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-Gītā* (Chapter 3). Showing the importance of the *karma* theory, Eliot remarks, "right action is freedom. / From past and future also" ("Dry Salvages" V 136). Here "right action" means selfless or motiveless action by which humans can achieve freedom from the Wheel of life and death. The essence of *karma* theory is the renunciation of the fruits of actions and doing selfless work as worship as Thomas Becket does as "the instrument of God" in *Murder in the Cathedral* (Interlude, 199) or Harry does as "a missionary" in course of his "pilgrimage" (2.3.286-93). When one supposes that God is the doer and one is simply the agent of God to perform God's work, the work does not cling to one and he or she becomes free from bondage. Thus, the sense of ego or I-ness must disappear and one should consume the things of the world without the sense of one's ownership over objects to face the consequences of life calmly.

Life is a journey. Death is a part of that journey. *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad* describes the transmigration of the soul between death and new birth (4.4.37- 4.4.6). Eliot expresses his belief in metempsychosis with an example of the passengers of a train in the third part of "The Dry Salvages," "You are not the same people who left that station / Or who will arrive at any terminus" (134). Life is a journey like that of "a train." As the train stops at many stations before reaching to its terminal (final destination), so also the soul reincarnates many times before it attains Brahma. The journey of the train also suggests the transitoriness and changeability of human life.

To be free from rebirth, one's mind should be equanimous and passionless at the time of death. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* instructs us to be passionless and pure-minded to attain liberation (3.2.5). Similarly, Eliot in "The Dry Salvages" III approves that one should develop evenness of temper throughout one's life and more especially during the time of death to escape the Wheel of life and death: "Here between the hither and the farther shore / While time is withdrawn, consider the future / And the past with an equal mind (134). This suggests that an individual should treat the past and the future without attachment between "the hither [birth] and the farther [death] shore"; that the individual should have no regrets, no worries nor any worldly desire, especially at the moment of death; and that the individual should be disinterested. Besides, that individual should be free from self-interest and worries about others as well. This state of "equal mind" is a state of choiceless awareness or non-dual state having no sentiment of partiality or enmity for anyone or anything. Only the individual of such "an equal mind" can be free from rebirth.

One is born as per his desires at the last moment of life. *Cāṇdogya*, *Praṇa*, and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* assert that one gets new life after death as per his wishes, resolution, or conviction (3.14.1; 3.10; 2.2.7). Likewise, Eliot illustrates the impact of one's last desire on determining one's next life in "The Dry Salvages" III:

At the moment which is not of action or inaction  
 You can receive this: "on whatever sphere of being  
 The mind of a man may be intent  
 At the time of death" —that is the one action  
 (And the time of death is every moment)  
 Which shall fructify in the lives of others. (134)

This clearly exhibits that our last desires or thoughts determine our next birth or no



rebirth (liberation). If we think of Brahma, we attain Brahma, or if we think of the world, we return to the world. One's deathbed wishes influence not only one's next life but others' lives as well. Eliot's remark, "Which shall fructify in the lives of others" suggests the communal and religious effect of *karma*. The coming generation shall get the result of one's *karma*. "The time of death is every moment" suggest that we may die at any moment. Therefore, we should be God-conscious all the time to escape from the cycle of life and death permanently. Besides, we each die every day during our fast sleep when we do not see any dreams at all at night. At that moment, our body and mind do not work at all. But we come to our consciousness and become fresh when we wake up from sleep. Thus, this kind of death and rebirth happens to all of us every day.

In the above poetic lines, Eliot also hints at the spiritual transformation (rebirth) of human beings. If bad thoughts dominate us, it is like dying. If good thoughts dominate us, it is like being reborn. We are reborn with higher thoughts through the spiritual transformation. In this connection, Mary expresses her conviction to Harry in *The Family Reunion*, "I believe the moment of birth / Is when we have knowledge of death" (Eliot 1.2.251). The gold becomes purer and more refined the more it is beaten. Likewise, we become spiritually reborn and go from bad to good, from good to better and from better to best if we have the knowledge of our transient life through the "knowledge of death." Likewise, contemplating on the state of spiritual rebirth, the Chorus remarks in *Murder in the Cathedral*, spiritual rebirth is "Not what we call death, but what beyond death is not death" (Eliot 2.210). Actually, an individual that goes beyond death after death attains immortality. The person having the knowledge of the Self attains such immortality while still alive after the spiritual transformation ahead of the real death of his or her body.

Similarly, Harry's spiritual transformation in *The Family Reunion* is responsible for the beginning of his new life as a pilgrim. Harry's mother Amy accuses Agatha of provoking her son for leaving his home. But refuting her accusation, Agatha, as a watcher and waiter, clarifies to Mary that Harry is leaving his home not due to her magic or persuasion:

AGATHA.

He is going.

But that is not my spell, it is none of my doing:

I have only watched and waited. In this world

It is inexplicable, the resolution is in another. (Eliot 2.3.284)

Obviously, Harry is now going to leave his home for a pilgrimage as a missionary against his mother's desire to atone his sin of killing his wife. It is "inexplicable" why somebody does something new. Here, Agatha hints that Harry's decision to leave his home is a part of his spiritual transformation. Anyway, everyone gets good or bad results of this life's *karma* in "another" birth. Harry's mother wanted the family reunion with her son for a long time. But now the reunion is going to be a separation for an indefinite time. In this situation, giving consolation to Harry's mother, Agatha hints that there is another birth that can be better than this one, that can result in better "resolution," and that Harry and his mother Amy could be reunited there.

Acting is a cause of suffering and suffering is a cause of acting in turn. Those persons who think themselves as non-doers of their actions become free from the repeated pattern of acting and suffering. This is related to the principle of *karma* and *vip ka* (action and its results) as mentioned in *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad*, which declares that one suffers or gets new life as a result of one's passionate and attached *karma* (action) performed in this life; one gets liberation if one is desireless (4.4.6). In reality, one is bound to work as per his own nature or quality. In this sense, one is not

the doer that suffers; it is one's nature that suffers. Attachment binds one in bondage, but the renunciation of transitory pleasures frees him or her from bondage ( *vet vatara*4.5).

Realizing this truth that the cause of suffering is acting and the cause of the freedom from the Wheel of acting and suffering is the sense of non-doership, Thomas Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* states:

THOMAS. . . . that acting is suffering,

And suffering is action. Neither does the agent [actor, doer] suffer

Nor the patient act. But both are fixed

In an eternal action, an eternal patience

To which all must consent that it may be willed

And which all must suffer that they may will it.

That the pattern may subsist, for the pattern is the action

And the suffering, that the Wheel may turn and still

Be forever still. (Eliot 1.182)

The phrase “acting is suffering” denotes *karma* and its result. Action becomes a cause of suffering and without facing the result (suffering) of one's actions, it is not possible to be free from the cycle of life and death. Every cause becomes an action and every action becomes a cause in turn, just as a tree and its seed appear out of each other repeatedly. Thus moves “the Wheel” of life and death forever. One cannot become free from “the pattern” of this movement unless the moving “Wheel” becomes “forever still” and one attains the still point (Brahma, liberation) of “the Wheel.”

Thus, the pattern of action and suffering is temporary, and in this spiritual vision, there is neither suffering nor action. The result is already decided by one's action, nature, or quality. It is one's natural qualities (goodness, briskness, and

evilness) which act upon him or her. From this angle, it is neither “the agent” nor “the patient” who acts. This is the non-dual worldview of the *Upani ad*, according to which Brahma Itself is involved in the actor and his acting, or in the patient and in his or her suffering. These two kinds of processes (e.g., actor and acting, or patient and suffering) are not distinct but two parts of One Reality. This kind of knowledge of non-doership and non-duality really liberates one. Besides, suffering is equally needed for spiritual evolution in the course of the quest for the Essence.

The result of one’s past *karma* is irrevocable. This idea is supported by the *karmic* theory of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* that stresses that one gets results as per one’s deeds (4.4.5). In *The Family Reunion*, Harry expresses that man is a sum total of his past actions from which he cannot escape at all:

HARRY. I am the old house

With the noxious smell and the sorrow before morning,

In which all past is present, all degradation

Is unredeemable. (Eliot 1.1.234)

In fact, there are the deposits of all the actions—good or bad—of the past lives in “the old house,” a metaphor for the old body. “All degradation” bears “the noxious smell” of the bad works performed in the past, which is “unredeemable.” Harry is haunted by his guilty feeling that he had pushed his wife into the sea. From this guilty feeling, he can never escape. Eliot implies that the “noxious smell” (negative impression of previous bad action) cannot be erased however hard we try because the past always lives with us and the future gets shapen at every moment. The sweet scent of good *karma* has a power to make our future bright. The body is the house of the soul (the individual self). The soul cannot remain without the body unless it attains *mok a* (liberation). There are three types of the body — physical, subtle, and causal.

To achieve *mokṣa*, we need to be free from these three types of the body. Only those who have the self-realization of Ātmā and Brahma can be free from the bondage of the three types of the body.

In the above dialogue of Harry, “The old house” connotes the fleetingness of the human body and its inevitable death. Brahma dwells in the city of the human body having nine gates— “*navadvāre pure dehāḥ sa*” ( *vet vātara* 3.18). The human body is a city of Brahma — “*asmin brahmapure*” (*Cāṇdogya* 8.1.2). The Self is the Lord of the body, which is Its house. *Cāṇdogya Upaniṣad* declares that though the body grows old and dies, the Self does not become old. Neither does the Self die nor is It killed— “*na sya jarayaitatj ryati na vadhen sya hanyata*” (8.1.5). Thus, the Self changes Its “old house” as one changes one’s garment after it gets old.

Regarding the theme of unredeemability or irrevocability of one’s past *karma*, Agatha assures Harry in *The Family Reunion* that one cannot change his past and escape from it because the cause of the present effect can never be destroyed:

AGATHA. Everything is irrevocable,

Because the past [action, cause] is irrevocable,

Because the future [reaction, result, effect] can only be built

Upon the real past. (1.1.228)

Past is the foundation of present, and both past and present are the foundations of future. Deeds create one's destiny, which is irrevocable. Harry comes back to his home after eight years, but he does not find peace and happiness at home though he is financially rich and materially prosperous. He has a mental pain though he has no physical troubles. In this context, Agatha expresses that Harry's luck is made by his own past deeds that are “irrevocable.”

In fact, our future destiny is already determined by our past and present works that we cannot change. Therefore, Eliot's characters pronounce in *The Family*

*Reunion*:

HARRY. O God, man, the things that are going to happen  
Have already happened.

CHORUS. And what is spoken remains in the room, waiting for the future  
to hear it.

And whatever happens began in the past, and presses hard on  
the future. (2.1.258-270)

The above dialogue clearly exposes the role of unchangeability of the past action, unredeemability of its result, and the effect of the present *karma* that "presses hard on the future." Obviously, we cannot become free from the effect of the *karma* without using up the fruits of that *karma*.

All achievements and their pleasures are unreal because human beings' life itself is unreal. Unreality within unreality is present everywhere. This sentiment is very close to the spiritual message given by *Katha Upani ad*, which expresses that all the worldly pleasure has but a short life (1.1.26). Similarly, *Katha Upani ad* reveals that those who see differences here and there in Brahma go from death to death. The whole universe is nothing except Brahma (2.1.10-11). The Four Tempters want Becket not to oppose the king. But Becket challenges them that if the King persists to be proud and does not do according to the rules of the church, he is ready even to be a martyr. The Tempters warn Becket that even his desire to be a martyr is a result of his pride and desire to be famous even after death. They chant in unison to Becket about the unreality (*M y*) of temporal existence and the meaninglessness of all human activities and achievements so that they could stop him from being stubborn:

THE FOUR TEMPTERS. Man's life is a cheat and a disappointment;

All things are unreal,

Unreal or disappointing;

The Catherine Wheel, the pantomime cat,

The prizes given at the children's party,

The prize awarded for the English Essay,

The scholar's degree, the statesman's decoration.

All things become less real, man passes

From unreality to unreality. (*Murder in the Cathedral* 1.194)

The Four Tempters really disclose the harsh reality of life. Anyone can die at any time. So, "Man's life is a cheat and a disappointment." Everything is "unreal." Even death is unreal because one does not die forever after death but is reborn for another life due to lack of spiritual knowledge. No doubt everyone passes from "unreality to unreality" (from death to death, or from ignorance to ignorance). Ignorance is death. If one does not know the Essence of life and finds himself or herself and all the others different from Brahma goes from "unreality to unreality." The phrase "From unreality to unreality" is very close to the expression of *Katha Upani ad* as mentioned above.

Worldly attractions and vanities are deceptive. Such a person who has a false opinion of himself or herself and is lost in his or her greatness cannot know the Essence. In *Katha Upani ad*, Yamar ja teaches to Nachiket that those who have no understanding, no control over his mind, and no purity cannot attain the Essence but moves on the cycle of life and death repeatedly (1.3.7). The Four Tempters want Thomas Becket not to revolt against the king. Hence, they present arguments, so that he would stop his rebellion. Hence, they point out the destruction of adamant human beings like Becket (whose death is like the death of the obstinate moths):

THE FOUR TEMPTERS. This man is obstinate, blind, intent

On self-destruction,

Passing from deception to deception,

From grandeur to grandeur to final illusion,

Lost in the wonder of his own greatness,

The enemy of society, enemy of himself. (*Murder in the Cathedral*

1.194)

The above conversation between The Four Tempters and Becket points out the drawbacks of being lost in one's "grandeur" and "greatness." Self-praise is nothing but an "illusion," a cause of "self-deception." One oneself is one's foe or friend. If one is blind to one's desires and cannot control one's mind, one invites one's great ruin. This argument is true to Becket's life. He does not compromise with the Four Tempters and as a result meets his physical death. From the Four Tempters' viewpoint, Becket cannot know himself and Brahma because he knows no art of humility.

One should purge one's sin and guilt in order to be qualified to get a better life. There are two types of sin: physical and mental. Even merely a slight thought of malice towards others is a mental sin. *Katha Upani ad* expresses that he who is not free from bad conduct, whose mind and senses are not controlled and whose mind is restless cannot attain Brahma even through his minute intellect (1.2.24). Harry realizes this truth in *The Family Reunion*. He is conscious of his guilt-ridden mind. As a result, he is restless. Harry has an unbearable guilty-feeling that he might have pushed his wife overboard to murder her, though actually he did not do so. He is aware of his mental sin:

HARRY. Perhaps my life has only been a dream



Dreamt through me by the minds of others. Perhaps

I only dreamt I pushed her. (2.2.275)

This implies that Harry does not want to live his life as per the dream of his near and dear ones such as his mother Amy. He feels that his life has become useless like a dream. Guilt has a wide network, so it needs a steady attempt to be free from it. As Harry demonstrates, happiness comes in life if we become psychologically aware of sin and evil at all times. Even mental sin can make one feel guilty and compel to purge his or her soul from the sin for a pure spiritual life. Harry feels that he should purify his guilt-ridden sin to find peace and happiness in coming days.

The Upani ads prescribe a process of purification to attain the Essence. The paths of action, devotion, and finally knowledge are prescribed to purify the soul. From the viewpoint of knowledge, the Upani ad expresses that an individual is by nature or by essence a living embodiment of *Sat-Cit- nanda* (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss/Fullness). An individual realizes *Sat* and *Cit* naturally or automatically. But for realizing *nanda* (Bliss/Fullness), that person should attempt. Whatever an individual has been doing so far from the beginning to now is for the attainment of that bliss. However, that person is oblivious to this truth that a person himself or herself is Brahma, a source of eternal bliss. *Taittir ya Upani ad* reveals that Brahma is truth, knowledge, and infinite—"satyam jñ nam anantam brahma" (2.1.1). Bliss is infinite. But we have forgotten this truth due to ignorance. Therefore, we are in trouble. Once each one of us knows this truth "I am Brahma" (*Brihad ranyaka* 1.4.10), we can immediately realize ourselves to have been Brahma already. This is the path of knowledge that can purify the soul without much delay.

Evil as well as good does not stop unless the cycle of life and death stops. The cycle stops only when ripen fruits of the past *karma* are consumed or destroyed. Good

actions breed good results and bad actions breed bad ones. Such an interconnection between action and effect resonates in Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*:

THIRD PRIEST. For ill or good, let the Wheel turn.

For who know the end of good or evil?

Until the grinders cease. . . . (1.179)

This dialogue is related to the law of *karma*. In this dialogue, the Third Priest suggests that he and others should not stop Archbishop Thomas Becket from coming to England from France after the Archbishop's seven years of exile. The Archbishop may be a winner or a loser in his fight against the King Henry II because nobody knows "the end of good or evil" till "the grinders" of "the Wheel" cease. Thus, one should go on doing one's duty without worrying about the result that may be "ill or good."

A truly religious or spiritual person remains steadfast in his or faith in God even in any unfavorable circumstances. From the insight of the Upani ad, the person who knows the bliss of Brahma is not afraid of anyone (*Taittir ya* 2.9.1); nor does he want to be protected by It (*Brihad ranyaka* 4.4.15). For example, Thomas Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* chooses to be a martyr for his belief in God rather than be a puppet of the unjust political rulers. Therefore, he decides:

THOMAS. I give my life

To the Law of God above the Law of Man.

He further remarks:

THOMAS. It is the just man who

Like a bold lion, should be without fear. (2.213)

The above dialogue presents the theme of fearlessness. In fact, the person who realizes the immortality of the Self is without the fear of death. Becket's realization

sounds similar to what *C ndogya Upani ad* discloses, "*j v petam v va kiledam mriyate na j vo mriyata*"—though the body dies but not the individual self" (6.11.3). Therefore, Becket realizes, "No life here is sought for but mine, / And I am not in danger; only near to death" (2.208). He clearly suggests that physical death does not matter. It is the death of body only. There is the Self beyond the body; the Self does not die.

We cannot escape from our bad *karma*—this is the inflexible law of the nature. Past cannot be undone. We cannot escape from it. In this connection, the Chorus in Eliot's *The Family Reunion* uncovers:

CHORUS. All twined and tangled together, all are recorded.

There is no avoiding these things

And we know nothing of exorcism

And whether in Argos or England

There are certain inflexible laws

Unalterable, in the nature of music. (2.1.271)

This implies that the body is a house of the soul. When the body becomes old, the soul changes its dwelling house. However, in all its births, the soul stores all the memories of the past actions—good or bad—of its past lives like a hard disk of a computer does. Their "exorcism" (erasure) is not so easy. To indicate the inevitability of the laws of *karma*, the Chorus compares them to the unalterable laws of music that govern its rhythm.

Eliot presents the theme of impermanence, change, transitoriness, and suffering, which is close to the idea presented by *Katha Upani ad* that everything is subject to decay and death (1.1.28). For example, this theme of impermanence, change, transitoriness, and suffering is presented in the opening lines of "East Coker":

In my beginning is my end. In succession  
 Houses rise and fall, crumble, are extended,  
 Are removed, destroyed, restored, or in their place  
 Is an open field, or a factory, or a bypass  
 Old stone to new building, old timber to new fires  
 Old fires to ashes, and ashes to the earth. . . . (123)

This extract has a direct reference to World War II (1939-45). It shows the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction processes which take place before and after the War. "In my beginning is my end" shows Eliot's disillusionment from the belief that pleasure is everlasting. Pleasure secretly brings pain with it. The end of pleasure is the beginning of pain. The final destination of everything including our body is "the earth" after they turn into "ashes."

In a nutshell, the ideas of Eliot on *karma* and rebirth are close to the *karmic* theory of the Upani ad. Eliot conveys the *karmic* theory through the symbol of "the Wheel." The theory of *karma* asserts that there is the eternal Wheel of cause and effect just as a tree comes out of a seed and a seed comes out of the tree over and over again in the life cycle of a tree. Good works give good consequences and bad works give bad ones. The Wheel of birth and death continues till one is a victim to illusion, ignorance, desires, and selfish deeds. Moreover, we are born again to exhaust the consequences of the *karma* of our past lives or to fulfil the unfulfilled desires of the past. Until the fruits of the *karma* performed are consumed completely, the Wheel of life and death does not stop. Till we perform actions with the desire for their fruits with attachment, our *karma* will yield to fruits.

Hence, we need to perform desireless or selfless *karma* to be released from the Wheel of life and death, or pleasure and pain. *Karma* binds whereas knowledge frees.

Having such an insight helps break *karmic* continuity and bestows liberation or immortality to an individual forever while running after the quest for the Essence. The next chapter highlights the quest of the individual self for the Essence through the symbol of “water.”

## Chapter Four

### The Symbolism of Water in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*

Like the previous chapter that explored how *karmas* performed and rebirth happens for the quest of better life or for the fulfilment of higher goals, this chapter analyzes how the quest of the individual self for the Essence to get liberation is represented by the symbol of "water." Everyone has a desire to develop and function better. This desire of entelechy guides human beings to quest for the Essence for liberation by transcending materiality. In the process of fulfilling this quest through writing, Eliot uses the word "water" and its different forms, such as "Gang ," "rain," "river," "sea," and "ocean" to represent the quest for the Essence or the soul's spiritual journey from materiality to the Essence, from bondage to liberation, or from misery to eternal happiness. "Water" embodies spirituality, "Sh nti " (Peace), and liberation. Eliot searches for water, i.e., spirituality, "Sh nti ," liberation, and human, moral, and spiritual values in *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*.

This paragraph and the next one give some Upaniadic insights into the symbol of water to provide with sufficient theoretical support for examining the quest for the Essence in Eliot's writings. As *C ndogya Upani ad* highlights, those who meditate on water as Brahma attain all their desires and become satisfied (7.10.2). In *vet vatar Upani ad*, the river represents the flow of life from birth to death or from birth to immortality. The flow of the river is very forceful and terrible. Those who fall into the river become subject to recurring birth and death (1.5) in the process of searching for the Essence. *Pra na* and *Mu aka* Upani ads suggest that as all the rivers (individual souls) finally flow into the sea sooner or later, so also the individual selves attain the Essence finally if they quest for the Essence (6.5; 3.2.8). Likewise, *C ndogya Upani ad* expresses that rivers come from the sea in the

form of rain and mixes into the sea finally forgetting their names and forms; just like example individuals come from Brahma but do not know that they have come from Brahma. However, they return to Brahma to be Brahma again (6.10.1-2). Thus, the river's journey into the sea represents the individual self's journey from the mundane world to the Essence. The individual self is like the river and the Essence (Brahma) is like the sea. Like the river, each of us is a traveler on a cosmic journey.

Similarly, *Taittir ya Upani ad* explains that water is one of the five elements—ether, air, fire, water, and earth—created by Brahma to create life. From Brahma arose ether; from ether air; from air fire; from fire water; from water the earth; from the earth herbs; from herbs food; and from food the person. Man's body is made by the juice of food (2.1.3). Moreover, *Mu aka Upani ad* stresses that different types of rivers flow from Brahma (2.1.9). Hence, water is pure and sacred. Highlighting the significance of water, *C ndogya Upani ad* asserts that the life of everything on earth depends on water. Therefore, water indeed is all these things that have solid forms. Water is greater than food. The lack of abundant rainfall causes scarcity of food and sadden people whereas abundant rainfall gives plentiful food and rejoices them (7.10.1). Thus, the Upani ads treat water as both spiritual and material element that gives joy to creatures. People are always in quest for water both spiritually and materialistically. Water has a purifying power. It can purify both body and mind. It is nectar for the whole creatures because it gives life.

Symbolically, water revives people to life from their spiritual death. In *C ndogya Upani ad*, water is a metaphor for liberation (7.10.2). But in *The Waste Land*, people are without liberating water: "A heap of broken images, where the sun beats, / And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, / And the dry stone no sound of water" ("Burial of the Dead" 38). "Gang " is "sunken" and the leaves are

limp due to lack of rain ("Thunder Said" 49). *The Waste Land* is suffering from drought, dryness, the scorching sun, and heat. As a result, broken images are seen; the trees are dead without leaves; the cricket bird's chirping sound is not soothing; water is not anywhere and the land is turning into desert. Thus, the scarcity of water, and the dryness of the atmosphere and land signify the dryness of the soul lacking in spiritual belief and practice after World War I.

Similarly, due to lack of water, the land of *The Waste Land* is waste, barren, and infertile. The wastelanders want water but do not get it because they are not interested in using the means to get the water. They are not ready to follow the spiritual and moral values of life, which are necessary to cause water to fall down. Therefore, it is ironical since their desire and means do not match. The values of life are generosity, compassion and self-control which are the means to bring the rain of peace, prosperity, and happiness. Without perpetual peace and eternal happiness, it is impossible to attain liberation.

One has to preserve the spiritual values of one's tradition to be successful in quest for the Subtle Essence. The tradition of the sages (*ṛiṣi*) in *Cāṇḍogya* and *Bṛihad āraṇyaka* Upaniṣads inspire us to follow their spiritual values of life for attaining the Essence (8.15.1; 2.6.3, 6.5.4). Towards the end of the *The Waste Land*, Eliot collects the disembodied fragments of the past spiritual tradition to control the present dry spirituality, "These fragments I have shored against my ruins" ("Thunder Said" 50). This suggests that he remembers the "fragments" or the lost spiritual and moral values of life. The term "moral" is used here to refer to a conscious decision to act responsibly with respect to knowledge and conscience but not as moral conventions only. Until and unless the wastelanders are apathetic to follow the values, the situation seems to be pessimistic. They cannot undergo metamorphosis without



the revival of the ancient spiritual and human values of life. Now they have the knowledge of science but not of spirituality.

In reality, the knowledge of science is a fake knowledge not a genuine one from the viewpoint of the Upaniads. The knowledge of science is only information about the physical life and the materialistic world. Rationality and science alone cannot solve human problems and misery. Nor can they liberate people. The knowledge of Ātmā and Brahma is alone a real knowledge from the Upaniadic insight. Thus, the interest for spiritual quest is necessary to revive the dead spiritual life and to reinstall the forgotten eternal values.

Memory and desire are the main causes of human suffering. Memory and desire are the functions of mind. *vet vatara Upani ad* illumines that mind alone is the cause of human suffering (1.5). The wastelanders have desperate sadness and so they find even the spring season unsympathetic and uninteresting and cannot welcome even the rain of the spring:

April is the cruellest month, breeding

Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing

Memory and desire, stirring

Dull roots with spring rain." ("Burial of the Dead" 37)

The mood of the wastelanders is dull. Hence, they find the spring season dull, which is indicated in "Dull roots with spring ring." (This equation of the mood of the nature with that of a human being is called pathetic fallacy in literature.) "The cruellest month" suggests the spiritual death of the modern people due to lack of the spiritual water. The memory of the past, happy and sad, and the desire for the future, which could be a fantasy, indicate the intermixture of pain and pleasure. They (pain and pleasure) move like the cycle of winter and spring. Moreover, "memory" does not

mean simply conscious remembering. It means the unconscious expression of the *samskara* (impressions of the activities done in the past lives) and their effect in our present actions and thoughts. "Desire" means the desire to repeat the past pleasurable activities or to fulfill the unfulfilled wishes of the past. Desires are born out of memory. Desires are (*voga-*) *visans*, karmic residue. A person has desires as per his or her memory. Memory creates desires and vice versa. One depends upon another. Hence, there is a special connection between "memory and desire" (*samskara* and *bhagavans*).

Madame Sosostris, a modern fortune teller, warns the modern dwellers of *The Waste Land*, who have lost their spiritual contact with water due to their materialistic desire for pleasure and pain, or profit and loss, "to fear death by water" ("The Burial of the Dead" 39) because she finds the death of the drowned Phoenician Sailor, a sea-trader, while reading her Tarot card. She has already found the doom of Belladonna, a luxurious woman, the wound of the man (the Fisher King) with three staves, and the death of the foolish one-eyed merchant, a very money hungry man, through reading her Tarot cards (38). On the one hand, the wastelanders wish liberation but on the other hand they "fear" liberation because it demands a rigorous ordeal, the ordeal of self-realization, just opposite to the attachment to hedonism. Thus, Madame Sosostris exposes the debased people of the modern civilization.

Sexual purity is necessary for a happy and peaceful life. *Taittiriya* and *Praṇa Upaniśad* allow only married couples to have sex during the nighttime for procreating offspring (1.9; 1.13). Likewise, *Katha Upaniśad* stresses on the need for maintaining complete celibacy for the liberation-seekers (1.2.25). But sweet showers of rain that maintain chastity or sexual purity are denied to the wastelanders even in "A Game of Chess." The game of chess has sexual connotations. The poem presents the theme of

the crisis of fidelity, marital sanctity, and sexual purity. The poem is about the unsuccessful and unhappy relationship between husband and wife. The game of chess is found in Middleton's *Women beware Women* (Eliot's Notes on "A Game of Chess" 51). Moreover, the game symbolically suggests the sexual perversity, the sexual intrigues and the moves made in the seduction of a woman at night. The game is symbolic of the wicked play full of man's sexual desires and emotions.

In line of the argument discussed above, Eliot's narrator visualizes a beautiful description of the parlor of a (modern) Cleopatra (Eliot's Notes on "A Game of Chess" 51) or perhaps "Belladonna" ("Burial of the Dead" 38) in a mock-heroic style in "A Game of Chess":

The chair she sat in, like a burnished throne,  
Glowed on the marble, where the glass  
Held up by standards wrought with fruited vines  
From which a golden Cupidon peeped out  
.....

The glitter of her jewels rose to meet it. ("A Game of Chess" 39)

Belladonna is Eliot's archetypal female, who is beautiful but sexually impure. Her chair looks like a throne of a queen. "A golden Cupidon" is peeping out of the decorated "glass" that is reflecting her desires. The Cupidon is the god of desire, erotic love, attraction, and affection in classical mythology. Belladonna's jewels are glittering on the dressing table.

In Belladonna's parlor, "The glass held up by standards wrought with fruited vines" (39) and "the glitter of her jewels" (39) suggest artificiality of modern urban life. The atmosphere inside her room is suffocating and stupefying, suffused with "the fattening" of "the prolonged candle-flames" (40), which is deadening the fresh air

blowing from the window. Here, the trivial triumphs the profound. Cleopatra (or Belladonna) and her husband are in the parlor. She uses perfume, but it arouses neither pleasure nor libido nor orgasm. It rather worsens her nerves. So, she complains, "My nerves are bad to-night" (40). She thinks of escaping from the insidious horror and desires for a closed car in case it rains. Here, the irony is that the husband and wife will escape from the suffocating room only to the more confined space of a car in which they will be sheltered from the reinvigorating water of rain and think of the dull intercourse (a game of chess). Here their emotional disturbance is primarily caused by their failure to take the advantage of water, the source of great delight, happiness, strength, and health.

Marriage institution fails if there is no sexual discipline and understanding between husband and wife. *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* accepts that a person is full of desires—"k mamaya ev yam puru a" (4.4.5). But sex is for reproducing children as per the scripture—"prajana " (*Taittir ya* 1.9). Water is symbolic of chastity, austerity, spirituality, and liberation in the Hindu religion. For example, bathing in the water of the Ganges or any river can bestow liberation if the water or the river is revered as Goddess or as a sacred object. However, Belladonna and her husband have no faith in water. They are licentious. Sexual perversity causes sterility. Henceforth, they have no children. Lil's husband Albert has recently come back from the War after four years, but she does not want children from him though her husband always pursues her for sex. "She's had five [abortions] already, and nearly died of young George" (42). Her crony feels the need of children for Lil; therefore, she asks Lil, "What you get married for if you don't want children?" (42). There is misunderstanding between husband and wife. This shows failures of the conjugal life and the traditional marriage institution due to lack of spiritual water.

Eliot has no trust with women. Therefore, he criticizes, "All the women are one woman" (Eliot's Notes on "Fire Sermon" 52) like Belladonna, Cleopatra, or Belinda. And "Lovely woman stoops to folly" ("Fire Sermon" 44). These undervaluing comments show that every woman shares the same characteristics regarding sexual matters. This further implies Eliot's misogyny. Belladonna literally means a "beautiful lady," frequently associated with Leonardo Da Vinci's *Madonna of the Rocks* and with his *Mona Lisa* or with Alexander Pope's Belinda in *The Rape of the Lock*, a mock-heroic narrative poem.

In "The Fire Sermon," Eliot shows that modern people do not really want the purifying rain of spirituality. Its reason is that spirituality deprives them of wantonness, sexual promiscuity, and perversity. The world is on the fire of sterile passion; the river of Thames is polluted; and "the canal" is "dull" (43) due to the dirty activities performed by the lustful people and due to the waste material deposited by them and industrialists as well. But only those who can resist all lust and desire can achieve real peace, happiness, and freedom, which is denied to the wastelanders.

"The Fire Sermon" and "The Game of Chess" move around the themes of the inconsistent nature of human beings, obsessive desire, and the struggle of dealing with passion as people try to live their lives. Both poems suggest that passion is fire, which destroys physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual lives.

Lust is like fire. Craving is like a river. Regarding lust and craving, *vet vatara Upani ad* explains that the human river is made of lust, anger, delusion and craving among other things (1.5). So, the human life is full of troubles. "The Fire Sermon" suggests that the rivers of London were full and pure in the past. Now, they are being contaminated and gradually drying out, and, as a result, turning every place into the wasteland. Therefore, "the [old] nymphs are departed" (42). This reminds us

of Matthew Arnold's lyric poem "The Dover Beach," which describes how the sea was once full and how it is receding and its beaches are turning into desert now.

In this situation, the river of Thames has been an entertaining place of brief liaisons. It has become popular for love makers' rendezvous. Presently, it has been made dirty with orgies of lust by the holidaying crowd of merrymakers. The river bears "empty bottles, sandwich papers, / silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends / Or other testimony of summer nights" (42). "White bodies naked on the low damp ground" (43) are seen here and there. This makes Tiresias unhappy and he finds himself deserted even by the modern nymphs (modern women). Lonely, he weeps and sings a sorrowful song by the bank of Leman. Thames looks like the sexual commercial place of a brothel house. The river witnesses Elizabeth and Leicester's debased romances. Lust burns them. They cannot control their craving for sex.

Eliot's narrator character Tiresias, a blind prophet, can see the past and future with his gifted sight. With his experience of both male and female, Tiresias can closely observe mechanical copulation between a typist girl and a clerk. Being her lover, the clerk "assaults [rapes her] at once" (44). Indeed, neither the woman nor the man feels emotionally connected in their physical relationship. Precisely, lovers' sexual relationship remains devoid of spirituality. In this context, the typist girl divulges ironically after her lover's departure: "Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over" (44). Mrs. Porter and her illegal sexual partner Mr. Sweeney are licentious. Mrs. Porter and her daughter "wash their feet in soda water" (43) to attract sexual customers instead of washing feet as part of the holy ritual at the bank of Thames. Water is simply water for them, not a holy thing that could purify the soul or that could bestow merits, virtues, heaven, or liberation.

In this way, the shameful, gross, and illicit sexual activities of prostitution, adultery, fornication, or rape take place near the river in England, which is indicated through a ballad sung by a vulgar soldier: “Twit twit twit / Jug jug jug jug jug jug / So rudely forc'd ("Fire Sermon" 43). Thus, the holy river is made dirty by a dirty game of sex. This suggests the lack of pure love either between married or unmarried couples. Sex is merely a routine, a dull activity without any real pleasure. Even consensual love is not satisfactory. In this connection, Beerendra Pandey remarks, "Life is psychologically inert, spiritually dead and sexually defunct" (116) due to lack of spiritual water. Psychology, spirituality, and sexuality are interconnected. Disturbance in one person causes disturbance in another.

In such a crisis, Tiresias, the narrator, thinks of "asceticism" of both—St. Augustine's “*Confessions*,” and "Buddha's Fire Sermon" (Eliot's Notes on *The Waste Land* 53)—as a spiritual treatment for the worldly disease of lust. Asceticism (living a simple and harsh life for spiritual reasons) urges to avoid lust. Lust traps lovers in bondage while austerity liberates them from it. The internal renunciation of lust, anger and avarice is better than the external renunciation of one's life style. The internal renunciation alone can bring a long-lasting peace and happiness.

The problem of sex and rape is an age-old problem. In the myths of the past, such as in the myth of "Philomel" ("Game of Chess" 40), the cruel Tereus marries Procne and rapes her sister Philomel. When the sisters start to run away, he pursues them and turns Philomel into a swallow and Procne into a nightingale (“Philomela,” *Oxford Dictionary*). This problem is due to the spiritual drought and can be solved to some extent if human beings become ready to listen to the spiritual voice of “the thunder [Prajapati, the Creator] — “DA-DA-DA” (“Thunder Said” 49). *The Waste*

*Land* regains the sparks of hope at the end of the poem due to the three divine syllables “DA-DA-DA” meaning “Give, sympathise and control.”

In "Death by Water," Eliot presents an ironical picture of modern man. In the past, people revered water, which was a symbol of reinvigoration, rejuvenation, and liberation. They were not afraid of dying by water. But now, they fear "Death by Water" (Eliot 46). In the Hindu philosophy, he who dies getting the touch of the water of "Gang " (Eliot, "Thunder Said" 49) at the time of death achieves liberation. The Gang has a power to purify both—matter and soul.

Liberation comes by faith in the Essence, the governing element of the universe. *Katha Upani ad* expresses that they who have fathomless faith in Brahma residing in their heart attain Brahma —"*astityevopalabdhasya tattvabh va pras dati*"(2.3.13). But people have no knowledge of this kind of spiritual faith because of their pursuit of material pleasure. In "Death by Water," Phlebas drowns and so dies by water "entering the whirlpool" (46) but does not get liberation because he had no faith in the purifying power of water, i.e., spirituality. He lived a material life until his death. "The whirlpool" is a symbol of the Wheel of life and death and circularity of time. *vet vataraUpani ad* argues that five sense objects (*pancavart m*) are the whirlpools and by being tied to them, the *jiva* (individual creature) moves on the Wheel of life and death (1.5). Therefore, Eliot makes us cautious of the Wheel (our *karma*) and the vanities of life: "O you who turn the Wheel and look to windward, / Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you" (47). The physical attributes are not real because they disappear with death. What is real is the Spirit dwelling in the heart of everyone.

Similarly, the Fourth Tempter reminds Thomas Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral*, "That nothing lasts but the Wheel [of time, life and death, or *karma*] turns"



(Eliot 1.192). This reminds us of John Dryden's great mock-epic satire "Mac Flecknoe," which presents the grim reality of life: "All human things are subject to decay, / And, when Fate summons, monarchs must obey" (*Poetry Foundation*).

Likewise, Harry shares his opinion to Agatha in *The Family Reunion*, we are "in and out, in an endless drift / Of shrieking forms in a circular desert. . . ." (Eliot 2.2.277).

The words "in and out," and "circular" indicate our endless birth and death. The circularity of time prevents our liberation and thus it draws a grim picture of human predicament.

One has to obtain knowledge from his or her teacher. In the Upaniṣad, disciples go to their teachers, who have learnt Vedas and have realized the Essence, in their *guru- i ya* (teacher-student) tradition carrying a bundle of dry Wood for their teachers from the jungle (*Muṇḍaka* 1.2.12). Similarly, in Eliot's *The Family Reunion*, Harry follows the *guru- i ya* tradition. He turns to her aunt Agatha for spiritual advice and knowledge so that he could be liberated from the Wheel:

HARRY. I have thought of you as the completely strong,

The liberated from the human Wheel.

So I looked to you for strength. Now I think it is

A common pursuit of liberation. (*Family Reunion* 2.2.273)

In this dialogue between Harry and his aunt Agatha, he thinks that Agatha is an enlightened soul that is "liberated from the human Wheel." Now, he thinks that both of them have a "common" goal to quest for the Essence whose realization brings about liberation. From the insight of the Upaniṣad, there are three types of persons: *puruṣa* (a simple person, *jīvātman*), *mahāpuruṣa* (a great person, *mahātman*) and *Paramapuruṣa* (the Supreme Person, *Paramātman*). A spiritual seeker (*puruṣa*) has to go to a great person who can lead the spiritual seeker to his or her destination (the

Supreme Person) with his past spiritual experience. So, a spiritual teacher is a great person that can show to a spiritual seeker an appropriate path for him or her. Also, that spiritual teacher can remove the hurdles during the quest process for the Essence. In the context of the play, Harry develops detachment (*vair gya*, the end of the hope of getting something from the world). But only detachment is not enough. After detachment, he needs spiritual guidance that he seeks from Agatha. Eventually, that spiritual guidance encourages him to surrender his life to God as a pilgrim. Thus, a spiritual teacher plays a great intermediary role to join a spiritual seeker to the Supreme Person.

Harry's outward journey to a pilgrimage is metaphorically the beginning of his inward journey within his heart. Ātm or Consciousness abides in our heart. By worshipping at this holy pilgrimage place (Ātm /the Conscious Self) inside ourselves, we become enlightened, limitless, and immortal. Pilgrims travel vast distances to arrive at holy places. But the enlightened do not need to travel anywhere to reach the Sacred Reality/Essence that dwells within the Conscious Self, Ātm .

Everyone is afraid of the shadow of death. Body changes into dust after death. Concerning shadow, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* expresses that shadow or external Darkness is the representative of the god of death (2.1.12). The theme of fear of death in "Death by Water" can be linked to Eliot's intense revelation of death accompanied by the sense of life's changeability and impermanence. Everything, without exception, is transient, evanescent, and inconstant as represented by "shadow" in "The Burial of the Dead":

There is shadow under this red rock,  
 (Come in under the shadow of this red rock),  
 And I will show you something different from either

Your shadow at morning striding behind you  
 Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;  
 I will show you fear in a handful of dust. (38)

This extract suggests that all of the conditioned existence is short-lived. Here the poet longs for a resolution to his fear of death. At first, the persona is afraid of death; he is under the grip of duality trying to escape from it. After musing on it, he comes to accept its inevitability in life. Actually, “shadow” or darkness stands for the ignorance, which is dwelling in our heart. The rock stands for God in Christianity. The phrase “a handful of dust” stands for death. Also “dust” stands for the mortal human body as the Chorus comments in *Murder in the Cathedral*, “Dust I am, to dust am bending” (Eliot2.211). Dust (death) alone is true in the world. In Christian and Hindu philosophies, life is likened to a pot of clay or “dust.” As the pot is fragile, so is the life. It can break any time. It has no guarantee of reliability and durability. Clay is symbolic of death. Only death is true in the world.

In this line of argument, the “shadow” and the “red rock” (the rock is red due to bright sunlight) are the representatives of a *jīva tma* (an individual self) and Param tma (the Supreme Self) respectively from the viewpoint of *Katha Upaniśad*, which posits that shadow (*cāyā*) and sunlight (*dharma*) reside in the intellect-like cave of the heart (1.3.1). A *jīva tma*, like the shadow, is less lighted—knowing little, and Brahma, like the sunlight, is fully lighted—knowing everything. However, the little light of the *jīva tma* is the light of Param tma. Itself for the little light of the shadow comes from the full-light-like sunlight itself. In other words, shadow (*jīva tma*) comes into existence with the light of the sun (Param tma). This idea of interdependence between shadow and sunlight, or *jīva tma* and Param tma illustrates that though a *jīva tma* seems to be different from Param tma from the viewpoint of the *jīva tma*'s

*avidyā* (ignorance, *Māyā*), they are inseparable from each other from the viewpoint of their Self-form. To this effect, both *jīvātman* and *Paramātman* are *Ātman* (the Self) exactly like ice and snow, which are both water though they look different physically.

Death is inevitable. Enforcing the idea of the inevitability of death, *Katha Upaniśad* asserts that human body is mortal (1.1.6, 1.1.28). In Eliot's "What the Thunder Said," the people are dead because of the lack of water, a symbol of spiritual, moral, and humanitarian virtues: "He who was living is now dead / We who were living are now dying / With a little patience" (47). This indicates that no one can conquer death. Death after life is an inevitable and natural process. Therefore, death should be faced with patience though "Sweet is dry and feet are in the sand . . . / There is not even solitude in the mountains / But dry sterile thunder without rain" (40). Life "without rain" is difficult. And there is no any other way to overcome the fear of death without maintaining "patience." Patience can overcome the mountain.

The narrator of "What the Thunder Said" wants to solve the crisis of water (spirituality), and, hence, he reaches the chapel, a symbol of the final destination of life, even by facing extreme heat through the dry, sandy, and stony desert without water. Unexpectedly, the chapel is empty with "dry bones" (49) and without water. At this disappointing situation, the narrator hears "a flash of lightning . . . with a damp gust / Bringing rain" (49). The rains relieve the drought and renew life but gratuitously. The sunken "Ganges" and "limp leaves" wait for more rain while the black clouds gather "far distant, over Himavanta [the Himalayan mountains]" (49). The jungle animals gather together and wait for more rain in silence when the thunder (*stanayitnu*) speaks: "DA / Datta. . . DA / Dayadhvam. . . and DA / D myata" (49) meant for human beings to be generous/charitable, kind, and self-controlled. Really,

human life has two inseparable parts: materiality and spirituality. Material life becomes incomplete without pursuing the spiritual life simultaneously.

The story of the thunder goes back to the mythological story of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad*. Accordingly, the Creator (Father Praj pati or Brahm ) speaks the same syllable "DA" at the end of His teaching to the three groups—gods, human beings, and demons (Asuras), who were learning from Him as celibate disciples. The gods understand that "DA" means for them to control themselves. The human beings understand that "DA" means for them to give charity or alms to others. Finally, the demons understand that "DA" means for them to sympathize others. Then the Creator agrees with their different understandings. Even now, the thunder repeats its divine voice, “DA-DA-DA” to remind us to subdue our senses (D myata), to give (Datta) to others, and to be merciful (Dayadhvam).

Thus, the three groups of disciples—gods, men, and demons—learn the triple lessons of self-control (*dama*), donation, alms-giving, or sacrifice (*d na*), and compassion or kindness (*day* ) from the Creator (5.2.1-3). These lessons given by the Creator are moral and spiritual norms and values to be followed by humanity at all places and in all times for material, mental and spiritual progress. But today’s modern civilization is bereft of these spiritual values as suggested by the title of *The Waste Land*. Life becomes meaningful if we practice giving more than taking from others. The wastelanders acquire theoretical or verbal knowledge of “give, sympathise, control” (Eliot 54). But more important than this verbal knowledge is the experimental knowledge. The message of the thunder can be fruitful only if the triple commands of the Creator are used practically and experienced in daily life.

Giving habit is a divine character, highly appreciable. Regarding giving habit, *C ndogya Upani ad* asserts that the person who does not give alms or donation, has

no faith, and offers no sacrifices is an Asura (a demon). In "What the Thunder Said," regarding the importance of giving, charity, or donation (Datta), Eliot asks, "What have we given?" (49). He possibly suggests that we have given "a moment's surrender" (49) to our sexual partners in our meaningless sexual encounters or pleasures. Instead, we should surrender our "blood shaking" heart to the Supreme Self because there is our true existence only in the divine union of the individual self with the Supreme Self. We are living "in our empty [having no intimate relationships] rooms" (49). Besides, life becomes meaningful if we learn to give things to others freely without hoping for any reward. Love for each other between one sex and other sex is selfish, fickle, and corrupted. They give love to each other, but sexual emotions and desires are at its core. They cannot control their fleshly instincts. And uncontrolled instincts cannot achieve success while questing for the Essence.

The serious question is: who is the model of perfect love? It is Brahma only. Only our love to Brahma and Brahma's love to us can be the perfect love. We are not able to give each other selfless love of spiritual value. Regarding the importance of mercy, kindness, or compassion (*daya*), Eliot remarks that each "is in his prison [of ignorance]" ("Thunder Said" 49). As a result, one becomes cruel and violent. The reason to this problem is a lack of mercy. So, the key to solve this problem is mercy. The tragedy of "broken Coriolanus" (49) took place due to the shortage of mercy. Human beings are isolated and alone from spiritual aspect. They need sympathy. Who holds "the key" that frees us from isolation? (49). Eliot suggests that Brahma holds the key. If we believe that each one of us is Brahma, we will become kind to each other.

The body is like a boat that can reach to destination by expert hands. In this matter, *vet vatara Upani ad* claims that the wise can cross all the streams of fear

and obstacles by the boat of Brahma —*brahmo upena* (2.8). Crossing the sea of life and death depends upon boating. Eliot suggests that boating depends upon the “expert” or “the controlling hands” of the boatman (“Thunder Said” 50). For boating, we need self-control. Regarding the importance of self-control (*D myata*), Eliot suggests that as we control “the boat” (symbolic of our body) with our “controlling hands” (symbolic of capable mind) and lead to our desired destination or home (symbolic of the abode of Brahma) with a cheerful “heart” by crossing “the sea” (symbolic of the world); so also, we should control our body and life with the rein of our mind (49-50) to go beyond the sea of the world. Indeed, one cannot detach oneself from the wasteland and take the journey back Home without self-restraint and self-discipline. For this, one should manage to subdue one’s uncontrolled mind and pleasure-seeking instinct.

The boatman needs guidance. Who can guide the person home, i.e., to the destination? *vet vataraUpaṇiśad* replies that Brahma can do so. The self-surrender to Brahma is needed for getting enlightenment/self-knowledge and *mokṣa* (6.18). Likewise, *Muṇḍaka Upaniśad* expresses that the world is a sea, and Brahma is across the sea. Through the meditation on Brahma with the incantation of the divine syllable "OM," one can easily cross the sea (2.2.6). If one relies on Brahma, It will show the path back to Its Home with the technique of self-control. So, Eliot posits that the boat of life should be steered gaily "beating obedient [surrendering oneself] to controlling hands [of Brahma]" (“Thunder Said” 50) for returning Home. Thus, he highlights the importance of self-control or self-discipline in order to handle the boat of life for attaining the goal of reaching the next side of the sea where liberation is attained.

Our body is unreal like an unreal city. From the viewpoint of *Chāndogya* and *vet vataraUpaṇiśad*, "Unreal City" means our unreal body inside whose heart

remains the immortal Self — *puru a* (8.1.1; 3.18), which is termed as "the still point" by Eliot:

Unreal City,  
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,  
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,  
I had not thought death had undone [destroyed] so many. ("Burial of the Dead" 39)

The "Unreal City" represents the modern cities of Europe, which has turned into the wasteland characterized by unreality, hypocrisy, suffering, and death after the devastating effect of World War I. The words "Unreal" and "brown fog" evoke a metaphysical and meditative tone.

Fire is destructive as desires whereas it is liberative as austerity and knowledge. In the form of knowledge, fire is Brahma. In this connection, *Katha Upani ad* expresses that Brahma can be attained only by *tapa* (austerity) and celibacy (1.2.15). Also, knowledge and liberation can be attained by our prayer to Brahma. So, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* teaches us to pray to Brahma to lead us from non-being to being, from darkness to light and from death to immortality (1.3.28). Eliot uses "Burning" fire as a metaphor to imply both the pain of worldly experience and the means to purify our desires for going beyond lust:

Burning burning burning burning  
O Lord Thou pluckest me out  
O Lord Thou pluckest  
burning ("Fire Sermon" 46)

The phrase "burning burning burning burning" are from "Buddha's Fire Sermon" (Eliot 53). Similarly, the phrase "O Lord Thou pluckest me out" is from "St.



Augustine's *Confessions*" (53). The word "burning" is repeated five times. This repetition shows how impatient human passions are. The gap between the third and fourth lines are suggestive of monotonous and futile effort of human beings. Moreover, worldly things and desires are like the burning fire, which is irresistibly attractive but ultimately becomes the fatal cause as the moth's desire for fire becomes the cause of its death. So, Eliot prays to God to "pluckest" him from the well of burning fire just as a spiritual seeker prays to Brahma to remove the veil of golden fire(ignorance, illusion, darkness, obstacles, deceptive attractions) from the mouth of Truth (Brahma) to see It in *v sya Upani ad* (15).

As indicated above, fire is associated with both bondage and liberation. The fires of the burning mind such as lust, passion, anger, greed, delusion, infatuation, despair, lamentation are always "burning" (afflicting) all beings. Lust can be burnt by the fire of knowledge and by the mercy of Brahma as well. Therefore, we should pray to Brahma to "pluckest" out of the well of burning fire. Only the rain of spirituality can extinguish the burning fire of desires. Liberation or immortality cannot be attained by mundane desires. They only add fuel to our desires such as the desires for wife and wealth. A lustful person is like the dog which is beaten and troubled by flies. The goal of life is to attain purity, peace, and happiness through self-control but not through self-indulgence.

"In What the Thunder Said," the thunder's message such as "Datta. Dayadhvam. D myata" (50) is a possible assurance of rain and liberation for the wastelanders wounded by World War I. The message offers some hope to the Western world. By that message, the wastelanders can regenerate or reinvigorate the dead world. Regarding this regeneration, the isolated figure asks: "I sat upon the shore / Fishing [an allusion to the Fisher King, who was wounded due to his excessive

passion], with the arid plain behind me / Shall I at least set my lands in order?" (Eliot 50). If the isolated figure practices faithfully the triple message of the thunder, the figure can restore the dead, wasteland to a new life. Otherwise, he cannot do so. But the isolated figure, a representative of the wastelanders, does not seem to be prepared for practicing the triple message in his life. Mere utterances of the triple mantra of the Upani ads cannot establish peace unless they truly believe in and practice the interrelated mantras of the thunder.

Every Upani ad including *Brihad ranyaka* ends with "OM Sh nti Sh nti Sh nti ,," meaning "O Brahma, bestow your peace upon us all." However, Eliot does not write "OM" ahead of "Sh nti " at the end of *The Waste Land*. Without being preceded by "OM," the benedictory mantra "Sh nti Sh nti Sh nti " cannot become complete. In my opinion, Eliot does not use "OM" before the benedictory mantra "Sh nti Sh nti Sh nti " perhaps due to his incomplete knowledge, partial and limited by his own time and culture. He seems to fail to understand the significance of the sacred syllable "OM," which is the essence of all the Vedas, the Upani ads, and of the whole Omk r Family (Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhas, and Jains) that respects and utters the sacred syllable "OM" at the end of their mantras or prayers exactly like "Amen" or "Ameen" is done by the followers of Semitic or Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). However, he uses the word "OM" at the end of his family name as "T. S. Eliot, OM" (*Collected Poems: 1909-1962*) that signifies the influence of the Hindu philosophy on his ideology.

The foregoing discussion illuminates that "OM" is a Sanskrit divine word equivalent to "Amen," an English divine word. Thomas Becket uses "Amen" two times in the initial and final parts of *Murder in the Cathedral* when he "preaches in the cathedral on Christmas morning" (Interlude 198, 200). The sound [m] is common

in these two divine words. The recitation of the spiritual sounds like “Amen” or “OM” can take us into the state of deep silence. This deep silence can lead to God-realization. *vet vatara Upani ad* describes this kind of benefit of doing meditation on the divine sound “OM” as Brahma or God. Then the meditator becomes free from all kinds of shackles and sufferings, and the Wheel of birth and death ceases (1.11). The sound “OM” stands for both Nirgu a Nir k ra Brahma (the Impersonal Ultimate Essence) and Sagu a S k ra Brahma (God) in the Upani ad. The “OM” sound has universal significance because it is uttered by the Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhas as well to establish the mystic connection with the Essence.

In Eliot's early poems like *The Waste Land*, the characters in the beginning fall prey to the materialistic or romantic world but later on gain a sudden inexplicable moment of mystical spiritual insight (epiphany). The best example is the scene in *The Waste Land* where the protagonist visits a real girl carrying hyacinths (a kind of flowers) and spends the rest of the poem trying to recover that vision, juxtaposing the legendary Quest for the Grail (58):

Yet when we came back, late, from the hyacinth garden,  
 Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not  
 Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither  
 Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,  
 Looking into the heart of light, the silence.  
 Qed und leer das Meer. ("Burial of the Dead" 38)

The word “nothing” suggests a sexual failure, a moment of impotence. After a long gap of time, the protagonist now suddenly realizes that it was his foolishness to fall into the love of the “hyacinth” girl; all this memory of his encounter with the girl during his youth is bleak and empty— “Qed und leer das Meer.” This is the moment

of the speaker's nihilistic epiphany. The citation also suggest that the characters are spiritually "dead" knowing "nothing" in the post-war society due to spiritual emptiness. "The heart of light, the silence" refers to Ātmā or the Essence that is inside the heart. The speaker knows "nothing" about it. Here, Eliot appears to be moving more as a seeker than as a finder of metaphysical and spiritual knowledge.

Life is meant for self-realization. So, *Katha Upaniṣad* invokes us to arise, awake and go to the best great person to know the Supreme Brahma — "*uttiṣṭhata jagrata prapya varan nibodhata*"(1.3.14). Eliot compares life and death, and pain and pleasure with two waves of the sea to indicate their brief span of time and appeals us to accomplish our goal to find the Essence soon with complete simplicity:

Not known, because not looked for

But heard, half-heard, in the stillness

Between two waves of the sea.

Quick now, here, now, always

A condition of complete simplicity

(Costing not less than everything). ("Little Gidding" V 145)

We do not know the Essence because we have not searched for it. However, only a few seekers could sometimes half-hear the voice of the Essence "in the stillness" of their meditation. As the waves appear and disappear quickly, so also is the life, having a short life span. Between the time of life and death, the common people do not know about Brahma or the Essence because they do not search for it. Even if they hear about it, they cannot realize it on their own. They do not do either self-inquiry or self-attempt either for realizing the Essence. Therefore, they cannot attain self-knowledge and self-realization. However, the attempt for the upliftment of the soul should be

done immediately when its need is realized in deep mood of reflection. This attempt can be started "always."

There is no time boundary for this kind of spiritual attempt and upliftment. The attempt can be started with "complete simplicity," as Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* does. Simplicity helps to purify the source and motives of (bad) actions. The journey of material life is complex and expensive, but that of spiritual one is completely simple and cheap if we can observe strict discipline and renunciation, and maintain resolute faith. When we try to possess something in the material world, we must pay for it, but when we try to forsake something in the spiritual world, we do not have to pay any more for it. The path of the material world is crowded, but the path of the spiritual world is less travelled and peaceful. Therefore, we should not delay to search for the Essence, which is always present in everything of the world. Thus, the above extract depicts the quest motif. "The sea" has two edges. Most of the people like to live on this edge. Only a few people wish to cross the sea to reach the other edge of the Supreme Bliss.

In line with the above argument about the quest motif of life, Eliot seeks to purify the origins and motives of his action with "complete simplicity." This suggests that the meaning of life lies in living a saint-like life of simplicity. "Complete simplicity" does not cost any more, but people find it difficult to live a completely simple life. An individual of simplicity is satisfied with nothing sort of everything. It is simple to achieve the Essence if one thinks that one himself or herself is Brahma. Obviously, only the saint or saint-like people can lead a life of complete simplicity. Contrastingly, the life of show and pump, pretentiousness, complexity, snobberies, and vanities costs more. Moreover, adherence to dualism creates complexities whereas adherence to non-duality creates simplicity.

Eliot presents similar quest motif in "Burnt Norton" V, which urges us not to waste time. Otherwise, we could not complete our journey to our Eternal Source:

Quick now, here, now, always—

Ridiculous the waste sad time

Stretching before and after. (122)

Time will make us sad if we waste it for the worldly purpose. So, it is “ridiculous” to “waste sad time” that is always “stretching before and after” our birth. This ridiculousness hints that our effort to fulfil our physical desires causes meaningless and endless suffering. Time is not under our control, but we are under the control of time. Therefore, time should not be misused. Rather it should be used for fulfilling the demands of the spiritual dimension of life. In terms of the *Upani ad*, the phrase “Quick now, here, now, always” indicates that “You are that [Brahma]” (*C ndogya* 6.8.7) all the time or more directly “I am Brahma” (*Brihad ranyaka* 1.4.10) even right now. This kind of understanding is the self-realization of Brahma. Realization means knowing something that is already there, not creating anything new. Ātm or Brahma is already in existence. We just need to be aware of Its eternal existence in us in order to become Brahma. A sick person cannot recuperate with the medicine in his or her hand without swallowing it. Likewise, a person cannot be free bondage without his or her immediate experience of the Self.

Still further, Eliot presents the quest motif in "The Dry Salvages" I. Dwelling on the future and the past is meaningless. In this regard, *Katha Upani ad* states that the wise man who knows Brahma by whose power we see the scenes of the past and the present does not grieve (2.1.4). All our labors and calculations for our worldly benefit without thinking of others' benefit are all deception:

Lying awake, calculating the future,

Trying to unweave, unwind, unravel  
 And piece together the past and the future,  
 Between midnight and dawn, when the past is all deception. . . . ("Dry  
 Salvages" I 131)

We should neither go back to the past nor ahead in the future. We should remain in the present moment to live a meaningful life. The things done during the darkness of ignorance are "all deception." Hence, Eliot indirectly emphasizes on living in the present, being conscious of life's real purpose, and doing something meaningful with conscience and knowledge. Living in the present means living in the center of one's Self, realizing oneself as the embodiment of *Sat-Cit- nanda* (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). If we spend our present time thinking over the Essence of life, life becomes meaningful. Otherwise, if we spend our time regretting the past and making castles in the air as to how our life can be spent luxuriously, then we will really miss our time. Living in past or in future is an illusion. Past is like a dream.

Our goal of life should be to move ahead to achieve our goal of attaining the Essence unconditionally. This quest motif of life is close to *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* that inspires us to go to truth from untruth, to light from darkness and to immortality from mortality (1.3.28). Justifying the quest motif of life, *Katha Upani ad* expresses that Brahma is the ultimate destination—"s *par gati* " (1.3.11). Eliot also presents his quest motif stating that our journey should be continued even by facing challenges and obstacles unless we reach our own Home (Brahma):

Home is where one starts [his journey] from.

.....

Old men ought to be explorers

Here and there does not matter  
 We must be still and still moving  
 Into another intensity  
 For a further union, a deeper communion  
 Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,  
 The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters  
 Of the petrel and the porpoise. ("East Coker" V 129)

The journey of life from materiality to spirituality, from bondage to liberation or from misery to permanent happiness should be made in “intensity.” The words “further union” and “deeper communion” indicate the deep desire of the soul for being united with the Essence. These words are related to the self-realization/spiritual realization of Brahma. The world is like “the vast waters” where there is “dark cold,” “empty desolation,” and the “cry” of different sea creatures. Life is a struggle against all these difficulties. We cannot face them without being “still” (patient). The search for the reintegration and restoration of the lost unity with Brahma is similar to returning “Home” or searching for Home (the source of life) in Eliot’s writing. The destination (“Home”) of everyone is the same.

Regarding the above-mentioned quest motif, *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad* expresses that when we know Ātm or Brahma, this whole world is known— “*tmani khalvare dri te rute mate vijñ ta ida sarva veditam*” (4.5.6), nothing remains to be known— “*n ta param veditavyam hi kincit*” ( *vet vatara* 1.12), and we achieve everything through the achievement of Ātm or Brahma. In terms of *Katha Upani ad*, those who see Brahma in their own hearts all the time get permanent peace but not those who fail to do so (2.2.13). Therefore, Eliot wants us to continue our spiritual journey of life to reach the original source of our life:



We shall not cease from exploration.

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.

.....

That which was the beginning;

At the source of the longest river. ("Little Gidding" 145)

The journey of life is "the longest river" that passes through the 8.4 million of species of life through rebirth. Since the source of "the longest river" is "the still point," its destination is also "the still point." That is, "the still point" is the place from where our journey starts and where our journey ends. Unless the journey is complete, we must move on the cycle of life and death repeatedly. When we learn that we can get only brief moments of the enjoyments of peace and pleasure through our physical and material search, our external exploration/seeking for them stops. Then our internal exploration/seeking for perpetual peace and unlimited happiness starts. When we achieve "the still point," the internal exploration of the spiritual journey becomes complete and it (the internal exploration), too, stops. What we had been seeking all our life was the end of seeking. Even this desire for seeking ends at the attainment of "the still point."

The importance of knowledge is revealed through ignorance. Without knowing about ignorance, we cannot know about knowledge. This idea is influenced by the *neti neti* (apophatic knowledge) principle of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* that nothing is Brahma (3.8.8, 4.4.22, 4.5.15). After knowing about nothingness, we know that everything is Brahma in Ved ntic process. Hinting at this message, Eliot states that "In order to arrive what you do not know / you must go by a way which is

ignorance" ("East Coker" III 127), and further states that "the lesson of ignorance, [is a treatment] of incurable diseases" (*Family Reunion* 2.2.281). Paradoxically, the experience or message of "ignorance" is a cure of all "incurable diseases" of the world. These diseases are not physical diseases but rather mental or psychological one related to the problems of metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology. Besides, this discussion implies that without knowing about duality, we cannot know about non-duality. Ignorance and duality reveal all the more the glory of knowledge and non-duality respectively.

One should renounce all kinds of desires, passions and properties and be ascetic while questing for the Essence. Regarding these pre-qualifications of a spiritual seeker, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* states that the spiritual seeker should be calm, self-controlled, withdrawn into oneself (self-denying, detached, passionless), patient (enduring), and collected or concentrated (4.4.23). It is necessary to transcend materiality to realize the Essence through self-transformation. To transcend materiality, we should walk on the path of spiritual knowledge. For achieving the transcendental state, we should be humble, renounce the world and its property and pleasure, and enter the world of *sam dhi*, the non-dual transcendental state of self-realization, through meditation. Or we can avoid physical and mental movements involving memory and desire, especially strong sexual appetites. Therefore, Eliot recommends:

Descend lower, descend only

Into the world of perpetual solitude [*sam dhi*, a state of meditative absorption]

World not world, but that which is not world.

Internal darkness, deprivation

And destitution of all property,

Desiccation of the world of sense,  
 Evacuation of the world of fancy,  
 Inoperancy of the world of spirit:  
 This [renunciation] is the one way, and the other [asceticism]  
 Is the same, not in movement  
 But abstention from movement: while the world moves  
 In appetency, on its metalled ways  
 Of time past and time future ("Burnt Norton" III 120).

This extract has a quest motif. Here, the first two lines suggest that the goal of life is to attain "perpetual solitude" or *sam dhi*, which is the non-dual transcendental state of self-realization. *Sam dhi* is the state of absorption or immersion in Brahma or the achievement of sameness or identity with it. Eliot finally suggests that till the time one does not walk on the path of renunciation and/or asceticism and nourishes desires, especially sexual ones, one cannot be free from "the world" that moves with past and future "time" or on the cycle of life and death.

Worldly attractions are traps. Lust weakens our power. Regarding physical pleasures, *Katha Upani ad* confirms that all the physical pleasures are transient. They wear out the vigor of all the senses of persons. Even a full life is brief (1.1.26).

Therefore, the Fourth Tempter warns Thomas Becket, "Hooks have been baited with morsels of the past. / Wantonness is weakness" (*Murder in the Cathedral* 1.190). An individual self that desires is a feeble creature; that person meets an unpleasant situation or event in the end. Past still lures us with its false promise but we do not know that "wantonness" weakens our five senses, both physically and spiritually. Making Harry aware of this wantonness, Mary states:

MARY. Pain is the opposite of joy

But joy is a kind of pain

I believe the moment of birth

Is when we have knowledge of death. (*Family Reunion* 1.2.251)

Even “joy” is also a kind of “pain” because it finally invites pain. The consumption of material things cannot give permanent joy. They come and go. With labor we achieve them and with pain we lose them. Moreover, we have new “birth” or we rise eternally when we know about the mystery of death and the ephemerality of body and physical pleasures.

Water is Brahma. River and the sea are two forms of water or two planes of existence. *Candogya Upani ad* describes water as Brahma that is too mysterious to be sought (7.10.2). Likewise, *Kena Upani ad* expresses that Brahma cannot be understood by words; It can be understood by signals only (2.2-3). It can be only realized as the existence of one’s Self as a valid proof (*Mukya* 7). In this sense, Eliot remarks in his poetic vision, “I do not know much about gods; but I think the river / Is a strong brown god—sullen, untamed and intractable, / Patient to some degree / recognized as a frontier. . . .” (“Dry Salvages” 130). This river reminds us of the Goddess “Gangā” spouting from the heaven over the head of Lord Śiva (Brahma), the bestower of immortality, in the “Himavanta” (*Waste Land* 49). “The river” also indicates nature (*prakṛiti*) that is “sullen, untamed and intractable” beyond the controlling power of human beings. Symbolically, Gangā is the river of knowledge in which every spiritual aspirant wants to bathe.

According to *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad*, there are thirty-two kinds of gods (3.9.2). Rudra (a dreadful form of Lord Śiva) is one of them, “a brown god” that is beyond our logical power of understanding. Similarly, *Bṛihad ranyaka Upani ad* defines that human beings’ ten kinds of *prāṇa* (ten senses, breaths) are called Rudra.

When all *prāṇa* departs from the mortal body, it makes its relatives weep. Therefore, it (*prāṇa*) is called Rudra that makes us weep at the time of the departure of the soul from our relatives' body (3.9.4).

A *jīvātman* (individual self) itself is Brahma, but it is not aware of its true spiritual nature. Regarding this oneness between the *jīvātman* and Brahma, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* compares individual selves (*jīvātman*) with the rivers flowing towards east or west, and Brahma with the sea. As the rivers finally are reunited with their origin, the sea, the same way, the individual selves are ultimately reunited with Brahma (6.10.1-3). In this sense, Eliot expresses, "The river is within us, the sea is all about us" ("Dry Salvages" II 30). Here, "the river" is a symbol of individual selves or the *Ātman* dwelling within individual bodies, and "the sea" is a symbol of the Supreme Self, characterized by permanence and omnipresence. Rivers flow impatiently to get their original source (the sea) and become still only when they get it.

Similar to the allegory of the river and the sea, the individual selves become peaceful and happy only when they attain Brahma, their original source of life, and become Brahma as well. The word "sea" suggests the universality, omnipresence, and omnipotence of Brahma. As the depth of the sea cannot be known, so also Brahma cannot be known as an object through our logic and reasoning power. If It can be known, It is not Brahma. Nevertheless, as the river and the sea are essentially water and have no difference between them, so also the individual self/*Ātman* and the Universal Self (Brahma) are the same Self. Essentially, they are one and inseparable. In this sense, Brahma can be understood. Besides, the individual self can become free of impurities (*mala*) by bathing in *Ātman*, the sacred river flowing within the heart. Ordinary water cannot wash away the impurities or sin of our innermost soul.

One gets results after death as per one's *karma*, and, therefore, one should do one's works selflessly without any attachment for having no rebirth. Regarding *karma*, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* asserts that one gets his new life after death as per one's *karma* and desires, and gets no rebirth if one becomes desireless before one's death (4.4.6). Likewise, *vet vatara Upani ad* asserts that Brahma allots the results to the creatures or grants their desires as per their *karma* (6.13). The final destination of everyone's journey is the same Brahma. One should continue one's journey of life by fulfilling one's duty without being ambitious and attached.

By doing so, one can be free from the bondage of *karma*. This is the message of *karma yoga* exhorted by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-Gītā* (2.47, 3.20). The principal sources of this *karma yoga* principle are found in chapters 2 and 3 in *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *śvāsyā* (1-2), *vet vatara* (6.4) and *Muṇḍaka* (3.3.2, 3.26) *Upani ads*. *Karma yoga* means performing actions without expecting the fruits of actions. In this sense, Eliot repeats Lord Kṛṣṇa's admonitions to Arjuna that we are like voyagers (seafarers). According to our *karma*, we must experience the result as decided by the sea (Brahma):

"O voyagers, O seamen,

You who come to port, and you whose bodies

Will suffer the trial and judgment of the sea,

Or whatever event, this is your real destination."

So Kṛṣṇa, as when he admonished Arjuna

On the field of battle.

Not fare well,

But fare forward, voyagers. ("Dry Salvages" 135)

This excerpt has a quest/journey theme. The world is “the field of battle.” In this battlefield, humanity should not be afraid of doing work as per their duty. The “voyagers” (humanity) should not worry as to how to “fare [travel] well” but how to “fare [travel] forward” to quest for the Essence. This suggests that we should do our deeds without expecting the desired results of our *karma* by accepting destiny with an equal mind towards victory and defeat, gain and loss, pleasure, and pain. (This is the message of *karma yoga* in *Bhagavat-Gītā* 2.38). We should be satisfied with our lot. “Whatever event” of *karma*, devotion, or knowledge one follows, the destination of any path is the same Brahma as much as the destination of any river is the sea. However, we are capable of committing bad deeds, sometimes horrible or harmful deeds because we all make mistakes. As human beings, none of us are perfect in thinking and behavior even though we all are divine, not evil, in nature.

Finally, everyone has to come to the same “port” of death, the final stage of life. At this stage, no one can escape from the divine law of *karma* made by the sea. Here, the term “the sea” has three meanings. One meaning is Brahma. Second meaning is our inner consciousness that is a real judge of our *karma*. The last meaning is our own *karma*, the prime cause that determines results.

Brahma is the ground of all existence. Brahma illumines us, but we cannot illumine It. Everything is known through Its power. We are like a lamp, which cannot illumine the sun. *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad* questions—“*yeneda sarva vijñāta kena vijñāyate*”(by what means can a person know Brahma through whom a person knows others?) (4.5.15). The existence of Brahma can be felt in everything. The knowing power that we have comes from Brahma:

CHORUS. We praise Thee, O God, for Thy glory displayed in all the  
creatures of the earth,

In the snow, in the rain, in the wind, in the storm; in all of Thy  
creatures, both the hunters and the hunted.

For all things exist only as seen by Thee, only as known by  
Thee, all things exist

Only in Thy light, and Thy glory is declared even in that which  
Denies Thee; the Darkness declares the glory of light.

Those who deny Thee could not deny, if Thou didst not exist;  
and their denial is never complete, for if it were so, they  
would not exist. (*Murder in the Cathedral* 2.220)

Both the hunters and the hunted get light (consciousness to act) from Brahma.

Everything is in existence due to the presence of the non-dual Brahma in all of them.

Those who deny Brahma do not know that the capacity to deny also comes from Its power and that they themselves would not be alive without its existence. The words "the rain," "the wind," "the storm," and "Thy light and thy glory" indicate the existence of Brahma. "Darkness" and "light" are the forms of Brahma, both indicating Its existence. Darkness reveals the glory of light. Darkness is associated with the bad qualities of the mind such as anger, lust, and evils. Why has Brahma created them? In order to create saints. An individual becomes saint by conquering and the bad qualities of the mind and the senses. There is nothing impossible for that person who has subdued his passions. That person can even realize Brahma through its Grace. Besides, lust also holds importance in the world because Brahma can perpetuate its creation only through lust.

In a nutshell, on the one hand, water is a metaphor for rebirth and regeneration of the lost spiritual and moral values of life and also a metaphor for liberation (*mok a*). On the other hand, water including the river and the sea symbolizes Ātm , Brahma, or



the Essence both in Eliot's writings and the Upaniṣads. Water also symbolizes the cosmic journey of human beings for the quest of the Essence. The quest for the Essence becomes complete if we become successful to go from materiality to spirituality, from bondage to liberation, or from misery to unbound happiness. We can realize the Essence if we follow the three cardinal spiritual messages, "give, sympathise, control" with the practice of selfless, disinterested *karma* as admonished by the Upaniṣads or by Lord Kṛiṣṇa in *Bhagavad-Gītā*. As a whole, Eliot's writings criticize materiality. They are about the search of modern human beings for water, the Essence. Knowledge is the main key to find the Essence and liberation. In this context, the following chapter highlights the concept of Ātmā, Brahma (the Essence), and their oneness through the symbol of "the still point" with more focus on one's search for oneself.

## Chapter Five

### The Quest for Ātm and Brahma (the Essence) and their Oneness in

#### Eliot's *Four Quartets*

The previous chapter analyzed how the symbol of “water” represents the quest for the Essence in Eliot’s writings. Similarly, this chapter attempts to identify the quest for Ātm and Brahma with their concept and establish their oneness through the symbol of “the still point.”

"The still point" is a central theme in Eliot's poems and plays. There are direct and indirect references to "the still point" in his texts. "The still point" means the Still Center, which is known as Ātm or Brahma in the Upani ad. "Still" means *nitya*—constant, eternal, ever present (*Mu aka* 1.1.6; *vet vatara* 6.13; *Katha* 1.3.15)—Brahma. Besides, the word "Still" means peaceful—“*ntam*” (*M ukya* 7). "The still point" also indicates *candrabindu* (the moon-like spot of the sacred syllable “OM”—ॐ), which represents the *tur ya* (the transcendental superconscious) state of “OM.” “OM” (Aum) means Brahma in *M ukya Upani ad* (1). The Upani ads treat both Ātm and Brahma in the same sense. Ātm Itself is Brahma (*M ukya* 2). The similar terms used by Eliot for "the still point" are "still," "white light," "heart of light," "the multifoliate rose," "the center of silent Word," "stillness," "axle-tree," "eternity,” “the center of reality,” "the Word,” “God,” "the Lord," "the self," "eternal," "the dance," "the Absolute," and "Home." Similarly, he uses "the shaft of sunlight" and "enlightened mystification" to indicate divine knowledge, inspiration, or revelation.

For Christians, the word “soul” (the Ātm that is in an individual body in terms of the Upani ad) might simply describe the essence of who we are. But for Hindus, Ātm is the Divine Self, which Itself is Brahma. The Christians do not agree

that we have always been part of God. Nor do they agree that we were, are and will be Brahma forever. The Orthodox Church has, at best, the concept of theosis (deification, divinization, or apotheosis), the concept of "making divine," which is quite different from the Upaniṣadic concept of being already "divine."

"The still point" (Logos) is the source of eternal, absolute peace and happiness. The word "peace" means Brahma as indicated in *śvāsyā Upaniṣad* (Shanti Pāṭha). This "peace" is the Absolute and Eternal Peace (*śvetāvatara* 4.14), which is without disturbing thoughts similar to the ocean without disturbing waves. Eliot wants to achieve "the still point" to end three planes of sufferings—physical (*dhībhautika*), natural (*dhīdaivika*), and spiritual (*dhītmika*)—through "Shānti Shānti Shānti" (*Waste Land* 50), which means peace, peace, and peace. As Eliot writes in his Notes on *The Waste Land*, "Shānti . . . [is] a formal ending to an Upaniṣad. The Peace which passeth understanding is our equivalent to this word [Shānti]" (55). Here, Eliot suggests that "Peace" does not simply mean peace, which we understand in our daily life. "Peace" means Brahma. Language is inadequate to describe this "Peace." When we become free from the fear of bondage, we can attain this "Peace."

"The still point" can be realized through the negative, mystical, or transcendental vision that is used to describe the non-dual Brahma. When it is realized, the three identities (the knower, knowledge and the known) become one. Then bliss is realized. The concept of "the still point" is found in *Praṇa Upaniṣad*. As the spokes of a Wheel are rested on the hub (*nāva* of a chariot, so all the sixteen qualities (*kalā*) of the universe are rested upon Brahma. Such a worthy-knowing Brahma should be known so that death will not trouble (6.6). The concept of the ineffability of the non-dual Brahma is found in *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad*, which

expresses that Brahma is *neti neti* (2.3.6)—apophatic—meaning whatever is visible is not Brahma; this (thing) or that (thing) is not Brahma. Everything is negated as Brahma because Brahma is beyond description. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* describes the nature of the non-dual characteristics of Brahma. Accordingly, Ātmā or Brahma, who is neither with form nor without form, who neither dies nor is born, and who is blissful or who is beyond description, is described as *neti neti* (7). These negative words manifest the ineffable mysteries of Brahma beyond human understanding.

Similarly, describing the transcendental non-dual Brahma, *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad* states that Ātmā /Brahma is *netineti*—neither this, nor that. It is uncatchable or incomprehensible, indestructible, unattached, unfettered, unaffiliated, and indeclinable (4.5.15). Bliss is Brahma — “*nando brahmeti vyajñānāt*” (*Taittirīya* 3.6.1), “*vijñānam nandam brahma*” (*Bṛihad ranyaka* 3.9.28). Brahma, the Self-Creator, is verily the source of joy for one becomes happy by coming in touch with that source of joy— “*raso vai sa , rasam hyevāyam lavdhvā nandi bhvati*” (*Taittirīya* 2.2.1).<sup>5</sup> This suggests that the next form of Brahma is bliss, joy, delight, or happiness.

In line with the arguments as discussed above, Eliot realizes “the still point” negatively or mysteriously, which is the source of infinite bliss:

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor  
towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance [effect of *Māyā* ; action or means], and there is only  
the dance [bliss or all-consciousness alone]. (“Burnt Norton” II 119)

Eliot uses the structure of “neither . . . nor” pattern in this vignette. The negative pattern is used as the principle of *neti neti* to describe the non-dual nature of Brahma in the Upaniṣad as mentioned above. “The still point” is “neither flesh” (with form) “nor fleshless” (without form). It is neither immanent nor transcendental. It is neither on rest nor in “movement” here and there. It is not only a fixed point (static) where past and future merge. It is dynamic, too. There is neither increase nor decrease. There is “no dance” (effect of *Māyā*) but only “the dance” (everlasting bliss or all-consciousness alone; Brahma). Thus, “the still point” is devoid of internal-external-differences.

The Wheel of life or the world is “turning” (moving, changing) all the time. As Eliot rightly comments, we are “Distracted from distraction by distraction / Filled with fancies and empty of meaning” (“Burnt Norton” III 120). When all the mental distractions caused by desires disappear and all the thought-waves in the mind are stilled, the knower (doer, actor, or dancer), knowledge (acting, means or dance) and the object to be achieved (the end, bliss itself, Brahma)—all three become One. That is, they merge into Brahma. The distinction between them disappears. The dancer and his dance become “the dance” (the bliss, “the still point”) itself. In other words, what remains alone is “the dance” of bliss or Brahma in the self-realizing process and thus one attains enlightenment or pure all-consciousness with pure mind. At this state, “Past and future” merge into the everlasting present. And the Wheel of life stops.

The above poem describes the blessed mood of being one with Brahma. It suggests that the source of happiness and the center of all creatures is Brahma. Everything is changing constantly. In the constantly changing thing or state, there is something unchangeable. The unchanging element is “the still point” (*sattā* : thisness, isness, existence/being) of the Wheel of Brahma (*Brahmacakra*). That is also known

as Ātmā or the Self. When one attains "the still point," one does not have to move around "the Wheel." This kind of knowledge releases one from bondage and accords freedom.

Eliot differentiates between the two terms: "the dance" and "dance." He uses the word "dance" to mean the effect of *Māyā* or to indicate the action or means that is used to achieve bliss. He uses the word "the dance" as the bliss itself. The word "the dance" also means *Līlā* or Divine Play. It reminds us of the cosmic sacred dance of Lord Śhiva dancing as consciousness in everybody's heart in terms of *Māhātmya* (7) and *vetāvatara* (3.2, 3.11, 4.10) Upaniṣads. In fact, the whole creation is the Dance of Lord Śhiva or Natarāja, the Cosmic or Universal Consciousness. As He Dances with his drum, the divine sound "OM" is heard; His consciousness spreads; and the whole universe with different varieties of objects, animate and inanimate, appears in each creation after the Great Dissolution. In other words, with his dance, the inert nature (*Māyā*) gets power and starts dancing in tune with His dance. He is not affected by His dance but affects others with His dance. Thus, the whole creation is only the manifestation of the Universal Consciousness alone. That is, the whole creation is the embodiment of Lord Śhiva, another name of Brahma.

On the one hand, Lord Śhiva holds a drum (*damru*) and on the other hand, He holds flame. Drum symbolizes creation and dynamic forces of the nature (time, motion, and Action). Flame symbolizes destruction or the Great Dissolution. With that Great Dissolution, the dynamic physical forces of the universe will stop functioning. Thus, Śhiva is the God of both destruction and a creative/reproductive power. He destroys things to make renewal and new growth possible. The figure 1 given on page 148 illustrates the divine qualities of Shiva. Sketching His divine qualities, Lynne Gibson writes that [in the picture] "He is shown dancing in a circle of

flames and standing on the dwarf of evil and ignorance. The flames symbolize *Shakti*, energy. They also remind Hindus of the fires of cremation, which follow death” (17). Shakti is believed to be the female form as Lord Śiva’s consort Pārvatī, and as other forms such as goddesses Durgā and Kālī. Without His energy, Shakti, He is not capable of destroying and reproducing things.

Divine joy is inside our own Self, not outside. Divine joy comes while one is in touch with one’s Self or knows himself as “I am Brahma” (*Bṛihad ʹranyaka* 1.4.10) or as the witness of all the activities. But Harry feels unhappy because of “The degradation of being parted from my self, / From the self which persisted only as an eye, seeing” (*Family Reunion* 2.2.272). He has feeling that he has lost his connection with his Self that knows everything as an observer, not as an actor, of all the activities. So, he feels dislocated from the center, degraded, and unhappy.

In this context, Eliot declares his journey motif to search for the source of the Infinite Joy—“Home is where we start from” (“East Coker” 129) — and, therefore, “We must be still and still moving / Into another intensity / For a further union, a deeper communion. . . .” (“East Coker” V 129) with “the still point.” “Home” is a source of joy. “The still point” is Home. “The still point” is within ourselves. Happiness is within. Eliot suggests that we cannot live without “the still point,” just as a fish cannot live without the ocean. We should travel within the inner sky of our heart to go beyond the material world; we should look within to look beyond.

**iva as Lord of the Dance (Nataraja)**



iva as Lord of the Dance (Nataraja), c.11th century, Copper alloy, Chola period, 68.3 x 56.5 cm (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

**Fig. 1.** Source: *Khan Academy*, Online Resource



Contrastingly, we go out for the search of happiness without knowing their presence within us, just as a deer wanders in the jungle searching for its own aromatic musk without being aware of its presence inside itself.

The Essence is everywhere. It is not limited to only one place and time.

*Taittir ya Upani ad* expresses that Brahma is both beyond the sky and within the inner cave of the human heart— “*yo veda nihitam guh y m parame vyoman*” (2.1.1).

That means, Brahma is both transcendental and immanent. Eliot reveals that we can have momentary flashes of "the still point." However, we cannot say where and for how long the brief illuminations occur for they cannot be expressed in terms of place and time. It is out of time-space-bound experience: “I can only say, therewe have been: but I cannot say where. / And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time” ("Burnt Norton" II 119). Here, Eliot signals that momentary experiences are not enough for human kind to be happy forever. We need permanent self-realization of "the still point." Only then, we can have everlasting, unconditional peace and happiness.

Freedom from all sorts of desires is the key to liberation (*mok a*) that is the last one of the four goals of life: *dharma*, *artha*, *k ma*, and *mok a* (righteousness, money, pleasure, and liberation). The elimination of desires leads to the realization (attainment) of Brahma as claimed by *Brihad ranyaka* (4.4.7) and *Katha* (2.3.14) Upani ads. Eliot, in "Burnt Norton" II, describes the transcendental state of "the still point" that comes after one becomes free from all sorts of desire, compulsion and fear:

The inner freedom from the practical desire,

The release from action and suffering, release from the inner

And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded

By a grace of sense, a white light still and moving,

Erhebung without motion, concentration

.....

Protects mankind from heaven and damnation

Which flesh cannot endure. (119)

“The inner freedom from the practical desire” causes the release from action and suffering, and “the inner and the outer compulsion” as well. And one achieves “a grace of sense” (knowledge) and “a white light” of Brahma that is “still” among the “moving” (transitory) things. This state is exactly “Erhebung” (a state of exaltation) and concentration “without motion.” The attainment of this enlightened state protects humankind from bondage (“heaven and damnation”). The cycle of life and death which “flesh” (creatures) “cannot endure” is very painful for it.

The above vignette also suggests that the goal of an intelligent person should be to attain "the still point." When the desire for all sorts of desires dies, whatever one does cannot yield any fruits. One becomes a non-doer. One gets release from the sufferings of actions or from *karma* and its results. But one attains very pleasant heaven or very painful hell as per his merits or demerits if one sticks to one's selfish *karma*. “Heaven and Damnation [“hell”] are temporary. One cannot remain there forever. One has to return to this mortal world from there after one exhausts one's fruits. Desires are the seeds of rebirth. Therefore, "the inner freedom from the practical desire" is necessary to be free "from action and suffering" or birth and death. We can achieve liberation in this body before death by being desireless as suggested in the above extract. This is called the epistemological liberation, i.e., the liberation through knowledge.

We can realize "the still point" by devotion (*Bhakti*) to Brahma. This idea of devotion is close to what *C andogya* and *Brihad ranyaka* Upani ads express that the spiritual aspirant who has a whole-hearted devotion to Brahma — "*brahmasamstho amritattvameti*"—or who is devoted to the remembrance of Brahma ("*sam hita* ") attains Brahma (2.23.1; 4.4.23). Brahma is "endless" or Infinite (*Taittir ya* 2.1.1). Against this background, Eliot argues, "The only wisdom we can hope to acquire / Is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless" ("East Coker" II 126). As one meaning, humility means *Bhakti* (love for Brahma). Since the word "endless" is associated with Brahma, the word "humility" means *Bhakti* is "endless." Supporting this idea of the endlessness of *Bhakti*, *N rada Bhakti S tra* declares that *Bhakti* (humility) is immortal— "*amrita svar p ca*"(2). *Bhakti* is both —the means and the end to achieve Her. That is why *Bhakti* is "endless," undying in Her nature. *Bhakti* ever increases; therefore, She is endless. The words related to *Bhakti* are faith, grace, mercy, favor, blessing, devotion, surrender, humility, humbleness, love, and passion (*r ga*).

Humbleness resulted by losing one's pride with complete surrender and extreme self-sacrifice are the means to attain Brahma. Where there is pride, there is no *Bhakti*. Without *Bhakti*, it is impossible to have the grace and knowledge of Brahma. *Kena Upani ad* signals that understanding Brahma is only a matter of self-realization but never an outward pedantic expression. Those who say that they know Brahma do not know It really but those who say that they do not know It know It really (2.3). Similar idea Eliot reveals in "East Coker" III: "And what you do not know is the only thing you know / And what you own is what you do not own / And where you are is where you are not" (127). Here, Eliot suggests that those who are conceited have no knowledge in a real sense whereas those who have knowledge are not conceited. In

other words, those who are boastful of their knowledge cannot know the Essence. The only thing we “know” is that we can “not know” Brahma really. The knowledge that we “own” about Brahma is not sufficient. Our progressive understanding (“where we are”) about Brahma is not sufficient. That is beyond our description and understanding. The more we know, the more remains to be known. Therefore, the Upani ad instructs that Brahma is “*netinēti*.” Ignorant people are boastful. Ignorance is a hindrance to knowledge. Ignorance means treating the non-eternal as eternal, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasant and the *an t m* (body) as Ātm (the Self).

“The still point” could be attained only through the inner transformation of ideas, inner experience, and the self-realization of what *C ndogya Upani ad* declares boldly, “You are that” (6.8.7). Similarly, this idea of self-realization is highlighted by *Kena* (2.5), *Katha* (1.3.14), and *Brihad ranyaka* (4.4.14) Upani ads. Regarding self-realization, Mary admonishes Harry:

MARY. . . . Be your real self, to do something for you

That you can only do for yourself.

What you need to alter is something inside you

Which you can change anywhere—here, as well as elsewhere. (*Family Reunion* 1.2.250)

Ātm (our “real self”) cannot be found through our outward exploration of objects. Rather it is a subject matter of inner exploration of ideas. When we realize that we ourselves are Brahma, we find It. Special time, place, technique, or labor is not necessary to realize It. Just we need to “alter” our ideas “inside” us. Since It is inside us, we can realize It at any time and at any place. Since this kind of realization is a personal one, this cannot be displayed to others as in scientific experiment. One

cannot realize Brahma through others' understanding. Therefore, Mary instructs Harry, "That you can only do for yourself."

Darkness is one manifestation of Brahma. Several examples are in the Upaniads. They acknowledge that there is no difference between darkness and light. Both are the manifestations of Brahma. In a continuous flow of consciousness, both exist simultaneously, not separately. *vet vatara Upani ad* expresses that Brahma's *M y* creates creatures of three types like Her own three qualities—red (*rajo gu a*—activity, mercurialness), white (*sattvagu a*—good quality) and black (*tamo gu a*—ignorance)—“*aj m ek m lohita- ukla-k m bahv praj srijam n m sar p*”(4.5).

Regarding darkness, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* expresses that that which resides inside *tama* (darkness), but which is not known by *tama*, *tama* is whose body and which controls *tama*, that is the Self, invisible Immortal Brahma — “*yastamasi ti tha stamaso'ntaro yam tamo na veda yasya tama ar ram yastamo'ntaro yamayaty e a ta tm ntary m amrita*”(3.7.13). Similarly, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* proclaims that darkness is the abode of Brahma. The person of shadow (ignorance) is *tama*. Death (Brahma) is the cause of this *tama*—“*tama eva yasy yatanam, ya ev yam c y maya puru a , tasya k devateti mrityuriti*”(3.9.14). Here, we can acknowledge that darkness is the body of Brahma. Before its creation, the world was non-existent (unmanifest)—“*asat*” (*Taittir ya* 2.7) or *avy krita*. This indicates that there was but darkness in the beginning before creation. Darkness is exactly nothing but Brahma Itself. Brahma is the light dwelling inside darkness, *tama* (*Brihad ranyaka* 3.7.14).

Darkness and light are recurring themes in Eliot's writings. To Eliot, darkness is light. This is a paradoxical idea. He does not make a difference between them

because they originate from the single source, i.e., "the still point" (Brahma). To know about something, we must know about its opposite first. Therefore, to know about light, we must know about darkness first. Similarly, to know about knowledge, we must know about its opposite (ignorance) first. When one knows what ignorance is, then ignorance disappears.

In this connection, Eliot, in "East Coker," advises us to wait for "the darkness of God," to understand "the still point" fully. Darkness is the formless form of the non-dual Brahma from the viewpoint of the Upani ad. During *sam dhi*, the mind is dark (blank without any thought). For the realization of Brahma, darkness (emptiness of mind) is necessary. In Eliot's words:

I said to my soul, be still, and let the dark come upon you

Which shall be the darkness of God. As in a theatre,

The lights are extinguished, for the scene to be changed

.....

Or, as when an underground train, in the tube, stops too long between stations

.....

Or, when, under ether, the mind is conscious but conscious of nothing. . . .

("East Coker" III 126)

Eliot hints that darkness and light, or shadow and sunlight are the same. For their original source is Brahma. There is no darkness actually. Darkness is merely the absence of light. For the knower of the Reality, darkness is not dark (illusive). Rather it brings light (knowledge) after night. The people who have no knowledge that everything is Brahma are similar to those who are sleeping at the slumber of delusion and ignorance. Therefore, the wise people wake up when the ignorant ones are sleeping in darkness. However, every change takes place in darkness of which we are

not aware. The state of *sam dhi* (blissful mood being one with "the still point") is similar to the darkness when everything seems empty. During *sam dhi*, the mind is silent, empty without ideas, without defects, without form just like "ether" ( *k sa*), which is empty and widespread in the universe. Besides, in the Western mysticism, a soul meets God in darkness. So, "the darkness of God" indicates the transcendental state of the union of the soul with God.

To clarify the point of darkness, Eliot gives three examples in the above-mentioned extract—one example of the theatre in which "lights are extinguished" between the changing scenes to hide the ongoing scenes and to introduce new ones. Here, the darkness helps to introduce new things. Here, the darkness does not destroy the old things. It simply hides them. Even in darkness, things remain in existence. In the second example, Eliot makes a comparison of the darkness with the situation when the underground train halts too long between stations, and passengers become silent and mentally empty due to terror. In the third example, he compares "darkness" with the unconscious state of the mind "under ether" when the mind is unconsciously conscious. This is exactly the state of *sam dhi*.

Darkness merely covers reality with illusion. Darkness cannot destroy reality. Similarly, even in the darkness of ignorance, the existence of Brahma remains. Brahma resides equally both in darkness and in light. Night cannot destroy the sun. Can we say that there is no sun at night? When the sun is not here, it is somewhere in the other part of the world simultaneously. Darkness does not destroy but rather gives birth to light. Night gives birth to day. Darkness and light are sisters. The moment of the realization of "the still point" (Brahma) is similar to the state of darkness when nothing is seen, but everything becomes one. What remains is peace and bliss. This is the moment of *sam dhi* (full realization of "the still point").

Brahma is a reconciler of darkness and light, and stillness and dancing. In this sense, Eliot states, “So the darkness shall be the light and the stillness the dancing” (“East Coker” III 127). During *sam dhi* (unified, consolidated or crystallized empty mind), darkness brings light (knowledge), and stillness (*sam dhi*, the state of having enlightened) brings dancing (bliss). Darkness with her light full of knowledge destroys the darkness of ignorance. The Reality is hidden in darkness until we have knowledge. When knowledge dawns, the darkness (the illusion of the world) disappears and the illusion appears as the dream. Paradoxically, darkness becomes light.

Darkness is the formless form of the non-dual Brahma. This formless element is as widespread as the sky. This element is one without a second. Light is born out of darkness, emptiness, or formlessness. For example, the energy of electricity is formless. It cannot be seen. It is in darkness. However, when the energy is supplied in the bulbs, then light is seen. In this way, form (light) is born out of the formless (darkness), and knowledge is born out of darkness. Light is even inside darkness. This is the light of Brahma. As *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* highlights, everything is illumined with the light of Brahma. We see even darkness with the light of Brahma (3.7.14). Thus, Brahma is the illuminator of darkness. Darkness also means ignorance or *avidy* .

All people, great or small, finally vanish into darkness or nothingness.

*vsya Upani ad* presents the darkness theme. It describes what happens when people run after *avidy* (the worldly knowledge and selfish actions, *karma*) and *vidy* (the hollow knowledge of the scriptures without its deep self-realization; the knowledge of the three Vedas as *karmak nd* or rituals). Those sensually pleasure-bound persons who work for the fruits of their actions go into the dark hell (painful



world full of ignorance). Those who are falsely proud of their knowledge of the words (Vedas, Upani ads, scriptures) but do not apply them in their life and thus lacking in their practical experience go into still much darker hell. Pretending to be pedants but not practicing the learnt knowledge of spirituality, they become constant subject to rebirth as the lowest or hellish creatures like animals, birds, pigs, dogs, insects, or birds in the mortal world, or go to the hell (9). The worshipers of the unmanifest, undifferentiated nature (*prakriti*) go to darkness. Those who worship the Manifested (Hiranyagarbha K rya Brahma) but with the ego of their knowledge, power or prosperity go to still much more darkness (12).

The darkness theme is found in Eliot's "East Coker" III, too. In this poem, he examines the vanities of the world's so-called great people's accomplishments and ambitions and their brevity of life:

O dark dark dark. They all go into the dark,  
 The vacant interstellar spaces, the vacant into the vacant  
 The captains, merchant bankers, eminent men of letters,  
 .....  
 And cold the sense and lost the motive of action  
 And we all go with them, into the silent funeral  
 Nobody's funeral, for there is no one to bury. (126)

The above extract presents the theme of nothingness or Eastern nihilism (belief in the *nyaV da*), transitoriness, and Brahma-Vivarta *V da* or *M y V da* (belief in the unreal existence of the world). The apparently great people are not great. Their greatness is meaningless. For they all go into darkness one day. Everything of the universe, even "the Sun and Moon," has a certain life. Brave people defeat the world but cannot defeat the desires of their five senses and mind. So, their future becomes

dark. Their “cold” sense of life along with their worldly “motive of action” dies with their death.

Action-oriented life devoid of spiritual knowledge is “dark.” Still darker is the life of those scholars who lack the self-realization of their bookish spiritual knowledge. Understanding is more important than knowing. Self-experience or self-practice is more important than learning. Eliot emphasizes this sort of self-realization here. The spiritually poor or ignorant people meet their death silently or helplessly without attaining “the still point.” Everyone is destined to die and there will be “no one to bury” each other one day after the Great Dissolution. Nobody can remain on the earth permanently. Yet, people ignore this fact and undervalue the practical spiritual experience and, as a result, meet their spiritual downfall. They live unhappily and die, too, unhappily.

The treatment of time is a recurring subject in Eliot's poetry. He treats time both as a temporary element and as an everlasting element. In *Four Quartets*, his masterpiece, though less famous than *The Waste Land*, he presents time as both changing and changeless. The concept of time can have several philosophical meanings. Eliot tries to attain the changeless time, termed as Time, Eternity, or Immortality, in his quest for eternity and immortality. Time is ever flowing. It is eternal. It cannot be strictly divided into past, future, and present. It has no parts. All time (past, present, and future) is One. Our life flows through the continual march of flying time. The only way to free oneself from the clutches of evanescent time (death) is by attaining liberation. For this, one should take recourse to the spiritual insights. Eliot's idea of the Oneness of Time as mentioned in this paragraph will be illustrated with his quotations in the succeeding paragraphs.

One parable of ants can help understand the Oneness of Time, which is maintained by the non-dual philosophy of the Upaniads. There are some ants climbing over a pitcher. They arrive in the middle part of the pitcher while moving from one place to the other place of the pitcher. Then they move towards another direction. An individual who sees this all together, for that person all this is the present. Past and present are not separate, and future, too, is nothing. However, the vision of the ants is narrow. The more ahead they march, the more hidden becomes the rear part due to their narrow sight. We call this past and when this sight moves slightly forward, we call this future. If anyone sees this whole movement from a holistic viewpoint, then there is neither past nor future in front of that person. In other words, if an individual can see the three times together, then for that person there will not be three but only one Time.

Thus, Time is single. It is an unbroken series of events. It is eternal. But for ordinary people there is the existence of three times—past, present, and future. Regarding the Oneness of Time as Brahma, *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* expresses that what has happened, what is happening, what will happen in the future and anything beyond time (past, present, and future) as well—all this is the eternal divine sound “OM” or Brahma (1). Similarly, *vetāvatara Upaniṣad* expresses that what has happened in the past, that what will happen in the future, and that which is growing now through food—all this is Brahma, and Brahma is the Owner of immortality or *mokṣa* (3.15). *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* expresses that Brahma is the Owner of past and future—“*śānam bhātābhyaśya*”(4.4.15).

Contrastingly, *Kātha Upaniṣad* expresses that Brahma is different from past, present, and future and everything else related to these times—“*anyatra bhūtācca bhavyācca*” (1.2.14). Regarding time, *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* asserts that this world was

non-existent (*asat*) before the creation— “*asadv idamagra s t*” (2.7.1). Likewise, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* proclaims that there was Brahma only in the beginning before the creation— “*atm ivedamagra s tpuru avidha* ” (1.4.1). There was nothing else before the creation, neither time nor space. Therefore, everything is temporary (*asat*) except Brahma. From this viewpoint, time is temporary. Thus, in the Upani ads, we find both ideas—time as a temporary element or Time as the Permanent element.

The above discussion shows that the concept of time given by the Upani ads is paradoxical. On one hand, they express that all time (past, present, and future) is Brahma (i.e., Eternal) and on the other hand, they express that time is different from Brahma. There was no time in the beginning before creation. There was Brahma alone. That Brahma created time later on. In fact, time is both temporary and Eternal. Man is a meeting point of both times—temporary and Eternal. We undergo temporary time as an empirical existence. Also, we can undergo Eternal Time but as the Transcendental Reality (Nirgu a Nir k ra Brahma—Brahma without qualities and form). Human being is a part of eternity. In fact, both the Eternal Time in Itself and the eternal time in the empirical existence flow together. About the eternity of time, Eliot argues:

Time present and time past

Are both perhaps present in time future,

And time future contained in time past.

If all time is eternally present

All time is unredeemable. ("Burnt Norton" I 117)

Past and present, past, and future, and present and future are alike. They are interconnected. For their starting and dissolving point is Brahma. They are always

contained in Brahma, who is always present in three times. This signifies that past, present and future are a flow of the eternal time. Past and present become future. Therefore, past and present contain future. If so, both past and present are in future. Present also contains both past and future in its womb. We cannot be completely free from the past because the present carries the past. All time (past, present, and future) are merely sequences of a single movement when viewed from a higher level. From this viewpoint, time is One. It is a single unbroken unity. If time is considered a temporary moment, it is not eternal. If time is considered as Brahma, it is eternally present. Eliot does not make this idea clear here. Eliot simply investigates that "all time is eternally present" but he does not clarify in what sense it is so. It is natural that "If all time is eternally present / All time is unredeemable." We cannot escape from it.

In another sense, we cannot escape from the Eternal Time, which is our consciousness. Possibly, in this sense, Eliot examines: "If all time is eternally present, / All time is unredeemable." Thus, Brahma is present in all times, or all time is Brahma. So, we cannot redeem all time. Thus, the temporal time and the Eternal time are related to each other. The temporary time is born out of the Eternal Time ("the still point"). Both are time. Therefore, there is no difference between them. Despite being one with the Eternal Time, the temporary time does not remain in existence forever. In this sense, the temporary time is different from the Eternal Time. In the transactional world, time moves horizontally on a lower level in space. In the spiritual world, the timeless Time moves in circle on a higher level.

If time is considered as a temporary unit of measurement, we can escape from this sort of fleeting time. Only through the knowledge of Brahma and subsequently through the attainment of liberation, we can be free from the transient time (past, present, and future) and space. The moving time (the cycle of life and death) stops for

ever when we could attain *mok a* through the realization of “the still point.” Then we will not be born as children again. Henceforth, time is redeemable for the enlightened but “unredeemable” for the ignorant.

Through the (temporary) time, we can go beyond it and reach the Transcendental Time with the self-realization of Brahma. If we are stuck to the past with its memory and to the future with its desire, we could have only little “consciousness” (knowledge) of the Reality. Time is action, movement, or motion. If we flow with time (i.e., by performing spiritual activities), we could attain the stillness (the state of liberation or *mok a*) of “the still point” (Brahma). Therefore, Eliot confirms: “Time past and time future / Allow but a little consciousness. . . . / Only through time time [the cycle of life and death] is conquered” (“Burnt Norton” II 120). That is, we can enter stillness through motion (time). Finally, motion merges with stillness and becomes the stillness itself. The material world is undoubtedly an illusion, is born, and exists in ignorance, which has a temporary existence in the realm of *prakriti* or time, and which allows “but a little consciousness.”

Close to the Upani ad’s paradoxical ideas, Eliot’s idea of time, too, is paradoxical. On one hand, he remarks, as mentioned earlier, “If all time is eternally present / All time is unredeemable;” that is, time is a winner. On the other hand, he remarks, “Only through time time is conquered.” To assimilate these paradoxical ideas, it can be said that there is the existence of both the Eternal Time and temporary time. Temporary time is viewed as a part of the Eternal Time.

The beginning and end fall under the concept of time. Both—the beginning and the end—rotate after each other. Without one, another cannot remain in existence. The beginning and the end are related to the ideas of creation and destruction, or birth and death. From the non-dual vision, they are not different from each other. The

binary pairs (past/present, the beginning/the end) are united with Brahma. From the viewpoint of the non-dual philosophy of the Upaniṣad, the death and birth of the body are not separate from each other. For the source of both—death and birth—is Brahma. Death is birth, and birth is death. Birth comes with death and death comes with birth. Both stay in co-existence. But the Self never dies; It has neither birth nor death; the Self is eternal (Time) (*Katha* 1.2.18). Similarly, the Self does not attain old age, death, grief, virtue, or vice either (*Cāṇdogya* 8.4.1). The beginning and the end are like the two parts of the same coin. One cannot be separated from another. Though time ends and begins, it is always present now. In Eliot's words:

The end precedes the beginning,  
And the end and the beginning were always there  
Before the beginning and after the end.

And all is always [timeless, everlasting] now. ("Burnt Norton" V 121)

This extract is about the eternity of Time. The “beginning” or creation, and “the end” or destruction rotate after each other eternally. They are not different from each other for their original source is Brahma. Similarly, birth and death continue eternally until revelation. Past, present, and future are always present (eternal) with Brahma. The concept of Time as eternal falls under the eternal knowledge (*samvit jñāna*). The Eternal Time neither rises nor is destroyed. Brahma is timeless. The narrow-minded man has a transactional, phenomenal, or relational knowledge of time. This sort of narrow-minded knowledge has both rise and destruction, but the eternal knowledge has neither rise nor destruction. After the realization of the universe as One Brahma, there is neither past nor future—everything is everlasting now. Thus, for Eliot time includes two aspects: the temporal time moving in the phenomenal world and the Eternal (Transcendental, Absolute, or Timeless) Time fixed in the noumenal level.

However, the two aspects of time exist simultaneously. Human beings can feel the Eternal Time in transcendent moments.

Everything, when it gets old, decayed, or diseased, ends to begin the process again so that it could be young, fresh, or healthy again. But "the still point" remains the same before the beginning point and after the ending part of every process. "The still point" contains all—past, present, and future, and the beginning and the end. Therefore, past and future, and the beginning and the end are “always now” in “the still point.”

"All is always now" implies that Nirguṇa Nirākāra Brahma (Attributeless, Formless Brahma) is beyond the limit of time (past, present, and future), change, and transformation. That means there is always time and all is always now with Brahma. Brahma is essentially formless. Past, future, and present are also formless. Hence, they have affinity with the formless Brahma. Though without qualities and form, the *isness* (existence, being) of Nirguṇa Nirākāra Brahma is eternal. Contrastingly, Saguna Sākāra (Qualified and Formed) Brahma is subject to time and change. For example, the Creator (Brahmā characterized by *sattva* quality), the Protector (Viṣṇu characterized by *raja* quality) and the Destroyer (Śiva characterized by *tama* quality)—all they are subject to time. They have to merge into their higher cause when time comes. This whole idea is confirmed by *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad* (2.3.1).

Thus, *Four Quartets* bears a universal vision of "the still point" (Brahma) as the form of Cosmic Time whose similar term in Hinduism is *kālā* (time) or *mrityu* (death). *Kālā* could be used in four senses: time as past, present, and future; time as year, season, month, week, day, hour; time as Yamarāja (the god of death), who destroys all; and, as suggested by *Bṛihad ranyaka Upaniṣad*, time as Brahma, who is the God of the god of death (3.2.10). That is, Brahma destroys even Yamarāja, though



he is the king of death. The intended meaning here is that at the dawn of the knowledge of Brahma, death dies, and we become immortal. That is, when we attain the knowledge of the Essence; the death of death happens; and we win rebirth. As *Katha Upani ad* argues, death is the vegetable of Brahma — "*mrityur yasyopasecanam*" (1.2.25) because death is under the control of Brahma that creates and destroys death on purpose.

Time or Brahma creates, protects, and destroys, too. *Taittir ya Upani ad*, expresses that it is Brahma, who is all—the Creator (as Brahm ), the Protector (as Vi nu) and the Destroyer (3.1). From another viewpoint, past is the Generator; present the Sustainer; and future the Destroyer. Juxtaposing this remark of time, *vet vataraUpani ad* describes Time as Rudra (Brahma), playing three roles of creation, preservation, and destruction (3.2). Destruction and creation are not two different processes but one. Really speaking, destruction is not destruction. Destruction is disappearance. Brahma merely withdraws the whole world into Its body at the time of dissolution, and again spreads the whole world out of Its body at the time of creation. This is the non-dual philosophy of the *Upani ad*.

On the one hand, Western philosophy conceives time simply as time with reference to past, present, and future, as well as with reference to the originator/creator, preserver/protector, and destroyer of something. On the other hand, Hindu philosophy treats time not only as the creator, sustainer, and destroyer, but also as Brahma Itself as described in *vet vataraUpani ad* (1.1-3, 3.1-2). Eliot reveals the similar thing, as told by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-G t* (13.16, 10.32, 7.6-7), in "The Dry Salvages" II: "Time the destroyer is time the preserver, / Like the river with its cargo of dead Negroes, cows and chicken coops" (133). Time is like the river that gives, sustains, and destroys life. Negroes, cows, and chicken which were

sustained by the river are now dead in the river. As discussed above, on the one hand, Time is Rudra or *iva* who is Brahma and who alone creates, protects, and destroys the universe in terms of the Upaniṣad. On the other hand, *iva* is one of the deities of Trimurti —Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and *iva* or Rudra—in Hindu scriptures. Brahmā creates time, Viṣṇu maintains it, and *iva* destroys it.

The Upaniṣadic thought, particularly non-dualistic, expresses that Brahma is within the body of everyone; It is immanent. The Christian thought is profoundly dualistic, which expresses that God is not within the body; God is beyond; God is transcendent. Christians find it—the union of God within the body or within our actual sphere of existence—quite impossible. They think that the soul cannot become God; the soul should go beyond the body and the world and only then, it can attain God and yet it cannot become God Himself.

The Christian conception of "Incarnation" is different from the Hindu conception of Incarnation (*Avatāra*). Among others, one leading principle of the Hindu philosophy is that Incarnation means the direct descent of God into the Earth prior to His entry into the womb of His mother before birth. It seems that Eliot does not use the word "Incarnation" in this sense of manifestation or appearance of the Supreme Spirit in divine form as narrated in the Hindu mythology. In the Christian sense, Eliot seems to acknowledge that "Incarnation" is the embodiment of God in human flesh. That is to say, God does not appear down to earth from heaven directly but is born out of the womb of the mother. In this sense, the Christians, as suggested by Eliot, believe in "the impossible union" of the divine with the mortal. That is "Incarnation":

The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation.

Here the impossible union.

Of spheres of existence is actual,  
 Here the past and future  
 Are conquered, and reconciled. ("Dry Salvages" V 136)

Here, Eliot presents both Lord Kṛṣṇa, who descended down into the earth, and Christ, who was born out of Virgin Mary's womb, as "Incarnation." These are contradicting ideas. Eliot makes an improbable effort to reconcile the Christian concept of Incarnation with the Hindu concept of *Avatāra*. However, God came on this earth in the form of Jesus to save the sinners. God is both transcendent and immanent. Transcendent suggests that God is independent of the material universe and is removed from it while immanent suggests that God is present everywhere.

In Hinduism, *Avatāra* (one who descends; the appearance or Incarnation of a deity on earth, usually Viṣṇu) is a *Līla* (divine play) of Brahma or God. But the Abrahamic religions (Christianity and Islam) do not have such a concept of *Avatāra*, *Līla* or Divine Play. Hinduism maintains that God takes on limitation for the endearment of His devotees. Brahma has two forms — *mūrta* (formed with body) and *amūrta* (formless) (*Bṛihad ranyaka* 2.3.1). Incarnation is the *mūrta* form of Brahma. Brahma became many from one— "*rūpam pratirūpam babhūva*" (2.5.19).

Hindus are looking to experience God, whereas Abrahamic religions are looking to survive God and the coming apocalyptic Day of Judgment. This root difference accounts for why Hindus feel free to enjoy and devote themselves to the *Līlas* of God. For the devotee, the highest state is to realize their unconditional love for the Divine. Thus, God in Hinduism is not to be feared. God wants to be known. God wants to give us the highest joy of loving Him. Contrastingly, the emphasis on Christ's life is based more on an apocalyptic scenario than Hindu *Līlas* because for Christians the advent of Christ is more about being saved from damnation than

realizing His love. Similarly, mainstream Islam has no real concept of *Līlā* since it is entirely blasphemous for God to take on any form. In fact, for many Muslims it would be considered the worst of all sins to declare oneself as God.

In the *Avatāra*, seeing the unlimited in the limited and the infinite in the finite naturally opens the door to a deeper spiritual vision. What makes the *Avatāra* or *Līlā* so profound is that it accepts the paradox of God who is unknowable, omnipresent, and all-powerful existing simultaneously in a limited material form and in the unlimited abstract or incorporeal form. There are different kinds of *Avatāra* characterized by mystical, extraordinary, or exceptional power. Even the saints and *mahatmas* (the great souls) who have attained spiritual heights are the kinds of *Avatāra*, where the Lord incarnates in form. Though there is no concept of the *Līlā* in Christianity as in Hinduism, one could argue that the story of Jesus is a *Līlā* since it is God who has assumed limitations for the benefit of humankind. There is some truth in this, in that the personality of God becomes revealed through the actions of Christ. His compassion and love for humanity shows God's love for the world. From this divine aspect, one can draw a number of parallels between the *Bhakti* traditions of Hinduism and Christianity.

The purpose of the Incarnation or descension is to revive the eternal religion by punishing the evil people. As Eliot implies, "Daemonic, chthonic powers" are defeated by the "Incarnation" and man is delivered from those powers ("Dry Salvages" V 136). Ordinary persons cannot easily defeat the evil. Only the "Incarnation" can destroy the evil and untruth and restore goodness and truth.

From the insight of Hinduism, Kṛiṣṇa is both— the *Avatāra* of Lord Viṣṇu and an All-Round Perfect *Avatāra* (Incarnation) of Lord Kṛiṣṇa Himself. Generally, *Avatāra* means *sva-aṁśa* (self-part) of Bhagavān (God). To illustrate this point, there

are two types of timeless Incarnations (*Avatāra*)—*Yuga Avatāra* (Incarnation of Lord Viṇu of Viṇu Loka as Kṛṣṇa at the end of every *Dvāpara Yuga*) and *kalpavāta* (appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself of Goloka on this earth towards the end of every *kalpa*). In fact, the Kṛṣṇa to whom Eliot has referred here belongs to *kalpavāta*, i.e., the All-Round Perfect Incarnation.

Generally, both the Christian and Hindu doctrines believe that "Incarnation" is the divine spirit who appears in the human body but with the divine attributes (*aśa* or *kal*) in the world. From this viewpoint, the doctrines of the Incarnation of both the Christian and the Hindu converge. Accordingly, Eliot implies that both—Lord Kṛṣṇa and Christ—are "Incarnation" in "The Dry Salvages" V (136). However, there are some differences between them. The difference is that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the *Purṇa Aśa Avatāra* (full incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa with sixteen attributes). In my opinion, Christ can be attributed to a *Kal Avatāra* (Incarnation of God but having only some *kal*s or qualities of God) while viewed from the angle of the Hindu scriptures, though the Hindu scriptures do not mention Christ as an Incarnation. Hindus can accept Christ not as an Incarnation but as a spiritual guru.

The Christian doctrine of "Incarnation" is different from that of the Upaniṣad. The Christian belief is exclusive whereas the Upaniṣadic belief is all-inclusive. From the angle of the Christian doctrine, only Jesus Christ is the "Incarnation" of God in the sense of a union of divine and human natures. God became flesh. That is, He assumed a human nature and became a man in the form of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity—"the Father," the Son," and "the Holy Ghost" (*Murder in the Cathedral*, Interlude 200).

But from the Upaniṣadic insight, everyone is an incarnation of Brahma. Exactly speaking, every *jīva* (individual creature) is Brahma. Eliot's idea of

incarnation is close to this Upaniadic idea of incarnation. One can escape from the cycle of rebirths by supposing oneself to be a divine being, an "Incarnation." Eliot seems to suggest this idea of declaring oneself to be the divine being through the term "Incantation." But this kind of esoteric knowledge is not fully understood by the common people. So, Eliot remarks, "The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation" ("Dry Salvages" V 136). The meaning of "Incarnation" is mysterious. It can be fully understood by the saints only. When we live with the consciousness of "Incarnation" or Brahma, we live in the present, not in the past or future. And we become free from the endless cycle of birth and death, thus ultimately free from the clutches of time.

Eliot hints that "Incarnation" is the mysterious union or intersection of the human and the divine, of time and eternity, of matter and soul, or of the human body and the Divine Self. Words are without end to describe the mystery of "Incarnation." Therefore, "Incarnation" is "the hint half guessed, the gift half understood" meaning that this is related to the area of the occult.

We all have pure consciousness. *Aitareya Upaniṣad* declares that Brahma means pure consciousness—"prajñā nam brahma" (3.3). For an enlightened or knowledgeable man, the distinction between *jīva* and Brahma disappears. The paradox is that *jīva* is an incarnation of Brahma but is subject to the constant cycle of reincarnation until liberation. The rebirth or transmigration of *jīva* into a new body is reincarnation.

The word "reincarnation" is made of two words: "re-" prefix and "incarnation." From the insight of the Upaniṣads, reincarnation is real but the important thing to understand is that it is not 'we' (the pure Self) who return, but it is the *jīva* (the unenlightened soul) that returns in successive reincarnations.

Eliot, though being a Christian, professes that man can become Brahma. His faith is close to *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, which approves that the knower of Brahma becomes Brahma alone (3.2.9). Similarly, *vetāvatara Upaniṣad* declares that we are the children of Immortality—"amritasya putrāḥ" (2.5)—meaning that we are the Immortal Brahma. Very close to this idea of one's potential divine existence, Thomas Becket, preaching in the Cathedral, addresses the churchmen as "dear children of God" (*Murder in the Cathedral*, Interlude 200). Here, the relationship between human beings and God has been implicitly compared with children and father. Like father, like son. Similarly, like God, like human beings. The intended meaning is that as a drop of ocean bears all the essential qualities of the ocean, so also human beings bear all the essential qualities of God.

Eliot argues that the self-realization of "the still point" (Brahma) and "freedom" or liberation is impossible for the ordinary people like us: "For most of us, this ["freedom"] is the aim / Never here to be realized" ("Dry Salvages" V 136). A repulsion for the worldly pleasure and strong resolution to attain a higher goal are compulsory to attain freedom from the mundane world. Nevertheless, we should not leave our attempt till our last breath:

Who are only undefeated  
Because we have gone on trying;  
We, content at the last  
If our temporal reversion nourish  
(Not too far from the yew-tree)

The life of significant soil. ("Dry Salvages" V 136-37)

This final stanza bears a quest motif. It indicates that life is a journey, a process of self-realization. (The word yew-tree's longevity and evergreen foliage stands for

immortality.) Those also who are not defeated by their purpose of life and who "have gone on trying" doing good for humanity and for the upliftment of their souls throughout their life die happily at last. Moreover, their "temporal reversion" (death) will be useful if they can become "significant soil" that nourishes a tree. For them, immortality is "not too far." They have other births in which they can do better and attain Brahma. This quest motif is found in each final stanza of "Burnt Norton," "East Coker," and "The Dry Salvages."

The above-mentioned final stanza from "The Dry Salvages" shows the affinity of soul with soil. Life is breakable as it is made from the soil. This connotes that the journey of life starts right from the birth towards death. The journey from womb to tomb and tomb to womb is inevitable.

The mortal human being, though made out of the significant soil, becomes immortal (here symbolized by the yew-tree) after death ("temporal reversion") in space-time continuum. This is a Christian viewpoint. From the Upaniadic viewpoint, the attainment of "the still point" is not related to the time-space continuum of Christian philosophy, which is linear and so irrelevant. Rather the attainment of immortality is related to the need for self-search/self-investigation or self-reflexivity, an inward light-seeking journey. Immortality can be achieved while living alive before death as expected by the Upani ad. Everyone is a part of the eternal flow of life. Body, made out of the soil, merges with it after death, but the Self does not die, only changes Its body. Death is the destruction only of the superimposed name-and-form (individuality) of the body. For the Upani ad, every moment, including the moment of death, is a moment of Being because the Self (Ātm ) never dies. We can never be happy even if we are given the whole pleasures and wealth of the world.



Only the art of being “content” can make us happy. Therefore, contentment is the greatest wealth to be sought after in life. That contentment can ensure immortality.

We need divine grace to attain "the still point," but we need an individual effort to attain it. The realization of "the still point" is the point of intersection of the Timeless with time. This point of intersection is the feeling that "I am the Incarnation of Brahma," i.e., "I am Brahma." The saints who spend their whole life in love for Brahma with great passion, selflessness and self-surrender can attain "the still point." The saints offer their sense of love and are rewarded by the grace and knowledge of Brahma. This is what Eliot appears to reveal in "The Dry Salvages" V. In Eliot's words:

. . . to apprehend

The point of intersection of the timeless

With time, is an occupation for the saint —

No occupation either, but something given

And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,

Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender. (136)

Eliot suggests that the saint's complete self-surrender (the sense of "I am You, Brahma ") results in the death of body. That is, there occurs the loss of one's ego and attachment over one's body. Then, an unconditional love for Brahma arises. The unconditional love for Brahma is a selfless love for all. Complete surrender is an experience of the non-dual knowledge. Nevertheless, partial surrender is an experience of the dual devotion, which bears the sense of "I" and "You" (Brahma). In fact, self-enquire, “ardour,” “selflessness,” and “self-surrender” are four Upani adic methods that are used by the saints to attain liberation. Self-enquire leads to self-realization, which ultimately leads to liberation.

However, most of the people are not like the saints. The saints can have the experience of "the still point" forever. But the common seekers who are practicing the path of spirituality can reach near "the still point" but temporarily. They can have only glimpses of "the still point." Eliot describes the spiritual seekers' experiences of brief moments of the beatific vision of "the still point" while they see things with their inward eyes:

For most of us, there is only the unattended  
 Moment, the moment in and out of time,  
 The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,  
 The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning  
 Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply  
 That is not heard at all, but you are the music  
 While the music lasts. ("Dry Salvages" V 136)

"The still point" can be realized through mystic concentration till the mystic concentration ("music") continues. When a spiritual aspirant realizes "the still point," that person attains unbound happiness. Eliot expresses this moment of happiness in terms of music and reveals that as long as "the music" (the moment of the realization of the bliss, the moment of illumination) "lasts," you become the music (Brahma) itself. At this point of happiness, the seer (*Drast* ) and the seen (*dri ya*) become one. This is the moment of self-realization. Similarly, one can attain the moment of happiness through "wild thyme unseen," "the winter lightening" or "the waterfall" if one regards them not as objects but as "the still point."

Eliot gives some "hints and guesses" of the momentary illumination. He describes what the common spiritual seekers, like the poet, perceive inwardly during these moments. Eliot further remarks that there are other ways of attaining "the still

point" besides the "hints and guesses" of the meditation. These other ways are the paths of devotion or prayer, *karma* (observance, discipline, and action), and knowledge or thought:

These are only hints and guesses,

Hints followed by guesses: and the rest

Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action. ("Dry Salvages" V 136)

The "hints and guesses" indicate that "the still point" is present everywhere, but we ignore them or cannot recognize them. We should be careful to recognize them.

Precisely, the "hints and guesses" indicate that we ourselves are "the still point" or the Incarnation of Brahma. Nothing is necessary to do except thinking deeply of this secret knowledge of our divinity. The paths of *karma* and devotion are positive, i.e., easy to practice whereas the path of knowledge (practice of thoughts, austerity, penance, renunciation) is negative, i.e., difficult to practice. Eliot implies that one can adopt any path as it suits them. However, he prefers the path of knowledge to the other two. In fact, one cannot separate religion from secular life, neither can one separate *karma* and knowledge from love (*Bhakti*). Really, spiritual transformation takes place when one practices the two all-inclusive virtues—selfless love and non-attached action—in one's life.

As indicated earlier, Eliot's concept of time is close to that of the non-dual philosophy of the Upaniṣad. There is no ending of anything. For example, in "Little Gidding" V, he reasons: "What we call the beginning is often the end / And to make an end is to make a beginning. / The end is where we start from" (144). The beginning of life is the beginning of death and vice versa. This indicates the incessant mutability of human life. Though the body is destroyed by death, its seed cannot be destroyed. It reappears again in a new body with a new name.

Our final destination is Brahma from where we had come. When we reach there, our physical (*sthūla*), subtle (*linga*) and causal (*kāraṇa*) bodies disappear. The connection between these three bodies is like the relationship between cloth, threads, and cotton respectively. The cloth is made of threads, which are successively made of cotton. When threads are dismantled, cloth disappears. In other words, the cloth does not remain in its shape yet the threads remain in existence as before. Likewise, though the physical body (the cloth) dies, the subtle body (the threads) remains. The physical body is made of the five elements (ether, air, fire, water, and earth). These elements are like the threads of the cloth. The subtle body is made of eighteen elements—mind, intellect, ego, five senses, five bodily senses and five subtle senses (*tanmātrās*). The causal body (*avidyā*, beginningless, indescribable ignorance) is made of nature—*prakṛti* or *sattva*, *rāja*, and *tama* (the qualities of goodness, briskness, and darkness respectively). When we achieve *mukti* (freedom), the subtle body disappears but the causal body remains. However, when we achieve *mokṣa* (complete liberation), even the causal body disappears. Thus, until we reach our final destination, we are born and die as a plant grows out of its seed repeatedly.

Life after death continues. Death is not final. Death becomes an entrance to a new life, either to the physical life of this world as rebirth or to the spiritual life of another world as “the still point.” Regarding the inevitability and circularity of death and rebirth, *Bṛihad̥āranyaka Upaniṣad* expresses that as a goldsmith makes a new and more beautiful ornament out of the old gold so also a *jīva* (the embodied self) changes its body into a new and better form (4.4.4). Regarding the immortality of *Ātmā*, *Katha Upaniṣad* expresses that *Ātmā* is neither born nor dies. Nor is it created by anyone. Nor anyone is born from it. That is, it is neither effect nor cause of

anything. It is unborn, eternal, unchangeable, and ancient without rise or fall. Even though the body is destroyed, the Self cannot be destroyed (18).

Regarding the transmigratory existence of the individual self, In “East Coker,” Eliot expresses his conviction: “In my beginning is my end. . . . In my end is my beginning” (123, 129). Here, this idea of never-ending beginning is similar to the Upaniadic idea that birth contains death in itself, or the end embeds in itself another beginning. Death is inevitable after life, and life is inevitable after death. That is death is in life and life is in death. In this sense, both birth and death are alike. Death and birth or creation and destruction move on a cycle. If something rotates on a cycle or circle, we cannot say which one comes first. It is like the riddle —which one came first, the chicken or the chicken’s egg? In reality, Ātmā does not die but only changes its form (body) and name. This principle of the immortality of Ātmā is expounded by the non-dual philosophy of the Upaniads.

In the expression, “In my end is my beginning,” the word “end” may have two meanings. On one hand, the word “end” means the death of the physical body. This kind of death of the physical body is the beginning of a new physical or spiritual life. On the other hand, the word “end” means the poet’s spiritual goal or entelechy, which could be the beginning of transcendence into the Essence, not just for a moment but for Eternity.

In line with the argument discussed above, in European concept, time is linear as such it has a beginning and an end. Therefore, time is finite. But in the Upaniadic concept, time is circular or cyclical. Time becomes linear if the soul gets permanent liberation otherwise not. Thus, time is contemplated as both — temporary time (symbol of death and decay), and Eternal Time (*Mahākāla*), symbol of liberation of the individual self. In “Burnt Norton,” “East Coker,” “The Dry Salvages” and “Little

Giddings,” there is a description of the relation between the temporary time and the Eternal Time as we have seen in the foregoing paragraphs.

There is the eternal dance of time (*kāla*) or death every moment. All are gradually growing old and sick to die. This is a universal truth, which is similar to the idea of the *Upaniṣad*. No one can stop time. Therefore, time is no healer. It cannot heal the decaying body. The body dies. However, its Self does not die; it merely disappears; it transmigrates after death. This is expressed in Eliot's poetic lines such as in "The Dry Salvages" III: "Time is no healer: the patient is no longer here" (134) or in "The time of death is every moment" (134), or in "that which is only living / Can only die" ("Burnt Norton" V, 121) suggesting, moreover, that the individual who is born is destined to die. Obviously, every high or low, or big or small is subject to decay and death.

The cause of suffering is forgetting the Word. Regarding the meaning of the Word, *Muktika Upaniṣad* explains that "The Word" is the Logos. "The Word" is the divine sound "OM," which is Brahma (1). But people forget "the Word" (Brahma) and as a result suffer and cry like the disconsolate chimera:

The Word in the desert

Is most attacked by voices of temptation,

The crying shadow in the funeral dance,

The loud lament of the disconsolate chimera. ("Burnt Norton" V 122)

People fall prey to temptations and ignore the existence of "the Word" or "the still point" while living young in the desert-like world. But when death shows its "crying shadow" and "funeral dance" to them, they "lament" like "the disconsolate chimera," a fire-breathing she-monster in Greek mythology having a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail. While alive, they forget that even the giant monster like the

chimera meets a painful death. Finally, nothing other than “the Word” can liberate one from pain and misery. The world’s illusions or mirages are just temptations, which ultimately lead to another cycle of life and death.

Rhythmical or patterned words such as of the Upani ad can help us attain “the still point.” As *Mukya Upani ad* defines, this “stillness” or “silence” is called “*am tra*”—soundless state of the Supreme Brahma or Supreme Self (7, 12). The words of the Upani ad are mantras. They are written in certain forms and patterns. The use of Vedic Sanskrit words (e.g., Gang , Himavanta, Da, Da, Da, Datta, Dayadhvam, D myata, Sh nti , Sh nti , Sh nti ) used by Eliot indicates his great fascination with the mantras of the Hindu scriptures including the Upani ad. The mantras are of universal significance, which pray for benediction for all the humanity of the world. Simply listening to their soothing sounds can give us the peace and bliss of Brahma.

The word “stillness” means immortality to Eliot. He seems to express the immortal power of the musical sounds in “Burnt Notion” V: “Only by the form, the pattern, / Can words or music reach / The stillness” (121). A certain rhythmical form or “pattern” of poetry, music, song, or mantra is found in the Upani ad. The rhythmical form or pattern of the Upani ad has a power to move us to “the stillness” (immortality, eternity) just like a decorated or artistic Chinese jar has a power to remain still and artistic endlessly.

The Chinese jar reminds us of John Keats’ “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” which bears the imagery of “stillness.” Words or music having no form or pattern die or disappear into silence after a certain time. Only by the form or pattern of poetry, music or song, the words become still (perpetual) and attain immortality or eternity. Thus, words die but to make them immortal, they have to be shaped in a certain artistic form or pattern

of poetry. And poetry has a connection with mysticism and esotericism as mystical and esoteric ideas could be expressed clearly to some extent through poetry.

The Self is immortal. Regarding the immortality of the Self, *Katha Upani ad* expresses that the body is not stable, but in that unstable body resides the immovably stable and bodiless Ātm — “*a ar ram shar re u anavasthe u avasthitam*”(1.2.22). Likewise, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* argues that as a serpent changes its slough, so also human souls change their bodies and reappear in new forms and new places (4.4.7). This suggests an eschatological belief that this world is to be transfigured but not to be destroyed or superseded. Death or destruction opens a new entrance for another form of life. In Eliot’s words: “See, now they vanish, / The faces and places, with the self which, as it could, loved them, / To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern ("Little Gidding" III 142). People die, but their Self renews its face in a new place and new pattern. The people of the past ("history") reappear in new forms. However, we care or decorate the body, it deceives us one day. It vanishes in course of time. This hints that the body and the world are change able, but even in the change able body or world, there is the immortal Self that remains the same in all stages of life and destruction.

A lotus flower is a symbol of “the still point” or pure consciousness in the Upani ad. *C ndogya Upani ad* illuminates that there is a lotus in the center of the heart. And there is Ātm or Brahma in the center of the lotus (8.1.1-2, 8.3.3, 3.14.4). Brahma is effulgent (*Brihad ranyaka* 5.6.1), who is inside the heart ( *vet vatarā* 1.15). The lotus represents purity and goodness in Hindu scriptures. Its reason is that the plant grows in muddy water, yet when the flowers bloom, they are clean. Some of the deities are seen carrying, sitting, or standing on a lotus flower. This indicates that they are not affected by the evil power in the world.



In this line of discussion, Brahma is what Eliot calls "the still point" or "heart of light" sitting on a lotus flower: ". . . the [dry] pool was filled with water out of sunlight, / And the lotos rose, quietly, quietly, / The surface glittered out of heart of light" (118) in the pool of a rose-garden. This is the moment of spiritual delight or illumination when the dry pool is turned into the water-filled pool and the "lotos" flower is seen bright in the center of the heart in a meditative mood. Here, Eliot implies that the meditation on the "heart of light" gives joy, which he experiences during his light trance. Real joy comes from within the heart when we become conscious of our consciousness but not from the physical objects outside. The "lotos" is a symbol of pure consciousness as said earlier. The pure consciousness of Ātmā or Brahma is unchangeable or singular. In fact, consciousness is never experienced in the plural though there seems to be a great plurality of similar bodies. The seeming plurality is merely a series of different aspects of the singular consciousness produced by illusion or deception (*Māyā*). On the one hand, consciousness is undivided though it appears in many forms just like a crystal (of kaleidoscope), which is seen in different colors as they are reflected on it. On the other hand, the great majority of Western philosophers have literally accepted the pluralization of consciousness though this concept of pluralization is misleading from the viewpoint of the Upaniṣad.

Western thinking is dualistic. There is, as *Guardian* comments, "the spirit/matter dualism that has dominated Western thinking from Plato to the modern Christian church" (qtd. in Capra 415). Plato's mind/body and Form/form (Self/body) dualism is worth considering to understand the Western thinking of ontology (study of existence) and metaphysics (study of reality). From Richard A. Watson's viewpoint, "Western philosophy continues to be predominately dualistic" despite hard attempts to establish cogent ideas against dualistic thinking (245). "Dualism is a view that

reality consists of two disparate parts” and “is related to binary thinking” (244-45).

Descartes’s dualism separates the “thinking mind” from the body/matter (244). From Dewey’s viewpoint, “All modern problems of philosophy derive from dualistic oppositions, particularly between spirit and nature” (qtd. in Watson 245). Thus, the mind-body dualism is found in the Western philosophy.

Contrastingly, from Samarpan’s viewpoint, there is no dualistic thinking in the (mainstream) Hindu system. “All that exists belongs to God, who has no opponent to counter him” (67). The source of all the dual, plural, or multiple systems is the Brahma. The discussion held so far imply that for the Western philosophy, “mind” is an immaterial (spiritual and formless) element, but for the Eastern philosophy as in the Upani ad, “mind” is a material thing. Everything that is changing and impermanent including mind and intellect (*buddhi*) is material. Both mind and intellect change in different times and places. Thus, everything changing and impermanent except the unchangeable Ātm (the Self) is Brahma in the Upani ad.

Eliot wants to escape from the Western dualistic thinking and wants to seek unity between spirit and matter, between the self (*jīva ātman*) and the Supreme Self (Param ātman), and between East and West. His anti-dualistic thinking is close to the non-dual principle of the Upani ad, which tries to establish identity and unity between the binary oppositions of the world. From the philosophical angle of the Upani ad, Brahma is the ground of existence of all. In terms of Plato, Form is the ground of existence.

Eliot's concluding line "the fire and the rose are one" is from his last poem "Little Gidding" V (145), which represents the positive, immanent, or holistic insight of the non-dualistic (*Advait*) philosophy in his works, especially *The Four Quartets*. The line suggests that form (appearance [name and form; the world] and

content ("the still point," the Reality or Brahma) are one, and, as *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* argues, like the spider which itself creates its webs, Brahma is both—*nimitta k ra a* (the Efficient Cause, the Creator) and *Up d na k ra a* (the material cause, five elements) of the creation of this world and its creatures (2.1.20; *Mu aka* 1.1.7). Also, Brahma is both—cause (the Creator) and effect—the created thing, work, creation (*Taittir ya* 2.6). Eliot wrote "Little Gidding" in 1942 after writing his two famous plays *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) and *The Family Reunion* (1939). So, "Little Gidding" holds a great significance philosophically because it summarizes his non-dual viewpoints.

The concluding line of "Little Gidding" suggests that there is spiritual unity in diversity. Spiritual unity means essential unity or non-duality. Non-duality implies that everything that exists is one with the Supreme Being. Nothing else actually exists other than It. Actually, in the heart of all the things there is the fundamental unity of life. That is why all the things share the same Self or consciousness. In other words, they all are united to each other by the same Self or consciousness.

What Eliot means in his famous line, "the fire and the rose are one," may be a myth for the Westerners, but this is a reality for the seers of the *Upani ad* in the Hindu philosophy. However, the modern science of quantum physics argues that there is only one energy in the universe. What it calls energy is Brahma in the *Upani ad*. The Eastern philosophy, especially Shankar Vedanta, expresses that the world is not real, though true, but the Western philosophy expresses that the world is real. Here, Eliot wants to harmonize these two ideas of reality and unreality with the help of the *Upani adic* concept *M y*, which means magic that is both real and unreal at the same time. He uses the words "unreal, falsehood, illusion, deception or ignorance" to mean *M y*. From this aspect, the world is *M y*, both real and unreal. Actually, *M y* is the

mysterious and inexplicable power of Brahma with the help of which Brahma creates the cosmos.

Eliot's search for such a spiritual unity in diversity is similar to the search of sages for the unity of the whole existence in the *Upani ad*. He does not find a sharp distinction between spirituality and materiality, and between appearance and reality. Rather he tries to seek harmony between them.

The difference between the rose and the fire are valid in the kingdom of duality, but in the kingdom of the non-dual Brahma, they are the same. The rose and the fire stand apparently for all types of contradicting or opposing things, aspects, and processes of the world. However, they finally find their resolution in Brahma. The spiritual unity of the fire and the rose is mystical. This spiritual unity of the fire and the rose connotes many ideas, which could be linked to different aspects of materiality and spirituality in light of the *Upani ad* in the paragraphs to follow.

Eliot's witty expression "the fire and the rose are one [and the same]" is like an umbrella or blanket term which covers the entire meaning related to the interpretation of the non-dual philosophy. In this connection, he alludes to non-duality, being close to *Katha Upani ad* (2.1.10), "Here and there does not matter" ("East Coker" V 129) for the unity of everything with Brahma can be found anywhere in nature. What matters is "to recover what has been lost" (128). Here, Eliot possibly suggests that the wisdom of the Eastern philosophy of the ancient past is desirable to recover because it probes into the Essence with a deep understanding. With the help of that wisdom, we could try to recover the "lost" Spirit or "the still point." For that recovery of the lost Spirit or the Self, the renewal of the mind, a complete transformation of character, is necessary. Character is the root of all consequences. No scriptures can purify the mind that is impure.

There are two types of worlds—material and spiritual—in Eliot's poetry and drama. The notion of the dual self recurs in his writings—lower "bird" (*j v tm*) and higher "bird" (*Param tm*) as discussed earlier. Besides, we find some other dualities oscillating here and there in his writings—"here" (this world) and "there" (that world), "desert" and "garden," "you" and "I," "material" and "spiritual," "bondage" and "freedom," "real" and "ideal," "projection" and "perception," "illusion" and "reality," "two waves of the sea," literal and figurative and so on. They find their "impossible union" (resolution) in "the still point" (Brahma).

When we have the knowledge of the Eternal Reality, differences are harmonized; contradictions are resolved; everything including all paradoxes and dualities is eternally synthesized and coordinated under the Reality. In other words, all conflicts and dualities die and disappear in Brahma. This suggests that material things are different appearances of the same Reality. That is, they are not essentially different from each other as their first source is Brahma. This idea is related to non-dualism/monism. In other words, material things and mystical abstracts are not different ultimately because they all originate from and end in their original source, "the still point."

The source of love is Brahma. Brahma is bliss. Regarding this love, *Taittir ya Upani ad* highlights that Brahma is *rasa*, which means devotion, passion love, or the Essence of existence. *Rasa* makes us blissful or delightful (2.7.2). Inspired by non-dualism, the last stanza of Eliot's "Burnt Norton" suggests that Love (the formless part of Brahma) is "unmoving," "timeless, and "undesiring." It is both "the cause and end of movement" (of life and desires). Love is the first cause, which initiates the first event and terminates the last one. It is the timeless Love (intellectual aspect of the world of the Reality) which burns the flames of love (emotional aspect of the world)

in the heart of man and woman for each other. Love is Brahma. Physical love and spiritual love—both originate from Brahma. Divine love is “unmoving,” unaffected by human selfishness:

Love is itself unmoving,  
Only the cause and end of movement,  
Timeless, and undesiring. (“Burnt Norton” V 122)

The words “unmoving” and “undesiring” are related to “the still point.” Moreover, “undesiring” means selfless. Brahma creates and expands Its creation with the help of Its “unmoving” love, which is beyond description. Eliot is desirous of the absolute selfless love and of the absolute being/existence.

Mind is the sole cause of one's liberation or bondage. Attachment and detachment are two sides of the mind. Attachment binds whereas detachment liberates. The references to attachment and its negative dimensions are found in *Katha Upani ad* in the dialogue between Nachiket and Yamar ja, the god of death (1.1.1-29). The references to detachment and its need for spiritual upliftment are found in *Mu aka Upani ad* (1.2.9, 3.2.5-6). Selfless love (devotion) or selfless mind can grant us freedom from past (memory) and freedom from future (desire), which Eliot suggests in “Little Gidding” III:

. . . This is the use of memory:  
For liberation—not less of love but expanding  
Of love beyond desire, and so liberation  
From the future as well as the past. (142)

Detachment (“love beyond desire”) from past and future is a cause of “liberation.” Till there is desire, there is no liberation because desire and freedom are opposite to each other.

Fire is supposed to be Brahma in the Upani ad. Fire destroys or unites everything. *C ndogya Upani ad* declares that fire (*teja*) is Brahma (7.11.2). The sun and fire give enlightenment and deliverance to the creatures who are tied by the trap of the matrix of illusion and ignorance (*m y -j la* or *vi va-m y*) ( *v sya* 15-18; *Brihad ranyaka* 5.15.1; *C ndogya* 3.17.7; *vet vatara* 1.10). *Rig Veda*, the first oldest of the Vedas, begins with the word “Agni,” which means fire. Eliot’s “the tongues of flame” (“Little Gidding” V 145) reminds us of the tongue of flame that is in the upper left hand of dancing Natar ja ( *iva*). The flame of Natar ja is the flame of destruction. It is illustrated in figure 1 on page 148. The flame reminds us that the universe will be destroyed in billions of years from now on by the flame of Lord Natar ja.

Spiritual fire is liberating. The fire is symbolic of knowledge in the Upani ad. *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* associates light with knowledge, and darkness with ignorance (1.3.28). Knowledge leads to immortality— “*vidyay mritama nute*” ( *v sya* 11). In “Little Gidding” IV, Eliot asserts, “The only hope, or else despair / Lies in the choice of pyre [spiritual purity] or pyre [worldly desires, selfish *karma*] — / to be redeemed from fire [of desires] by fire [of knowledge]” (144). Here, pyre and fire have the same rhythm. They are associated with both worldly desires and purification, or the despair of ignorance and the hope of liberation. Here, the first pyre and the second fire have connection with the spiritual purity of life. The fire of desire is associated with *karma* that is really entrapping, but the fire of knowledge is really liberating.

Sensual love causes torment though it (love) is created by Brahma. The desire for sensual love is a natural instinct. However, it is a hindrance to our quest for the Essence. Regarding desire, *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* declares that an individual is

full of desires (4.4.5). Likewise, *Katha Upani ad* illumines that the dull-minded choose the pleasant way (the pleasurable), *preya*, whereas the wisest opt for the good way (the preferable), *shreya* (1.2.2). The flame of love is very destructive and inextinguishable. It is irresistibly attractive. We spend our time living either the life of sensual fire or the life of spiritual fire. In Eliot's words:

Who then devised the torment? Love.

Love is the unfamiliar Name

Behind the hands that wove

The intolerable shirt of flame

Which human power cannot remove.

We only live, only suspire

Consumed by either fire or fire. ("Little Gidding" IV 144)

Physical love is “the unfamiliar Name [of Brahma]. Or it is a product of Brahma’s *M y* (illusive power) woven by Its “hands.” So, it is “intolerable” or unsubduable; it cannot be controlled in a simple way without spiritual power. The capital letter of the word “Name” suggests that “Love is another “Name” of Brahma. When fire (energy, heat) is associated with passion, it comes in touch with the materialistic side of destruction. When fire is associated with detachment, austerity, renunciation, and enlightenment, it comes in touch with the spiritual side of purification. Pure love is unconditional, and without passion and desire, e.g., the love for Brahma. Physical love is blind. Hence, Eliot suggests that it is foolish to live a lustful life, and it is wise to be lust-free.

Everything becomes all right if the spiritual knowledge of oneness occurs to the mind. *v sya Upani ad* assures that there is no delusion and grief for those who realize one Brahma among all (7) and all the knots of their heart’s ignorance are cut



off (*Muṇḍaka* 2.2.8). Eliot oscillates between two thoughts: a humanistic dualism and an ontological monism. Eliot's line "So I assumed a double part" ("Little Gidding" II 141)" expresses his consciousness of dualism, which ends in the assertion of faith in the ultimate liberation if dichotomies between "the fire and the rose" are supposed to be living in harmony as a single existence of Brahma exactly as "tongues of flame are in-folded" and become one flame:

And all shall be well

All manner of thing shall be well

When the tongues of flame are in-folded

Into the crowned knot of fire

And the fire and the rose are one. ("Little Gidding" V 145)

This stanza indicates that "all shall be well" when "the tongues of flame" (fires of love/devotion and knowledge) come together to form a knot (unity) and transfigure themselves into the petals of a rose. As "the tongues of flame" become one (knot), and as "the fire and the rose," the dual elements, become one, in the same way all become one for an enlightened individual. That is, the Self, "the still point," and the world become one for that person. Thus, when varieties or differences ("tongues of flame") disappear and everything appears to be one, i.e., the same Essence ("the crowned knot of fire"), to a person, that person becomes enlightened and full of bliss and peace. "The tongues of flame" also suggest all-consuming Fire of the divine Love, the Essence, being destructive for constructive purpose. The term "fire" means both knowledge and Brahma in the Upaniṣad. Here, Eliot suggests that when all the things are viewed from the eye of spiritual knowledge, the whole world is seen as One Brahma as "the tongues of flame are in-folded / Into the crowned knot of fire." Thus, when everything mixes into fire (knowledge), all become one fire (Brahma).

This flame of fire in the divine sense suggests Eliot's longing for transcendence, just opposite to the flame of the longing for sex, "burning" in "The Fire Sermon" in *The Waste Land* (46). "The tongues of flame" holds a great importance in *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, which reveals that fire has seven tongues (1.2.4), through which Brahma receives the objects offered to It. Also, light is the mouth of Brahma (*Muṇḍaka* 5). This shows the closeness between the burning fire and the burning spirit-knot. The burning spirit-knot is the state of the self-realization when the knowledge of "This entire world is Brahma or One" (*Cāṇḍogya* 3.14.3),<sup>6</sup> or "Brahma is within all"—*“eko deva sarvabhūte u”* (*vetvatara* 6.11) occurs to the mind.

The flame of knowledge burns the flames of bad qualities.

*vetvatara Upaniṣad* declares that Brahma is fire—*“sa eva gniḥ”* (6.15) and *“tadeva gniḥ”* (4.2). By knowing that (Brahma), all bondage is destroyed; all troubles are destroyed; and the cycle of birth and death stops—*“jñātvā devam sarvapāpāni kṛhāi kleśai janma-mṛityuprahāṇi”* (1.11). Thus, we become free from the entire bondage — *“jñātvā devam mucyate sarvapāpāi”* (6.13). Eliot conveys the same meaning that the flames of worldly desires are destroyed by the fire of knowledge when "the tongues of flame" become one tongue of flame. In one sense, "The tongues of flame" consists of bad mental qualities such as lust, anger, avarice, delusion, ego, jealousy, passion, enmity. They are the causes of our bondage and troubles. When the fire of knowledge burns the flames of bad mental qualities, they turn into pure fire and what remains is a chunk of ashes (pure form of the soul). Thus, the knowledge of spirituality sets everything right and ensures liberation by removing mental imperfections.

As indicated above, “tongues of flame” stands for duality or plurality. All the dualities or pluralities of the visible world have no separate existence apart from Brahma. They should not be isolated because they are but different forms of the same Essence. From the monistic aspect of the *Upaniṣad*, truth is one, but sages call it by different names. Obviously, Brahma can become many from one or one from many. There is a difference between the *Upaniṣadic* concept of monism and the Christian concept of monotheism. Monism means there is one non-dual Self in the Universe whereas monotheism means there is only one form of God. Monism represents harmony, but monotheism increases narrow feeling that God can be only this much and nothing else. On the one hand, such monotheistic feeling begets different forms of bigotry and fanaticism. On the other hand, monism claims that Brahma is the one indivisible Reality behind this world of division. It is infinite and can assume infinite forms. And, each form is as real as any other forms or formlessness.

“The fire and the rose are one” is a paradox. On the lower level of perception, the fire and the rose cannot be one. But they can be one on a higher level of wisdom. Flowers such as a rose and a lotus are conventional symbols of joy, life, mercy, love, beauty, beautiful repose, and creation. Fire destroys ignorance and purifies the soul. On the lower level of truth, opposing elements, creative and destructive, cannot remain together. However, on the higher level of truth, all are one and the same and thus can remain together. Regarding fire, *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* defines that fire is one of the five elements of nature and one of the five deities involving ether, air, water, and earth (2.2.2). Indeed, fire (Agni) is both the fire god and Brahma. Also, fire is a conventional symbol of liberation, which completely releases soul from body after cremation.

Likewise, fire is taken as a fire of knowledge, which is also known as the third eye of knowledge, the third eye of Lord *Īva*. "The third eye in the middle of his forehead is," as Lynne Gibson writes, "always closed and is believed only to open in anger, when the light from it is capable of destroying anyone who does evil" (17). Eliot fuses the opposing elements, "the fire" and "the rose" to create a supernatural world of higher truth that could reconcile all the contrasting elements. By this reconciliation, human being can go beyond bondage and attain the Essence or immortality. Obviously, Brahman is the Core Essence, which links everything. The Upaniṣadic viewpoint is that everything is Brahman. Panpsychism argues that consciousness is in everything. In other words, everything material, however small, has an element of individual consciousness. This is a materialistic view of non-duality. Thus, both views are true. That is, we can understand it in the way that either everything is Brahman, or Brahman is in everything and everywhere.

The powerful word used by Eliot to synthesize and harmonize two opposed entities of dual pairs is "one." The word "one" holds a great importance in the Upaniṣad. It indicates the unity of the individual self and the Universal Self. Also, the word "one" shows the non-dual nature of Brahman. "One" means the non-dual Brahman in *vet̐vatara* (1.10, 4.14, 4.14, 6.11, 6.15) and *Cāndogya* (6.2.1) Upaniṣads.

"The fire" and "the rose" represent *jīvātman* (the individual self) and *Paramātman* (the Supreme Self). *Jīvātman* and *Paramātman* have one common factor or element. That is, both have the same *Ātman* (the Self). *Ātman* is Brahman. Therefore, *jīvātman* itself is Brahman though they differ from each other on the ground of their power. *Jīvātman* is not omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, but Brahman is. However, *jīvātman* and Brahman have some common internal attributes. They both are the expressions of *Sat* (Existence/Being) and *Cit* (Consciousness/Knowledge).

Nirguṇa Nirākṛā Brahma (Non-qualified, Formless Brahma) is qualified by the attributes of *Sat-Cit-ānanda*. *Jīvātma* has been eternally seeking for *ānanda* (Bliss) from his birth to death and even beyond death.

Eliot suggests that it is useless to attempt to try to acquire the knowledge based on the dualities and differences as sought out traditionally so far. Therefore, the shabby instruments of dualistic tradition should be discarded and a new venture on the inarticulate ("the still point") should be started towards the path of non-duality. The Ultimate Essence is without words and boundaries. Through self-realization, we can enter the indeterminate world of many possibilities. The Ultimate Essence is silence within the silence spread in every space including the inner space of the human heart. In the inner space of the heart, we can see the whole space of the universe. While in the mental silence of the inner thoughts, all the mundane and dual thoughts stop coming in, the mind is crystallized (unified) and attains "the still point." Obviously, "the still point" is beyond the rationality of science, lab experiment, human senses, human feelings, and all the limitations of the material world. Therefore, it transcends the imprecise "feeling, undisciplined squads of emotion" of the dualistic world:

And so each venture

Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate

With shabby equipment always deteriorating

In the general mess of imprecision of feeling,

Undisciplined squads of emotion. ("East Coker" V 128)

Eliot implies that knowledge comes from the perception of the five senses but that knowledge acquired from the senses is limited and, thus, falls under the area of ignorance. Five senses are traditional shabby equipment for obtaining knowledge. Therefore, Eliot recommends the intellectual equipment to transcend the perception of

the senses. The intellectual equipment uses inference, a type of reasoning by which we can conclude something when the senses are not adequate to do the job. The study of the spiritual and philosophical texts such as the Upaniads can develop the intellectual equipment for mind. The intellectual equipment is related to abstract ideas and concepts rather than emotions and experiences.

Brahma is either everywhere or nowhere. Brahma is either nothing or everything. This way of describing Brahma is directed by the ideas of the Upani ad, which describes two types of sentences— positive sentence (*vidhi v kya*) and negative sentence (*ni edha v kya, neti neti*) to speak of Brahma. In other words, everything is Brahma or nothing is Brahma except Brahma. However, both ways prove the non-dual state of Brahma. To suggest the non-dual nature (either in a positive way or negative one) of Brahma, Eliot states, "Here, the intersection of the timeless / Is and nowhere. / Never and always" ("Little Gidding" 139). The words "nowhere" and "never" indicate the negative (*neti neti*) vision of non-dualism. And the words "is" and "always" indicate the positive vision (*anvaya*) of non-dualism. In his epiphanic mood, Eliot reveals that "the still point" is always present in England. The time-bound and "the timeless" intersect at "the still point." England is the meeting point of both the time-bound and the timeless. "The timeless" is either present or absent in England.

Brahma cannot be obtained through our outer sense and notion. Regarding the inner approach to Brahma, *Katha Upani ad* remarks that the five senses are turned outward—"par nci kh ni." Therefore, they see only external matters, external bodies, and the external world but not the internal Self. We need to turn our eyes inward to see the inner Self (2.1.1). In other words, we need the sixth sense (mind) or the third eye (the eye of knowledge), which are turned inward, to see "the still point." Eliot

decides that the still point" cannot be attained through five senses, notion, and reasoning or logic though they can serve as a secondary aid. And the destination of any path of spirituality is the same, i.e., the non-dual Brahma:

If you came this way [of spirituality],  
 Taking any route, starting from anywhere,  
 It would always be the same: you would have to put off  
 Sense and notion.  
 You are not here to verify  
 Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity  
 Or carry report. You are here to kneel  
 Where prayer has been valid. ("Little Gidding" 139)

We can adopt any path of spirituality "taking any route, starting anywhere" to approach to Brahma, but we should use our inner sense, conscience, and intelligence in place of the outer sense and notion while treading the path of spirituality. It requires prayer, devotion, faith, and belief in spirituality, and above all the self-realization of the Essence to attain "the still point."

Purification of the ideas is the first prerequisite to attain "the still point."

*C ndogya Upani ad* declares that if something is done with knowledge, faith, and yoga, they become reinforcing (1.1.10) and help purify heart. As hinted earlier, many paths lead to Brahma; for example, the paths of selfless service, selfless *Bhakti*, meditation, and spiritual knowledge. However, Eliot finally gives a high importance to the immediate (*aparok a*) path of spiritual knowledge with his conviction that "the fire and the rose are one." To transcend materiality for realizing the Essence, he gives first emphasis on the purification of the intention of our heart through devotion. Then we can gain spiritual knowledge. Therefore, he declares: "And all shall well and / all

manner of thing shall be well / by the purification of the motive / in the ground of our beseeching" ("Little Gidding" III 143). The words "purification" and "beseeching" are related to devotion. Before entering the path of knowledge, we need devotion to Brahma. If we move ahead with that devotion, everything will be right and easy in the process of seeking the Essence.

When we have the self-realization of the Essence through (sudden) illumination, we have happiness. *Taittir ya Upani ad* maintains that Brahma is the source of happiness; one becomes happy by coming in touch with that source of happiness— "*raso vai sa , rasam hyev yam labdhv "nandi bhavati"*" (2.7.2-3). Therefore, *Mu aka Upani ad* stresses the need for self-realization to know the Essence of Brahma. It declares that Brahma is beyond the reach of mortal eyes, speech, or other sense organs. It can be attained by neither *tapa* (austerity) nor action. It can be attained only by the pure hearted-person who meditates on it with pure knowledge (3.1.8). Happiness derived through mystical enlightenment cannot be compared to the pleasures derived from fruition, security, affection, or good dinner. We cannot describe the personal experiences of such a sudden enlightenment through language. We can just feel it in our blessed mood of happiness. In Eliot's words:

The moments of happiness—not the sense of well-being,  
Fruition, fulfillment, security, or affection,  
Or even a very good dinner, but the sudden illumination—  
.....  
beyond any meaning

We can assign to happiness. ("Dry Salvages" 133)

This suggests that "happiness" is not what comes from the external and worldly things such as comfort, good health, physical prosperity, fulfillment of desires, freedom from



danger, or the attainment of worldly love. Happiness does not result from any *karma* or mere bookish knowledge. It results merely from "the sudden illumination" resulted from the personal deep reflection on the universal Existence of the Essence.

Therefore, without self- realization, we cannot have the immediate taste of the fruit. The taste is happiness. The fruit is Brahma.

Attachment, detachment, and indifference are key terms in spirituality. The purpose of the whole *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* is to remove a keen pang of attachment from the sages who have shaved their head to lead a pious life. The references to detachment are found in *Ṛgveda* (1-2) and *vetvatara*(6.4) *Upaniṣads*. Eliot shows differences between three terms: attachment, indifference, and detachment. He defines them intellectually:

There are three conditions which often look alike

Yet differ completely, flourish in the same hedgerow:

Attachment to self and to things and to persons, detachment

From self and from things and from persons; and, growing between

Them, indifference

Which resembles the others as death resembles life,

Being between two lives—unflowering, between

The live and the dead nettle. ("Little Gidding" III 142)

"Attachment," "detachment" and "indifference" often look similar because they grow "in the same hedgerow" of mind. These terms keep importance for spiritual seekers.

Attachment (*rāga*) means absorption of mind to body ("self"), to things and to persons. Detachment (*anāsakti*) means the distance (non-involvement) of the mind from the body, things, and persons. The idea that I am a body is attachment whereas the knowledge that I (the Conscious Self) am different from the body is detachment.

Attachment gives pleasure: detachment gives beatitude. Detachment is dispassion or non-attachment to sense-objects and to the fruits of action. Detachment inspires us to remain at the state of the *samatvayoga* (equanimity or evenness of temper) as instructed by *Katha Upani ad*, which asserts that wise men do not feel sad (1.3.22, 2.1.4) but rather controls their mind and intellect all the time (1.3.9). Detachment is not indifference. Detachment means not having sensual love for sense-objects even if they are present in front of us. Indifference is just opposite to attachment and detachment as death is to life. In between them — "the live" nettle of attachment and "the dead nettle" of detachment — falls indifference (apathy, insensibility), which is not good because it does not yield any flowers or advantages. More importantly, detachment is compulsory for the attainment of "the still point."

The individual selves (*jīva tmas*) cannot know the Essence easily. They are trapped by their mundane desires and illusion. *Muṇḍaka Upani ad* compares two selves, a lower self (*jīva tma*) and the higher Self (*Param tma*), with two birds (a lower bird that is the individual self and a higher bird that is the Supreme Self) living in the same tree. But the lower bird cannot know the higher bird due to its ignorance and illusion (3.1.1-2). Eliot's majority of characters are lower birds. So, they cannot believe that the Essence is behind this visible world. In this connection, the higher bird (the spiritually conscious Higher Self) warns the lower bird (the ignorant and unaware lower self) to go away from the tree (of material life consisting of wine, wealth, and wife) to be free from bondage and troubles:

Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children,

Hidden excitedly, containing laughter.

Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind

Cannot bear very much reality.

Time past and time future

What might have been and what has been

Point to one end, which is always present. ("Burnt Norton" 118)

This is the call of the higher bird (the bird of knowledge) persistently admonishing the lower bird (the bird of ignorance/*karma*) like us "to go" ahead to catch eternity or reality. The (mystically/spiritually aware) children who are hidden in the tree are laughing "excitedly" at the ignorance of the lower bird. The lower bird does not know that "the still point" is "always present" in all times and that everything whatever happened and will happen indicate the existence of "the still point." Obviously, ordinary human beings have limited knowledge due to ignorance; they have no capacity to bear the truth about eternity and immortality. Therefore, they want to keep on living in their dreams and fantasies. In fact, they are like a caged pigeon, which has forgotten its real home, i.e., jungle. Therefore, the higher bird acknowledges, "human kind cannot bear very much reality."

The characters like the higher bird are limited in number in Eliot's poems and plays. For example, Tiresias in *The Waste Land*, Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral*, Harry, Mary, and Agatha in *The Family Reunion* serve examples to the higher birds. The higher bird-like characters become fed up with the materialistic world and turn towards the spiritual world for the ending of their suffering and for the achievement of liberation as well. Whether one expresses it openly or not, the point comes sooner or later in everyone's life when they desire for the spiritual life in place of the materialistic one.

In a nutshell, Four *Quartets* is about the essential relationship between the temporal and the Timeless, between the individual self and the Universal Self, and between the One and the many. The central theme is human beings' quest for

attaining the Essence and liberation through the spiritual knowledge of “the still point.” East and West meet at "the still point." "The still point" is termed as Brahma in the Upani ad whereas it is termed as "God" in Christianity. In other words, "the still point" means the Self or the Supreme Self, which is standing immovable in the midst of the moving multitudes of material objects, body, mind, etc.

From the viewpoint of the path of devotion, “the still point” means God (Sagu a Brahma). From this devotion aspect, the common goal of Hinduism and Christianity is to attain God through devotion. It is the greatest achievement of Eliot’s mystical poetic capacity to be able to show the unprecedented juncture of the East and the West through their common goal of attaining the Essence as God. The individual self, the Universal Self and the world are one and the same on the higher level of spirituality. The opposite of “*karma* and rebirth” is “knowledge and liberation.” We can be free from *karma* and rebirth through the knowledge of “the still point” and self-realization. When we realize that we are already and always "the still point" (Brahma), we attain the unlimited happiness, which we have been attempting to seek from our innumerable previous lives till now.

## Chapter Six

### The Attainment of the Essence (Brahma and *Moksha*) through Self- knowledge and Self-realization in Eliot's Writings

#### Overview

This study justifies the main argument/claim or thesis of this dissertation that the Essence (Brahma and *moksha*) can be attained in life time itself through self-knowledge (spiritual knowledge, self-enquiry) and self-realization (the inner transformation of ideas; inner experience).

The research questions are answered by the study of the spiritual symbols such as “the Wheel,” “water,” and “the still point” in Eliot’s selected texts. The research questions support the title of this study that argues that the quest for the Essence resonates in his writings through different symbols. “The Wheel” symbolizes *karma* and rebirth in his *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion*. “Water” symbolizes the quest for the Essence, “Shanti,” and human, moral, and spiritual values in his *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*. And “the still point” represents the quest for Ātmā and Brahma (the Essence) and their oneness in his *Four Quartets*.

The research questions are met with the help of three objectives: (a) to explore the symbolic meaning of “the Wheel” in Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion*, (b) to analyze the symbolic use of “water” in Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*, and (c) to identify the quest for Ātmā and Brahma (the Essence) and establish their oneness through “the still point” in Eliot’s *Four Quartets*.

The exploration of “the Wheel” shows that “the Wheel” symbolically means *karma* and rebirth. Selfish, attached, and mundane *karma* (action) is responsible for

one's rebirth in Eliot's selected texts. The analysis of the use of "water" shows that water symbolizes the human quest for the Essence in Eliot's selected texts. The quest for water is the quest for the Essence and liberation through spiritual knowledge and self-realization in his selected texts. Similarly, the identification of "the still point" reveals that "the still point" represents Ātm and/or Brahma. Also, the quest for the "the still point" is the quest for Ātm and/or Brahma (the Essence) in order to establish their oneness in Eliot's selected text.

Eliot's selected texts express the theme of the quest for the Essence. This theme of the spiritual quest is found right from *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*, and *Murder in the Cathedral* to *The Family Reunion*. In *The Waste Land*, Eliot searches for the Essence through the search of "water" and reaches the chapel to find water there. In *Four Quartets*, he searches for the Essence through "the still point." In *Murder in the Cathedral*, he searches for the Essence through his unshakeable devotion to God. Similarly, in *The Family Reunion*, he searches for the Essence through the inquiry of the Self.

This study is carried out by using the eleven principal Upaniṣads, *Ṛgveda*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Praṇa*, *Muṇḍaka*, *Māṇḍūkya*, *Taittirīya*, *Aitareya*, *Chāndogya*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *vetāvatara* and their four major Upaniṣadic concepts as theoretical tools. The major Upaniṣadic concepts such as *karma* and rebirth, the existence and immortality of Ātm and Brahma, non-dualism, and self-realization are used to study Eliot's selected poems and plays. The study of the Upaniṣads shows that one's rebirth is decided by one's *karma*; Ātm is Brahma and Brahma is Ātm; all this world is Brahma; and Brahma can be attained only through the knowledge and self-realization of Brahma.

In the review chapter, the critical opinions of the authors on the Upaniads reveals that the Upaniads are sacred Hindu texts that reveal the Ultimate Essence and whose knowledge leads to spiritual liberation. Besides, the basic concepts of the Upaniads help us know about the essence of the Upaniads to some extent. The review of literature on Eliot's writings reveals that his poems and plays are criticisms of (scientific) materialism, which argues that there is no spirit and God, and that matter creates consciousness but not vice versa. Materialism, opposite to idealism and spiritualism, claims that everything including the mind is made out of matter and energy. Eliot objects to this sort of the materialistic bent of the modern mind revealing the futility of human wishes. His writings are criticisms of humanity's widespread apathy toward humanitarian, religious and spiritual beliefs. Besides, his writings are about the attempt of a modern individual for the search of the forgotten Self. Thus, a major research gap was identified and it was found that Eliot's poems and plays are not so far studied from the Upaniadic insights with special focus on non-duality in depth.

Chapter Three explores that Eliot represents the concept of *karma* and rebirth through the symbol of the "the Wheel" in *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion*. Our good and bad lives are decided by our good or bad *karma* (actions) but not by any outward forces. What we call *prarabdha* (fate/destiny) is the result of our past *karma* performed in the past lives. *Karma* and *jñāna* (action and knowledge) are opposite to each other. *Karma* cannot conduct to *moksha* (the end of rebirth by merging into the formless non-dual Brahman). *Karma* causes rebirth whereas *jñāna* leads to *moksha*. Ceaseless birth and death are bondage whereas permanent release from them is *moksha* (liberation).

On the one hand, Eliot's characters of ordinary type are subject to the cycle of *karma* and rebirth. They are not aware of the fact that the cause of their suffering and bondage is their desire to cling to the physical pleasures of life. On the other hand, the characters of higher type attempt to be free from the bondage of life by seeking recourse to the spiritual knowledge of the Self.

In *The Waste Land*, the Cumean Sibyl is very old, wants to die in order to be free from the bondage of being alive but cannot do so because of the role of her *karma*. Actually, one has no any option except bearing the result of one's *karma* done in the past. One is free to do *karma* but is not free to choose the fruits of one's *karma*. In "Burial of the Dead," Madame Sosostris displays the card of "the Wheel" to foretell that everyone is subject to the cycle of life and death.

In "A Game of Chess," the couples of lovers and beloveds play the dirty game of sex. That game is the cause that moves the Wheel of life and death. In "The Fire Sermon," sexual lovers commit unfair sexual activity, prostitution, adultery, or fornication. They do not know that they are burning on the Wheel of passion and bondage. "In Death by Water," Phlebas, a sea trader, dies by water and becomes the subject to the Wheel of rebirth without knowing the Essence of life. In "What the Thunder Said," the wastelanders suffer from the spiritual draught due to their indifference to the spiritual and moral values of life.

In *Murder in the Cathedral*, the *karma* of Archbishop Thomas Becket moves his Wheel of life. He thinks that no one, except his *karma*, has a power to turn his Wheel (*karma* and its result) on which he is moving. He goes against the order of King Henry II and sticks to the rules of the church. As a result, he is killed by the king's knights. The church declares him a martyr saint, but the government of the king does not recognize him as a martyr saint. Becket faces his death calmly with his



uttermost devotion to God without any attachment to the worldly powers, prestige, and pleasures. Thus, he becomes liberated from the Wheel of life and death. The comment of the Chorus of townswomen suggest that a human being undergoes many births from the sea creatures to the ape before being born as a human being due to his or her worldly *karma*.

In *The Family Reunion*, all the characters are influenced by their *karma*. The ordinary characters like Amy, Ivy, Violet, Denman, Amy's two sons, John and Aurther, Downing, Sergeant Winchell and Dr. Warburton remain on the lower level of the physical world of pain and pleasure. They cannot elevate themselves to the higher level of the spiritual world. However, the visionary characters like Harry, Mary and Agatha go beyond the physical world, see the unseen, and experience the noumenal world. Agatha can remain in both worlds simultaneously. Harry's opinion is that the whole world is a Wheel or a machine; we are the parts of the machine; and the Wheel of life does not stop until we attain knowledge and self-realization.

Harry, Lord Monchensey, returns his childhood home eight years after his abroad stay due to his wife's death at sea. His mother Amy wants him to remarry his cousin Mary. But he renounces the marriage proposal and his paternal property, and leaves his luxurious home with Downing, his servant and chauffeur, for a pilgrimage to atone for his guilt of killing his wife hoping that he could attain freedom from the Wheel of human bondage. The news of Harry's renunciation of Wishwood kills his mother Amy. Thus, she cannot control the Wheel of her family. Rather she is controlled by the Wheel of her *karma* .

*Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* are the junctions of rivers of three disciplines: action, devotion, and knowledge. *Murder in the Cathedral* shows the importance of the paths of selfless action/service and devotion whereas *The*

*Family Reunion* exhibits the importance of the path of knowledge. Eliot starts his spiritual journey as a seeker of spirituality with his poem *The Waste Land* and appears as a finder of spirituality with his poetic play *The Family Reunion*. He serves as a mystic pathfinder of the Eastern spirituality for western people. Strictly speaking, a mystic is one who realizes union with Brahma or God by whatever name.

As in the Upaniṣad, Eliot in *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and *The Family Reunion* shows that desires or cravings cause the Wheel of life and death to move. We grow old, but desires never. When we are free from the myriads of desires and their different forms such as lust, anger, avarice, attachment, delusion, pride, jealousy, passion, infatuation, and enmity, we are free from the bondage of materiality (*Samsara*, transmigration), and the Wheel stops. The root cause of suffering is ignorance (self-nonrecognition, ignorance of one's Self). The cause of ignorance is a lack of spiritual knowledge. The spiritual knowledge, which removes the ignorance of the Self, is the key to enlightenment.

Chapter Four analyzes how Eliot uses the symbol of "water" in the sense of spirituality, Brahma and liberation in *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*. People are in quest for water. The quest for water suggests the quest for the Essence. In *The Waste Land*, there is no water. That is, there is spiritual dryness. "In the Burial of the Dead," April, though being a month of a joyful spring season, is the cruelest month because there is no sufficient water despite it rains faintly. People are dying due to the scarcity of sufficient water. They are without spirituality due to the adverse impact of materialism. "In a Game of Chess," lovers and beloveds are stuck to their daily mechanical life of love and sex. They lack the spiritual water. "In the Fire Sermon," debased lovers and beloveds are burning due to lack of the spiritual water of self-control and asceticism. Similarly, in "What the Thunder Said," Tiresias, a pilgrim,

goes to the chapel in search of water, and the thunder speaks the mantras of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad*: “Datta. Dayadhvam. D myata” teaching humanity to be generous, merciful and self-controlled in order to establish peace that ensures liberation. The wastelanders get knowledge as to how the water of “Sh nti ” can be obtained but they do not become ready to practice the knowledge into their daily life. So, their knowledge does not really become fruitful for them.

In *Four Quartets*, there is a great role of water or spirituality. People are optimistic for liberation through the knowledge of “the still point” or Brahma. In “Burnt Norton,” a dry pool is filled with water out of sunlight and a “lotos” rises out of heart of light. This symbolic, mystic vision suggests that one can enjoy divine bliss even in an unfavorable situation when one is overwhelmed by spiritual knowledge while meditating on light (consciousness, the Self, Brahma). In “East Coker,” Eliot warns those people who are eating and drinking for dung and death only. The world is like the sea full of bondage and suffering. People must cross this sea carefully if they want liberation.

In “The Dry Salvages,” Eliot remarks that the river (Ātm ) is within us and the sea (the Universal Ātm or Brahma) is everywhere in the universe. He further expresses the unknowability of gods and the river. For him, the river is a strong brown god representing Lord Īva/Rudra or Brahma and whose knowledge leads to spiritual emancipation. The sea (Brahma, inner consciousness) is a judge that gives good or bad results to every person as per his or her *karma* or what he or she deserves based on his or her actions. Similarly, in “Little Gidding,” Eliot compares our life to the longest river that flows to find its original source, i.e., the sea. The journey of our life becomes complete when we find our Home, i.e., Brahma.

Chapter Five is about the quest for Ātmā and Brahma (the Essence) and their Oneness represented by the symbol of “the Still Point” in Eliot’s *Four Quartets*. “The still point” means Ātmā (the Self) or Brahma (the Universal Self) or both. The Upaniṣad asserts that Ātmā is Brahma and Brahma is Ātmā; Ātmā, Brahma, and the world are one. That is, all of this is Brahma. As in the Upaniṣad, Eliot suggests this idea of the oneness of Ātmā and Brahma through his witty expression, “the fire and the rose are one [and the same]” meaning that everything is divine. There is nothing else except “the still point” in the universe. Everything, visible or invisible, is an embodiment of “the still point.” “The still point” can be attained through knowledge and self-realization. Once one attains “the still point,” he or she becomes liberated from the Wheel of life and death once for all. Thus, “the still point” and the Wheel are related to each other. That is, the center of the Wheel is “the still point.” The Wheel stops moving once one attains the Central Point. “The Dry Salvages” is action-oriented, “East Coker” is devotion-oriented, and “Burnt Norton” and “Little Gidding” are knowledge-oriented.

“The Dry Salvages” instructs us not to think of the fruit of action but to continue our duties of life without any attachment as right action is freedom. The selfless *karma* can help us attain “the still point.” “East Coker” shows the importance of the wisdom of humility or devotion, which is endless and which opens the door of “the still point.” “Burnt Norton” suggests the need of the search for the divine bliss inside one’s heart where “the still point” resides. “Little Gidding” shows what the real knowledge is. The real knowledge is the knowledge of “the still point” that creates spiritual unity amidst diversity in the world.

In “Burnt Norton,” Eliot comments on two types of time, temporary time and Eternal Time. The Eternal Time is “the still point” or the Ultimate Essence. “The still

point” is known through the negative or mystical process that is known as *neti neti* in the Upani ad. Eliot’s concern was how to be free from the temporary time (the Wheel of life and death) and how to attain the Eternal Time or immortality while still being alive. To attain the Eternal Time, the self-realization with the practice of renunciation and ascetism are quite important. The inner freedom from the worldly desires is more important.

In “East Coker,” Eliot reveals that beginning and ending, creation and destruction, and life and death are eternal processes. “The still point” itself appears through these processes. The person who really realizes this kind of secret knowledge of non-duality is liberated from the Wheel of life and death. But the Wheel of life and death continues unless one attains “the still point.”

In “Dry Salvages,” Eliot describes Time as the “the still point” that is both destroyer and preserver. In terms of the Upani ad, it is Brahma that creates, preserves, and destroys the universe. Eliot presents Lord Kṛṣṇa as Incarnation or “the still point.” Those persons who know that they themselves are Incarnations of Brahma become Brahma and attain liberation. In the first part of “Little Gidding,” Eliot suggests that we can follow any path of spirituality to attain “the still point,” but in the fifth part he recommended the path of the non-dual knowledge of “the still point” because it is the immediate path of attaining Brahma before death. Thus, he concludes that everything and every manner will be well when dualities or multiplicities change into one flame of knowledge. And with that non-dual knowledge, one finds the fire and the rose as one embodiment of “the still point” because from the viewpoint of the Upani ad every name and form is the endless extension or expansion of Brahma.

However, name and form are only ideas. They (name and form) do not remain after their destruction. For example, the name and form of a pot does not remain after

the destruction of the pot. The only real thing is its clay. Similarly, the only real thing is Brahma, and all the names and forms of the material world originated from Brahma disappear after the dissolution of the world or living and non-living objects.

All the opposing pairs, contradictions, and paradoxes are reconciled on the higher level of the meditation on the world as a manifestation of “the still point.” They all become one in a sage's mystic or spiritual trance. For example, the fire and the rose become one; death and birth become one; beginning and end become one; still and moving become one; sinners and saints become one; foes and friends become one; and East and West become one. That is, they all are “the still point” (Brahma) at the core. “The still point” is still and unmoved but moves others and finally reconciles them into It. Thus, some interconnected themes such as humanity’s relationship with time, eternity, immortality, and “the still point” are found in Eliot’s *Four Quartets*.

In a nutshell, Eliot's selected texts hint at the human predicament of universal suffering, growing spiritual dryness of the modern people, the incessant mutability of human life, worthlessness of human vanities, immortality of the Self, and the universal longing for immortality or for the immediate liberation from material existence through the self-realization of the “the still point” (the non-dual Brahma).

### **Gist of the Analysis of the Primary Texts**

Eliot’s poem *The Waste Land* presents the theory of *karma* and rebirth, and the individual self’s quest for water (the Essence), “Sh nti ,” and human, moral, and spiritual values. *Karma* decides one’s fate and rebirth. The purpose of life is to quest for the Essence. More importantly, the teachings of *Brihad ranyaka Upani ad* — “Give, sympathise, control” — deserve following in order to assist in our quest for the Essence. Similarly, Eliot’s poem *Four Quartets* presents the purpose of the individual self’s quest for Ātm and Brahma (the Essence) and their oneness (non-duality). We

can establish the oneness between Ātm and Brahma through the knowledge of “the still point” (Ātm and/or Brahma) and self-realization. Besides, immediate liberation is achieved through this self-knowledge and self-realization. Finally, Eliot’s poetic plays *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion* present the theory of *karma* and rebirth. Past *karma* decides one’s present fate, and present *karma* makes one’s present and future life. Rebirth or liberation (no rebirth) depends on one’s *karma* . Selfish, attached *karma* causes rebirth whereas unselfish, detached *karma* causes liberation. *Karma* is the opposite of knowledge.

### Conclusion

The fundamental concepts of the Upani ad echo and re-echo in Eliot’s writings. The theme of the eternal quest of humanity for the Essence is found in his poems *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*, and poetic plays *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. Human beings move on the Wheel of life and death as per their *karma* unless they attain “the still point” or the Essence that is known as Brahma in the Upani ad. They can attain “the still point” through the non-dual knowledge that expounds the oneness between tm (the Self) and Brahma (the Universal Self) and, more importantly, through the self-realization of that non-dual knowledge of tm and Brahma. Before the self-realization, one needs to practice renunciation (rejection of attachment, egoism, the fruits of action, and the sense of ownership over the objects), asceticism (withdrawal from the sensual and sexual pleasures), detachment (*vair gya*, the end of the hope of getting something from the world), and dispassion. Also, one needs to practice “Datta, Dayadhvam, D myata” (give, sympathize, control) for the achievement of (the water of) “Sh nti ” (Peace). And, selfless *karma* (action) and pure Bhakti (devotion) are desirable in the initial stage though they are secondary or indirect means to attain the “the still point.” Thus, the ultimate goal of life to be

free from time (cycle of life and death) to attain eternity through the knowledge of the Essence is found in Eliot's selected writings. The crux of that knowledge is that an individual himself or herself is that Essence (the All-Pervasive Consciousness, Brahma) for which he or she is searching to attain eternal peace and bliss since beginning.

### **Rebuttal**

Most critics do not consider the influence of the Upaniadic aspect as sufficiently significant in Eliot's works though there are numerous direct and indirect Upaniadic references in his works. The Western scholars refuse to accept that Eliot's main intention was to assimilate the Vedic teachings of the Hindu philosophy including the Upaniadic philosophy into his Christian belief through his poems and plays. Nevertheless, the influence of the Upaniadic in his texts cannot be refuted as he was a student of the Eastern philosophy at Harvard. As he remarks, he was indebted to Indian thought and sensibility for his poetic creation. Moreover, his references to the Hindu texts such as *Bhagavad-Gītā* and the Upaniadic in his writings are irrefutable proofs of his deep interest in the Eastern scriptures and philosophy.

### **Judgmental Remarks**

Eliot's texts hold double significance or values for the world. On one hand, they have idealistic, theoretical, philosophical, or abstract significance while on the other hand they have realistic, pragmatic, practical or concrete values. Theoretically, Eliot's ideas expressed in his writings inspire us to read, reflect on, and analyze them from the Upaniadic insights, especially non-dualism. His non-dual ideas are influenced by those of the Upaniadic. Pragmatically, they inspire us to seek equality in differences, unity in diversity/plurality/multiplicity, inseparability in varieties, peace in conflict, and co-ordination or harmony in disagreement or incongruity.



The sense of non-dualism promotes the sense of cosmopolitanism, human equality, dignity, and justice all over the world. Therefore, the sense of non-dualism helps to alleviate the sense of discrimination and hatred among human beings created on the ground of their natural, hereditary, physical, educational, economic, social, and familial qualities. Besides, the sense of non-dualism helps to value everyone as Brahma with love, generosity, compassion, and sympathy. Today's world is divided on the basis discrimination in the name of cast, color, sex, gender, race, power, prestige money, blood and so on. In the context of Nepal, there is a great problem of cast-based untouchability and discrimination. The non-dual vision of Eliot can play a great role to end or minimize all these discriminations if humans are regarded equal as Brahma or God as highlighted by the findings of this research study.

Actually, the root cause of human discrimination is ignorance or lack of spiritual knowledge. Ignorance disappears when spiritual knowledge appears just as darkness disappears when the sunlight appears. Therefore, the spiritual knowledge of non-duality that establishes equality among human beings is a must now. Eliot's texts disclose the same spiritual knowledge that can promote equality and fair treatment among all in the world. This dissertation highlights the same fact.

Brahma is without any polar opposites; for example, it is neither male nor female. It is, without exception, equal to all as the sun is equal to all. All are Brahma so all are equal on the spiritual ground. The pairs of opposites/dualities function only in the relative world. Yet, the idea of spiritual unity in diversity and diversity in spiritual unity is the characteristic of the ancient thoughts of the Upaniadic seers. Thus, there is co-existence and co-ordination between oneness and manyness. These ideas are in Eliot's writing.

The concepts of the quest for the Essence (Brahma and *mokṣa*) and that of the oneness of Ātmā and Brahma are the original and fundamental ones of the Upaniṣadic philosophy that is not found in any other philosophies of the world. The quest for the Essence and oneness resonates in Eliot's writings. This knowledge is useful for the human society. One important aim of this research study is that it was written to bring into light the ancient Upaniṣadic philosophy of the East by linking it to the Western literature. This aim has been fulfilled now. Thus, this research study is an attempt to respect, reserve and promote the spiritual tradition of the Upaniṣad for the welfare of humanity.

### **Proposed Topics for Future Research**

Against the background discussed in the foregoing chapters, this study fills a lacuna in the studies of Eliot's selected writings by using the insights into the eleven major Upaniṣads of the Hindu philosophy. However, the poems and plays that were not studied by this researcher could be observed by potential researchers from the viewpoint of the Upaniṣad. Even some of the parts of the selected poems and plays not covered by this researcher could be researched from the insights of the Upaniṣad.

Being profound in the universal theme, Eliot's works are classics. They can still be studied from different methodological aspects including the Upaniṣad that has been used by this researcher. For example, they could be studied from the critical aspects of linguistics, history, biography, Christianity, Classicism, modern literary theories (psychoanalysis, Marxism, new criticism, reader-response, structuralism, deconstruction, new historical, and cultural criticism), *Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Patanjali Yogasūtra*, *Brahmasūtra*, and Buddhism. Some proposed topics for further study are as follows:

- (a) Interrelationship between Eliot's Writings and Hindu Philosophy

- (b) Grand Narrative in Eliot's Critical Writings: Upani adic Knowledge and *Mok a*
- (c) The Influence of the Upani ad in Eliot's "The Hollow Men," "Ash Wednesday," "Choruses from 'The Rock,'" and *The Cocktail Party*

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## Appendix I

### Vowel Alphabetsof Sanskrit Transliteration

Sanskrit Letters in <i>Devan gar</i>	Vowel Letters	Transliteration	Sounds Like
अ	a, A	<i>a, A</i>	o in son
आ	Aa	,	ain master
इ	i, I	<i>i, I</i>	i inif
ई	ee, Ee (long)	,	ee in feel
उ	u, U	<i>u, U</i>	u in full
ऊ	oo, Oo (long)	,	oo in boot
ऋ	ri, Ri	,	ri in rishi
ॠ	ree, Ree	,	
ऌ	lri, Lri	,	
ॡ	lree, Lree	,	
ए	e, E	<i>e, E</i>	e in ten
ऐ	ai, Ai	<i>ai, Ai</i>	y in my
ओ	o, O	<i>o, O</i>	o in over
औ	au, Au	<i>au, Au</i>	ow in now
˙ (anusv ra)	m, M	,	m in hum
: (visarga)	ha, Ha	,	h in huh!
ऽ (single avagraha)	a	'	inso'hamasmi
ऽ (double avagraha)	aa	"	in <i>tamas</i> "vrit

(Adapted from *Bhagavad-Git : As It Is* by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhup da)

## Appendix II

## Consonant Alphabets of Sanskrit Transliteration

Sanskrit Letters in <i>Devanāgarī</i>	Consonant Letters	Transliteration	Sounds Like
क्	k	k	k in <i>king</i>
ख्	kh	kh	ckh in <i>blockhead</i>
ग्	g	g	g in <i>guard</i>
घ्	gh	gh	gh in <i>log- hut</i>
ङ्	ng		ng in <i>king</i>
च्	ch	c	ch in <i>chin</i>
छ्	chh	ch	chh in <i>catch him</i>
ज्	j	j	j in <i>jug</i>
झ्	jh	jh	dgeh in <i>hedgehog</i>
ञ्	n	ñ	n in <i>vyanjana</i>
ट्	t		t in <i>ten</i>
ठ्	th	h	th in <i>ant- hill</i>
ड्	d		d in <i>doom</i>
ढ्	dh	h	dh in <i>godhood</i>
ण्	n		n in <i>phan</i>
त्	t	t	French <i>t</i>
थ्	th	th	th in <i>thumb</i>
द्	d	d	th in <i>then</i>
ध्		dh	theh in <i>breathe</i>

*here*

न्	n	<i>n</i>	n in <i>pen</i>
प्	p	<i>p</i>	p in <i>pen</i>
फ्	ph	<i>ph</i>	ph in <i>loop-hole</i>
ब्	b	<i>b</i>	b in <i>ball</i>
भ्	bh	<i>bh</i>	bh in <i>abhor</i>
म्	m	<i>m</i>	m in <i>money</i>
य्	y	<i>y</i>	y in <i>yellow</i>
र्	r	<i>r</i>	r in <i>row</i>
ल्	l	<i>l</i>	l in <i>low</i>
व्	v	<i>v</i>	v in <i>avert</i>
श्	sh (palatal)		sh in <i>shoot</i>
ष्	sh (cerebral)		sh in <i>show</i>
स्	s	<i>s</i>	s in <i>sin</i>
ह्	h	<i>h</i>	h in <i>hollow</i>
क्ष्	ksh	<i>k</i>	ksh in <i>kshetri</i>
त्र्	tr	<i>tr</i>	tr in <i>trailokya</i>
ज्ञ्	jñ	<i>jñ</i>	jñ in <i>jñani</i>

(Adapted from *Bhagavad-Git : As It Is* by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhup da)

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup>सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् । सोऽश्नुते सर्वान् कामान् सह

ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति ॥ (तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद् २ । १ । २)

*satyam jñ namanatam brahma, yo veda nihitam guh y m parame*

*vyoman,so' nute sarv n k m n saha, brahmañ vipa citeti.*

(*Taittir ya Upani ad 2.1.2*)

<sup>2</sup>द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे मूर्तं चैवामूर्तं च मर्त्यं चामूर्तं च स्थितं च यच्च सच्च त्यच्च ॥

(बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् २ । ३ । १)

*dve v va brahmaño r pe, m rtam caiv m ram ca, martyam*

*c mritam ca, yacca, sacca, tyacch.*(*Brihad ranyaka Upani ad 2.3.1*)

<sup>3</sup>अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ (गीता ८ । ५)

*antak le ca mameva smarnmuktv kalevaram*

*yah pray ti sa madbh vam y ti n styatra sa saya (G t 8.5)*

<sup>4</sup>जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ (गीता ६ । ७)

*jit tmana pra ntasya param tm sam hit*

*to ñasukhadu khe u tath m n pam nayo . (G t 6.7)*

<sup>5</sup>रसो वै सः । रसं ह्येवायं लब्ध्वाऽऽनन्दी भवति ॥ (तैत्तिरीय उपनिषद् २ । ७ । १)

*raso vai sa , rasa hyev ya labdhv "nand bhavati. (Taittir ya Upani ad*

*2.7.1)*

<sup>6</sup>सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म । (छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् ३ । १४ । ३)

*sarva khalvida brahma. (C ndogya Upani ad 3.14.3)*