

# Christianity in T.S. Eliot's Poems

---

Ganić, Mirela

Master's thesis / Diplomski rad

2017

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences / Sveučilište u Rijeci, Filozofski fakultet u Rijeci**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://um.nsk.hr/um:nbn:hr:186:430438>

Rights / Prava: [In copyright](#) / [Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.](#)

Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-07-11**



Repository / Repozitorij:

[Repository of the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences - FHSSRI Repository](#)



**University of Rijeka**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Department of English**

Mirela Ganić

**CHRISTIANITY IN T.S. ELIOT'S POEMS**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the M.A. in English Language and Literature and German Language and Literature at the University of Rijeka

**Supervisor:**

**Lovorka Gruić-Grmuša, PhD**

**September 2017**

**CONTENTS**

- 1. INTRODUCTION..... 1
- 2. CHRISTIANITY IN ELIOT'S POETRY ..... 3
- 3. ANALYSIS OF CHRISTIAN MOTIFS ..... 8
  - 3.1. Christian God-Holy Trinity ..... 8
    - 3.1.1. God the Father..... 9
    - 3.1.2. God the Son..... 14
    - 3.1.3. God the Holy Spirit..... 20
  - 3.2. Sacraments..... 24
    - 3.2.1. Baptism ..... 25
    - 3.2.2. Eucharist ..... 28
  - 3.3. Church- Bride of Christ ..... 35
- 4. CONCLUSION ..... 39
- 5. SUMMARY ..... 43
- BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 44

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this analysis was to investigate whether T.S. Eliot used primarily the Christian motifs in his poems. For the purposes of this analysis, one used 7 poems: *Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *Gerontion*, *Waste Land*, *Hollow Men*, *Ash- Wednesday*, *Journey of the Magi* and *Four Quartets*. The poems were analyzed by investigating the objective correlatives and Eliot's recurrent poetic theme of the Paschal mystery.

The Christian motifs that were taken into consideration are *Holy Trinity*, *Sacraments* and *Church*. Each motif analyzed contributed to a deeper insight into the development of the anagogic paschal theme, of which Eliot conceived as the intersection between the timeless and time-bound space utterly accomplished and completed in Christ's Incarnation and His Passion. The analysis focused particularly on the spiritual rebirth or eternal life in the temporality in relation to the images of birth and death in the likeness of Christ's Birth and Death.

The analysis concludes with the more critical corroboration of the results of the analysis considering mainly Eliot's poetic method of the unified sensibility, the anagogic and paschal interpretation.

**Key words:** poetry, Eliot, analysis, Christianity, paschal mystery, (re)birth, death, spiritual conversion

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the thesis is to explore whether T.S. Eliot used Christian motifs and symbols in his poems as an additional marginal poetic method or as the core theme and pattern of his poems.

The hypothesis of the present study is that the author's poems contain Christianity as their basic theme and motif. Since Eliot himself stated in his essay *Religion and Literature* that he desires "a literature which should be unconsciously, rather than deliberately and defiantly, Christian" (Singh 2006: 14), the analysis of Eliot's poems will focus on the Christian symbols. More precisely, his early poems (*Selected Poems*) that appeared before his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism seem to contain and elaborate Christian allusions as well.

For the purposes of this analysis, the present study includes 7 poems: *Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *Gerontion*, *Waste Land*, *Hollow Men*, *Ash Wednesday*, *Journey of the Magi* and *Four Quartets*. A single pattern may be easily observed in the above-mentioned poems. The most essential doctrine of the Catholic Church, Paschal Mystery is the theme, which is present in all poems from the corpus. Therefore, the thesis deals with the analysis of the anagogic monad or the chief theme of Paschal Mystery in Eliot's poems. More precisely, the motifs of Holy Trinity, sacraments of Eucharist and Baptism and the motif of Church are analyzed with its attention to the images concerning death and birth.

When exploring the anagogic movement of the poem's narrator from Eros to Logos, one will consider the literary epiphany. The revelation of Christ's divinity or, in Frye's words, the apocalyptic reality, seems to be achieved through the literary epiphany. This literary device

can be seen as an appropriate parallel to the Christian epiphany present in Eliot's poems, since the device is used to illustrate "the moment in which experience is transformed into truth, when 'radiant vision' triggers the sensation and the content of meaning" (Harper 2013: 66).

## 2. CHRISTIANITY IN T.S. ELIOT'S POETRY

Eliot's analyzed poems published in the time span extending from 1917 up to 1945 belong to modernist movement in literature, in which the poets and novelists in the essence thematized faith and religion in the context of doubt, self-doubt and spiritual aspiration. With his contemporaries, Eliot shared the “pursuing spiritual path while inhabiting the radical scepticism of the modern world“ (Freer and Bell 2016: xvi).

Moreover, the work of the critic Frye sheds light on the approach to the religion in the modern literature. Eliot's contemporaries such as Joyce, Yeats, Thomas Mann and Lawrence used literary epiphany and the symbols from Christianity and other religions in general to achieve a mythopoeic expression, which would allude to religious syncretism. However, as Bell points out, “myth in Eliot is radically opposed to the mythopoeia of other modernists; [w]hereas for them it is a way of affirming values in the conscious absence of metaphysical grounding. In Eliot it is rather a place - holder for religious belief, the sign of a wide-spread, if not universal, religious need“ (Freer and Bell 2016: 73). Finally, Eliot was “party to a discourse of 'comparative religion' that constituted the 'de-mythologizing' of Christian faith in denuding the singular and supernatural signification of Christ's death“ (Freer and Bell 2016: xv).

Eliot seems to have been committed to the Christian narrative of salvation. Hence, the apocalyptic reality in his poems can not be seen as the syncretic 'interpenetration', but only as the implication of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, “where the physical and the spiritual meet [and] which is intrinsic to all of the sacraments, which are traditionally spoken of as 'extensions' of the Incarnation“ (Freer and Bell 2016: 8).

Eliot uses the doctrine about Christ's work of redemption in his poems as the anagogic monad. According to Frye, Eliot seems to have been writing about the quest for “the point of epiphany of the Logos vision, the transcendent moment of pure illumination, where Word and Spirit are identical, where space and time interpenetrate. This is the anagogic vision- the movement from Eros to Logos“ (Frye 2003: xli). More precisely, the anagogic vision seems to be for Eliot *acedia* or being dead to the world and to oneself and the holy communion with the really present Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Furthermore, Eliot's quest movement in his poems is not cyclical, but it “rather moves up and down a vertical axis“ (Frye 2003: xli), which seems to have allowed him the anagogic interpretation of the doctrine of the Resurrection and the revolutionary overturn in the narrator's life.

Eliot's poetic expression is therefore based on the attitude of “not [being] deliberately and defiantly Christian in a world, which is definitely not Christian“ (Singh 2006:14), as already mentioned in the Introduction. Eliot's poetry describes the “lived experience“ of the belief in his poetry. His poetry appears to bring closer the Christian mysteries to a reader who is searching for the belief in the Christian God by using the concrete instances. Lynda Kong elaborated it more clearly in the journal *Life Writing*:

*“First, Eliot's poetry evokes common human experiences in the modern age that compel us to ask: what is the meaning of life when God's presence is no longer felt? Second, his poetry is intimate: it knows us well without knowing us personally at all.*



*Third, it unfolds into moments of epiphany, invoking in the reader an awareness of possible transcendence. Fourth, Eliot offers the Incarnation of Jesus Christ as a resolution for human predicaments. And finally, he dramatizes the difficulties and complexities of Christian belief through his peculiar modern metaphysical poesis“ (qtd. in Freer and Bell 2016: xix).*

In his discursive writings such as *The idea of Christian Society and Tradition and the Individual Talent* Eliot seems to have introduced his principles concerning a formal cultural and literary split between the secularism and religion. In other words, he expressed a clear opposition to literary humanism, to his Unitarian background and to incarnational theology (overemphasizing incarnation in terms of becoming Jesus' actual self) (as cited in Freer and Bell 2016: xv).

Concerning modern secularisation, Eliot was in particular sceptical about “the divide between religious art and humanist critical views that for him expressed only 'a modern emotional attitude' in reducing Christian theology to universal themes: for instance, the separation of Man from God is meant to speak of the 'isolation of the human situation“ (Freer and Bell 2016: xi). For Eliot, the alienation from God probably meant denying the presence of God's grace.

His poems might reflect the rejection of God's grace as a symptom of modern decadence, since the being may only be conscious of evil and of self as if this is all that can be known to exist. The being denies consequently the fullness of humanity. Eliot's voice in the poems seems moreover to enact the very spiritual apathy as the counterforce to Original Sin.

He poetizes in the essence the issue of the “spiritually dead“ people, who are unable to receive God's gift and grace, since they are persistent in the apathy towards the state. Consequently, they might lose the capacity for agency and could not be redeemed.

Additionally, Eliot generally emphasizes the need to maintain a sense of evil's familiarity in seeking salvation. Eliot's narrator seems to have this very Augustinian spirit in terms of dark expectations of humanity. His voice or spirit seems to be critical in the poems. This is also evident in the narrator's will to believe, in his self-critique and in his constant self-doubt.

The tentative mode of spiritual advancement or Eliot's narrators' struggle with the faith and their constant self-critique seem to witness the union of emotion with thought. Here it is important to mention that Eliot seems to have considered the emotion as the belief as well. The very holistic integration, which merges both thought and emotion, appears to have contributed to the objective poetic experience. Finally, it seems that Eliot's intention was to divert attention away from the poet towards the poem itself and its emotional complex or the Christian religion itself.

The anti-romantic approach might explain Eliot's usage of the ambiguous poetic methods concerning the double images (relating to opposites), irony and paradoxes. Meaning in Eliot poems is not a foretold or guaranteed outcome. One has to “infer the meaning from associations“ in Eliot's poems (Frye 2003: xli). Hence, the anagogic (spiritualized) interpretation of Christianity in Eliot's poems, as Frye elaborates, “doesn't exist on the surface, but on the layers of meaning that are not clearly visible in the 'plain text'. So there is, in the act of interpretation, an assumption that what is there in the writing is not all that is there, is not

all the author communicated (intentionally or otherwise), is not all that is meaningful (and has almost always a fuller meaning)" (Butcher, "Narrative and the Secrecy of Hermeneutics").

With the above mentioned ambiguous methods, Eliot seems to have achieved imprecise and loose intuitions of the Christian emotion or meaning. Eliot's purpose was for the reader to discover for themselves the possibility of the nature and moreover the source of the meaningfulness in his poems. Finally, the poetic method of Eliot appears to be in accordance with the hermeneutic theory of Kermode, which addresses covering as a precedent to disclosing in the mystic works. Eliot's indirect approach appears to have the purpose of depicting a mystery of time-bound quest for timeless Logos defined here as Holy Trinity and the Paschal mystery.

### **3. ANALYSIS OF CHRISTIAN MOTIFS**

The Paschal mystery that Eliot embodied into his poetry as its anagogic monad unfolds into the poems' recurrent motifs of death and birth. The objective correlatives or indirect symbols will serve as their additional illustration, whereby the mystic Christian motifs of *Holy Trinity*, *Sacraments and Church* will be the focus of the interpretation. The cryptic and indirect images of death and birth could moreover add to the unfolding of the epiphanic moments concerning these three Christian motifs in Eliot's poems.

The thesis will first deal with the analysis of the mystery of the three Divine Persons in Eliot's poems. What follows are the Christian sacraments Baptism and Eucharist that are to be explored. Finally, the motif of Church will be tackled. Each chapter will focus on the certain poems from the corpus depending on the relevance of the images or symbols for the interpretation of the each Christian motif.

#### **3.1. Christian God-Holy Trinity**

The Paschal mystery and its motifs of death and birth in this chapter will be tackled through three different lenses of each Divine Person. Concerning God the Father, the focus of the analysis is on His prophetic voice and foreshadowing of the birth and death of his Son. The Father's prophecy about his plan of salvation will add to the elaboration of the spiritual rebirth of the humankind and the spiritual advancement of the poem's speaker. The same monad of being born again and the narrator's apprehension of it will be analyzed on the grounds of the Passion of Christ. Finally, the Holy Spirit will give us deeper insight into the

Father's work of redemption accomplished in the Christ's paschal sacrifice focusing on the narrator's revelation or epiphany of the pentecostal fire.

### **3.1.1. God the Father**

The Father's plan of redemption of the time and the human's sullied nature due to the Original Sin will be elaborated with the help of the omniscient narrator or prophetic voice of the Father both in the poem *Waste Land* and in the poem *Journey of the Magi*. Furthermore, the objective correlatives „thunder“ from the poem *Waste Land (What the Thunder Said)* and „cloud“ from *Four Quartets* will be used for the purposes of the analysis in this section as well.

The Father's foreshadowing of the paschal sacrifice of his Son and his Church seems to be evident in the lines 19-30 from the poem *The Burial of the Dead*, where God the Father speaks through the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah, and through the voice of Ecclesiastes, who had been spiritually inspired by his Word.

The Father, speaking through the Ecclesiastes, seems to confront the humanity with the vanity and superficiality of the earthly life. The Father's voice “disguised“ in the Ecclesiastes' voice appears to recall that “shadow at morning striding behind you“ and “the shadow at evening rising to meet you“ (28-29), symbolizing the human's life, passes very fast and that all humans will eventually die or, in the narrator's words, become a “handful of dust“ (30). Therefore, the Father seems to urge that one should embrace the “beating sun“ or hardships of the earthly life. On the other hand, the Father's voice seems to suggest that one should repudiate “a heap of broken images“ (22) or the worldly attachments so that He could

take the “stony rubbish“ (20) or “the stony heart out of [one's] flesh and give [one] a heart of flesh“ (*King James Version Bible*, Ezek. 11.19).

Through the prophetic voice of Isaiah, God the Father seems to offer the humanity a shelter in the “shadow“ under the “red rock“ (26). This might be a reference to the Church, which will be “as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.“ (*King James Version Bible*, Isa 32.2). Eliot's illustration of “a rock“ or Church in his poem is, however of a red colour. This might implicate that only when the Church enters the abyss and embraces her cross in the likeness of Christ, will she experience “the shadow“ or a spiritual rebirth.

The paschal motifs of the spritual rebirth appear to be also present in the image of “the thunder“, which seems to be overtaken from the buddhist holy scripts. However, “the thunder“ is very likely used in the poem *What the Thunder Said* as an objective correlative for the Father's voice as well, since the Father's speaking in the Old Testament narratives is seems to be very often described as a thunder. One of the examples is the narrative from the Exodus, where God answered Moses through thunder on the Mount Sinai (*King James Version Bible*, Ex 19.19).

In the last stanzas of the poem, the thunder may also implicate the Father's voice. On the other hand, the Father's voice seems to be interchanged with the Son's voice, since the content of the thunder's speaking alludes to the Jesus' beatitudes recounted in the Sermon on the Mount (Roberts 2003: 386). Eight blessings from the Gospel of Matthew seem to be compressed into three stanzas or three words *Datta*, *Dayadhvum* and *Damyata* from the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (Maddrey 2009:123), which might likely correspond to the ideals

of teachings of Jesus on mercy, compassion and spirituality. The narrator seems to urge that only by imitating Christ's mercy and compassion, which he showed with His death on the cross or "the awful daring of a moment's surrender/which an age of prudence can never retract" (405), could "the waste" souls of Church experience the renewal of their being.

Interweaving the narrator's allusions of the announcements of the thunder (or God the Father) from the Exodus and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount seem to signify the perfect and complete fulfillment of the Law of the Christian God, who through his Son makes the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets "fulfilled in their ears" (*King James Version Bible*, Lk 4.21).

The poem's narrator provided a stronger hint of the intersection of the eternity and time in the poem *Journey of the Magi*, where God's work of redemption culminates in the incarnation and death of Christ on the earth. God the Father seems to be represented here as an omniscient narrator, who, without and outside the knowledge of the Magi, prophecies not only the birth and the life of his Son, but also the betrayal ("Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver" (27)) and the death of his Son ("And three trees on the low sky" (24)). Furthermore, the anachronism and the prophetic language of the Magi very likely signify the Father's speaking about the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New Testament, since the narration of the birth and life of the baby Jesus ("And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters, /And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly /And the villages dirty, and charging high prices" (13-15)) and the Jewish Pascha as the foreshadowing of Passion of Christ ("Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel" (26)) interweave.

In that same mode, the Father's voice speaking through the Magis' mouth seems to be interweaving the motifs 'Birth' and 'Death' in a way that he is contrasting the image of “a temperate valley“ “smelling of vegetation“ with the image of “three trees on the low sky“. Evidently, both terms refer to the birth and death of Jesus Christ:

*“Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,  
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;  
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,  
And three trees on the low sky“(21-24).*

Nevertheless, the symbolic hints of the Father's voice in the previous stanzas might not only show the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, but also our birth and death as the intersection of the earthly and over-earthly dimension. This appears to be evident, when the speaker reflects about how birth and death are strongly related to each other: “I have seen birth and death, /But had thought they were different“ (37-38). Moreover, the Magus seems to implicitly emphasize that the paradoxical union of the birth and death as the image of the spiritual rebirth occurs in the likeness of Christ and his Birth and Death according to the Father's work of redemption: “this Birth was/ Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death“ (39).

The union of the birth and death driven from Christ's Incarnation and Passion (“Birth“ and “Death“) indicate that the poem's narrator expelled all doubts concerning the Christian doctrine of Incarnation as one of the essential part of the Father's plan of salvation. Though, the narrator's tentative mode of speaking about his own religion may represent the conflict with the Law of Spirit in the human nature:



*“Then the camel men cursing and grumbling  
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,  
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,  
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly  
And the villages dirty, and charging high prices“(11-15).*

The Father's timeless prophecies about the birth of his Son seem to therefore intersect with the hardships in the time-bound space. The verses of the Father's message resonated through the mouth of the Magi interchange with the verses telling of the sensual appeal of the world and fleshliness.

The speaker through the Magi's voice seems to demonstrate a deeper understanding of these opposites as being one. Although the Magi might show their murmuring along the way to the manger, in the last stanza, they seem to show an eager wish to die to the world (“these Kingdoms“ (40)) and to the paganism (“the old dispensation“ (41)), for dying to the ways of the world, they might be born again in Christ.

The motif of the rebirth is present in *Burnt Norton* in the image of the Baptism, where God the Father is represented through the objective correlative “unseen eyebeam“ (30). With this image, the narrator demonstrated the sacramental work of God in time, alluding again to the intersection between the timeless and time-bound space. The poem's narrator dies to his sensuality and to his impurities, moreover he seems to accept the invisible God's grace in its visible form as “the water in the pool“ (37).

The cloud in the fourth section, which carries the sun away, is another implication of the inner death. The cloud is also a direct image of God the Father, taken from the Exodus, where God the Father explains to Moses that He “will come unto [him] in [the pillar of] a thick cloud, that the people may hear [Him] when [He] speaks with [him] and believe [him] for ever“ (*King James Version Bible*, Ex 19.19).

The prophetic voice of the narrator seems to be intertwined with the voice of God the Father, where he appears in the image of the “black cloud“ (136) in *Burnt Norton*. The later verses could explain that the image of God the Father as a “black cloud“ represents the deprivation through which He tests the faithfulness of His Church or Bride (Kramer 2007: 54). The desiccation of all senses seems to be a great struggle for the dying nurse or God's Church, which is nevertheless a reason behind the image of God the Father as “a ruined Millionaire“ (338) in *East Coker*. He seems to be losing his true adorers, who would seek and worship Him even if not receiving usual joys or spiritual ecstasies.

### **3.1.2. God the Son**

The section on God the Son seems to give one a deeper insight into suffering and rebirth, with the allusions that the true rebirth of a soul occurs in the love of Christ embodied into his Passion.

Christ as a “Word“ and a “tiger“ seem to implicate both His Incarnation and Passion. Moreover, the images of the birth, death and suffering appear to be intertwined and as one, which may be especially evident in the following verses from the poem *Gerontion*: “The word

within a word, unable to speak a word,/Swaddled with darkness“./In the juvescence of the year/Came Christ the tiger“ (17-20).

One can see that the image of the “darkness“ is contrasted with the image of “juvescence“,and one more opposite seems to be “the tiger“ and “the word (...) unable to speak a word“. These objective correlatives may allude to the suffering in relation to Christ. Furthermore, the narrator seems to implicate the broader view of the Paschal mystery explicitly referring that the humans' suffering for Christ should be in the likeness of his image of “the tiger“. The incarnated Word, unable to speak a word, implicating baby Jesus, in relation with the image of the “tiger“ might suggest that humans should be “wise [or cautious] as serpents, and harmless as doves“ (*King James Version Bible*, Mt 10.16). In addition, being “swaddled with darkness/In the juvescence of the year“ might represent the spiritual rebirth in relation to the biblical image of “the twoedged sword“. Hence, the poem's speaker seems to suggest that one could be born again only after having died to oneself and one's sensual nature.

The suffering or inner death would usually come from the conflict between the law of the body and the spirit in the likeness of Christ, resulting in the spiritual rebirth and finally in the resurrection, as the poet's objective correlative “the death's other Kingdom“ in the poem *Hollow Men* indicates. However, the souls from the poem *Hollow Men* seem to avoid Jesus' eyes, since they may reveal the true condition of their fallible nature. “[the] Hollow Men dare not meet those Eyes Christ's, or the reproachful eyes of Dante's Beatrice – that would demand repentance and the ordeal of regeneration; fearful they hide in 'death's dream kingdom', preferring illusion to transcendent reality“ (Kirk 2014: 130).

The hollow men seem to moreover reject Christ's "conception" (78) or grace that would encourage them to "creation" (79) or response in terms of the dying to the human nature in order to be consecrated and resurrected in the union with the Divine. The "swinging tree" (24) and the dance "round the prickly pear" (68) of the Hollow Men "at five o'clock in the morning" (71) may furthermore represent the hollow men's unawareness of the Christ's crucifixion and resurrection and its significance for the entire humanity. The hollow men's suffering appears to be therefore not in the likeness of Christ, eventually leading to the eternal death of their souls.

The desert or cactus land in which the hollow men are living seems not to recall the Carmelite experience, where a soul might experience God in the solitude and complete detachment from the fleshliness resulting in the mystic union of the soul with the Holy Trinity. Rather, the desert from this poem might suggest the eternal death of the souls, who did not meet Christ, but have rather adored stone images or false idols and begged them to renew their being and to release them from the human predicament. The death of "the hollow souls" seem not to be to the world but in the world. Rejecting Christ's image of "the tree" or the cross, their prayers become blasphemous and corrupted, since their "lips that would kiss/ Form prayers to broken stone" (Abbas 2016: 29). The image of the "broken stone" seems to furthermore highlight that not overcoming themselves in terms of Christ's "tree" or Crucifixion, the souls of the Hollow Men could not be overwhelmed with the grace of Christ, which would restore their spirits already in the earthly life in order to prepare their souls for their transcendent and eternal union with Himself in "the death's other Kingdom".

The narrator in the poem *Waste Land* seems to urge that Christ prepares the souls in the time-bound space for their eventual timeless life by "now dying" (329). The recurrent

motif of the death in *Waste Land* is this time accompanied with the line “With a little patience“ (330) alluding to Paul's epistle to Corinthians, where he urged that we show “we are God's servants by patiently enduring troubles, hardships, and difficulties“ (2 Co 6: 4). The narrator moreover urges that we should be dying in the likeness of Christ, “who was now living and is now dead“ (328). With the temporal adverb “now“, the narrator seems to emphasize that Christ was dead only in terms of the temporal sphere, suggesting His timeless restoring and resurrection. Hence, the foretaste of the eternal life of the soul seems to be summoned in the elipsis “With a little patience“(330). We wait for it with patience since “we hope for that we see not“ (*King James Version Bible*, Rom 8.25).

In the poem *Ash Wednesday* the “now dying“ as a prerequisite for the spiritual rebirth or the eternal life of the soul in the communion with God recalls words and expressions from the apostle John's Gospel, where Christ is addressed as Logos or “the Word“ (Camacho & Perez 2016: 36):

*“The Word without a word, the Word within  
The world and for the world;  
And the light shone in darkness and  
Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled  
About the centre of the silent Word“*(153-157).

The stanza seems to recall Jesus' words: “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword“ (*King James Version Bible*, Mt 10.34). This appears to be especially evident in the penultimate verse, where the objective correlatives “the unstilled world“ and “the silent Word“ are juxtaposed. The two images indirectly appear to

symbolize both the suffering and the bliss in the earthly life experienced both in and for the incarnated Word, resembling Christ's life as the Incarnated Word "within the world" and "for the world". Furthermore, "the unstilled world" seems to be the depiction of the inner world of our being, which struggles against the silence of the Word, since it reflects the Passion of Christ and dying to oneself. However, the last verse may allude to Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, where he urges that Christ is "our peace", who made in himself of twain one new man by the cross having abolished in his flesh the enmity (*King James Version Bible*, Eph 2.14-16). Hence, the narrator seems to allude that the reconciliation of the law of the body and the spirit still might occur in the time-bound space "about the centre of the silent Word" or "unto God in one body" (*King James Version Bible*, Eph 2. 16).

The same above elaborated illustration of the paschal motif concerning the very reconciliation of the body and the spirit one may discern in the meeting of the poem's narrator with the resurrected Christ in the second section of the poem *Little Gidding*. Eliot appears to have used the objective correlative "the dead master" for Christ to highlight the message conveyed. As the narrator seems to be open for receiving Christ's grace, he communicates with the Word, which the following lines suggest: "But, as the passage now presents no/Hindrance/To the spirit unappeased and peregrine/Between two worlds become much like each other (...)" (747-749). The two worlds of the speaker, which are very likely his body and his soul, appear to be reconciled. His body seems to obey the law of the spirit, signifying his religious assurances and humility, which is present in the "cold friction and the expiration of his sense" (758). The body and the soul "fall asunder" so that they may be reconciled (Corcoran 2010: 86).

The very paradoxical image seems to enable the narrator's being to embrace the words from "the dead master": "(...) unless restored by that/Refining fire/Where you must move in measure, like a/Dancer". In other words, his being was able to be restored and reconciled only through the "refining fire" or the pain of "dying to the earth" and experience of the vanity of the temporary life on the earth. The narrator seems to have adopted the mystic teachings of the saint John of the Cross for the dialogue between "the dead master" and the poem's speaker due to the spirituality *via negativa* (Bryer 1990: 166). The "negativity" appears to entail in the essence the very falling asunder or, in other words expelling the "enmity" to the complete and perfect integrity of the individual's being in Christ.

Dying to the bodily desires in order to be born of the Spirit and renewed in the time-bound space might leave the human soul in despair since, as "the dead master" reveals to the poem's narrator, it becomes well aware of "the human folly" and of his own "things ill done". "The dead master" declared furthermore that the exasperated spirit due to the rending pain could proceed "from wrong to wrong" "unless restored by that refining fire". On the other hand, the spirit might feel deficient on his way to consecration, even though it might "move in measure like a dancer".

The need for Christ's grace in order for the spiritually to "move in measure" one could already see in the poem Gerontion:

*"Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices  
are fathered by our heroism. Virtues  
are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.*

*These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree*“(42-45).

The poem's speaker seems to declare that our nature due to the Original Sin is imperfect. The imperfection of our being appears to be emphasized even more with the above verses from the poem *Gerontion* that even our “heroism“ or human goodness is not perfect in itself due to the general impure intentions or unnatural vices in the background. The narrator seems to therefore implicate that the human defile nature should embrace the path of Jesus' cross, which is an image of “tears“ and “wrath“ in order to accomplish perfection in Him. The organized way of moving as a dancer between the birth and death seems to be inseparable from the humility or „laughing without mirth“ and affirmation that we are not “(...) sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (King James Version Bible, 2 Cor 3.5).

### **3.1.3. God the Holy Spirit**

The following section observes the Paschal theme according to the objective correlatives of the third Divine Person. The objective correlatives that are going to be used for the analysis in this section are “the dove“, “the thrush“ and “the fire“ from the poem *Burnt Norton* and *Little Gidding*, with which one will furthermore elaborate the relationship between the birth and death as the implications of the spiritual conversion.

The poem *Little Gidding* seems to have distanced itself from the verses that would enact the focus on the matters of the spiritual asceticism and purification. Furthermore, the



following verses seem to have focused also on the intimate relationship between the human soul and her God.

*“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“ (834-840).*

The image of the Holy Spirit as “a shirt of flame“ may demonstrate the suffering and pain due to the death and detachment of love of ourselves so that we may be consecrated and fulfilled with the Divine love. “The flame“ seems to implicate the purification and refinement of the soul's rose or her love towards Logos. Moreover, “the hands that wove“ the very “shirt of flame“ might enact the grace, with which the Holy Spirit inspires and illumines the soul to act in love towards God. “The human power cannot remove“ the flame of the Divine love, which may inevitably lead to “the torment“ or death to the human's nature in order for it to be available to receive the perfect love of God.

The descending dove with a tongue of fire in the other stanza declares that the human soul has “the choice of pyre or pyre“ (832) so as to be “discharged from sin and error (833) The image seems to resemble the choice of either death to the earthly desires or death of the human soul, that the “hollow men“ seem to have experienced in the previous section. The narrator concludes the stanza with the words about the rejuvenating fire or the burning love of

God towards his people, which redeems the time and humanity from the fire of hell (“from fire by fire”).

By using the objective correlatives “fire“ and “flames“, the narrator appears to demonstrate that God calls each individual to love Him beyond things, self and persons. The narrator described moreover the grace of the Divine love by using the paradoxical image of “the frigid purgatorial fires“ (346) and its “flame“ as “roses“ (347). The voice in the poem appears to suggest that the soul, which accepts the grace or fire of the Holy Spirit, might experience birth resembling death in the same way as the indifference grows between “the attachment to self and to things and to persons“ and its “detachment“(789).

The narrator probably uses “the fire“ of the Holy Spirit to express his „deliberations“ or reflections upon the “not less of love but expanding/Of love beyond desire“ (784-785), the “liberation/From the future as well as the past“ (785-786) in order to be redeemed from time. The later verse however adds that people need “history“ in order to be redeemed recalling Jesus' words from the Gospel: “ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world (...)“ (*King James Version Bible*, Jn 15.19).

“We shall not cease from exploration“ (867), the narrator's voice furthermore urges in *Little Gidding*, in spite of the hardships or “frigid fires“ during our pilgrimage in the world, since we will eventually “arrive where we started and know the place (869) or “the flame“ for the first time“. “It is a version of the scriptural dictum that one must become like a little child in order to enter the kingdom of Heaven“ (Spurr 2016: 178). In addition, describing the very flame of the Holy Spirit as “the rose“, the poem's speaker might suggest “the kindness of [the] youth [of his Bride], [her] love of the espousals“ (*King James Version Bible*, Jer 2.2). “The

exploration“ might be therefore an implication of the necessity for the constant renewal of the covenant of the soul's young love towards God on the earth as well, since „the human understanding of the Paschal mystery is incomplete and “a further dying to the world and its ways will be required before [the human soul could] enter fully into its truth“ (Spurr 2016: 176).

The “thrush“ as the indirect symbol for the Holy Spirit invites and “allures“ moreover the souls to pass “through the first gate/Into our first world“ (22-23). The first world seems to recall “knowing the place for the first time“ from the above paragraph, which may allude to the spiritual stage at which God betrothes the soul unto Him in faithfulness (Hos 2. 14-15). The narrator reminds the reader again with the image of the Holy Spirit as “a dark dove with a flickering tongue“ (708) that each soul should pass “below the horizon of [her] homing“ (709) so as to experience “knowing the Lord“ in „the wilderness“ or “the first world“, where God speaks “comfortably unto [the soul]“ (*King James Version Bible*, Hos 2. ). The “homing“ of the soul might have a resonance of “the land of Egypt“ which should refer to the humanity's sins, which only through the spiritual “darkness“ and “fire“ could be buried in order for the soul to transfigure into the image of God.

After “the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling“ (865), which invites his Bride [to go] after [God] in the wilderness (...) (*King James Version Bible*, Jer 2.2) and to “kneel/Where prayer has been valid“ (672-673), the still small voice encourages the betrothed soul again “to ascent the mount Horeb“, where she could reveal God's presence in her everyday life and its challenges. Here the human soul could encounter the intersection of the timeless with the present moment. The following verses appear to demonstrate the narrator's celebration of the “still point“, where the temporal and the supernatural meet: “When the

tongues of flame are in-folded/Into the crowned knot of fire/And the fire and the rose are one“ (884-886).

“The tongues of flame“ of the Holy Spirit seem to finally represent a revelation to the human soul about the paschal mystery of the pentecostal fire or the burning fire of love present in the Passion in union with the mystical rose initiated at the Annunciation. The union of Incarnation and Passion reveals to the soul “the necessity to be alive and alert to the intimations of spiritual insight that may be revealed in the midst of ordinary activity“ (Spurr 2016: 161).

### **3.2. Sacraments**

The sacraments that will be tackled in the analysis are Baptism and Eucharist. These motifs were chosen due to the frequency of the images and objective correlatives in the analyzed poems. There are many indirect symbols, which seem to allude to these two sacraments, probably because of their strong reference to Eliot's anagogic monad of the mystery of Christ's Incarnation and Passion.

The chapter firstly deals with the objective correlatives of the water for the sacrament Baptism and finally observes the objective correlatives “blood“ and “flesh“, and the indirect symbols of Eucharist in the context of the anagogic motifs of “death“ and “birth“ of the incarnated Word Christ and the soul.

### 3.2.1. Baptism

The image of the water in Eliot's poems is very frequent and the poet likely used it to develop the motif of baptism. The water seems not to have a positive implication in the poems *Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock* and *Waste Land*, since it is the place, where mermaids and nymphs dwell. Their songs („weila weila“) that lure into the distance recall the human sinful nature, which leads an individual very often to succumb to his/her temptations.

Filthy Leman waters in the poem *Waste Land* might represent the decaying morality and the loss of innocence as well, whereas the whirlpool, which Phloebas entered, may implicate the vanity of life and emphasize its temporality. Finally, the image of drowning seems to additionally demonstrate that the water in these poems may suggest the death of the soul due to her response to the mermaids' songs or sexual desires and due to the attachment to the temporal and material things in the “whirlpool“ (318) of life.

The water as a symbol of death appears to be nonetheless different from the water to which the author alludes in *Ash Wednesday*. The death or water in the poem is related to the “silence“ (157), which may implicate the inner death of soul's Original Sin and her/his transformation into the human, which will be capable of receiving and sharing love and develop his/her personality to its highest potentials, or in other words into the living likeness of Christ. Moreover, the poet may have used the water as a symbol of death since the water receives the body as in a tomb and therefore figures death, while the Spirit “pours in the quickening power, renewing our souls from the deadness of sin unto their original life“ (st. Basil 2016: 35). The “dry pool“ (36) in *Burnt Norton* implicates furthermore the death as the transformation of a soul. The image recalls the biblical narrative about parting of the Red Sea

by God. Accordingly, the dryness of this pool might implicate the crossing to a new life, where the “water out of sunlight“ (30) or God's grace restores the fallen human nature closing again the “sea“ and washing away the humanity's sins.

The poet furthermore urges in *Ash Wednesday* that the purification of the soul, who “walks in darkness“ does not occur neither on “the sea“ nor in “the rainland“(128), but rather in its “spirit, whose “right place“ and “right time“ is “not here“ (131). The „spirit“, that cleanses humans from their impurities might here allude to the baptismal grace of God. The verses seem to recall Jesus' words from the Gospel of the apostle John: “(...) Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God“ (*King James Version Bible*, Jn 3. 5). Accordingly, the voice in the poem appears to have envisaged the baptismal grace of God as “not [only and primarily] putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God“ (st. Basil 2016: 35). For baptism is in the essence „our response to the invitation of Bride and Spirit“ (Frye 2003: lv).

In the fifth section of *Ash Wednesday*, the narrator fosters the very dialectic of choice and chance (Frye 2003: xlii), by featuring the need for the undivided renunciation of the worldliness so as to be able to “enter into the inner mysteries and consecrate all human senses to Christ“ (st. Ambrose 2015: 41). The narrator seems to suggest that Jesus' spiritual seal cannot be given to the souls, which “affirm“ God “before the world“, but “deny“ Him “between the rocks“ (181). The poet furthermore reiterates that there is no “place of grace for those who avoid the face“ and no “time to rejoice for those who walk among noise and deny the voice“ (132-133). The narrator demonstrates the inner conflict of the soul between her public avowals and espousal of Christianity and his private conviction (Schneider 1975: 123). Moreover, this moment of epiphany might refer to the anagogic message conveyed in the

Gospel of Mathew: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (*King James Version Bible*, Mt 6. 24). Finally, the most appropriate image considering this anagogic monad seems to be present already in the poem *Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* in the objective correlative “prince Hamlet“, with which the narrator underlines that a Christian should be fully committed and that for the perfection of life the imitation of Christ is necessary, not only in the example of gentleness, lowliness, and long suffering set us in His life, but also of His actual death:

*“No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;  
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;  
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—  
Almost, at times, the Fool“*(111-119).

In the poem *Ash Wednesday*, the narrator furthermore supplicates “the blessed sister“ and “spirit of the fountain“ (174) that we do not „mock ourselves with falsehood“ (175). The following verses seem to underline the reiterating need for the reconciliation of the body and the soul in order for the response to the baptismal grace of God to be proper:

*“Teach us to care and not to care*

*Teach us to sit still*

*Even among these rocks,*

*Our peace in His will“(176-80).*

For the poem's narrator, the “stillness“ and “our peace in His will“ seem to be the prerequisite for the genuine baptism. He therefore appears to declare that passing over to Christ from the beginning of faith, when the guilt was sunk in the waters (st. Ambrose 2015: 39), represents only the beginning of learning to “sit still“ “among rocks“. “Siting still“ may implicate the constant rejection of the worldly offers and, therefore dying to the world after having espoused Christianity and having received the gifts of God's baptismal grace. By declaring that our “peace“ or “stillness“ is only in His will, the poem's narrator might suggest that our baptism into union with Christ Jesus is in the essence the baptism into union with His death. Consequently, we are “caring“ and “not caring“, in other words, living and having desires. However, the soul is not attached to the desires since having been “buried with [Christ] by baptism into death“ (*King James Version Bible*, Rom 6.4).

### **3.2.2. Eucharist**

The need for the grace of God in order to overcome the imperfections and impurities of our nature seems to be additionally featured in Eliot's poetizing of the sacrament Eucharist through which the “stillness“ or “the saving effects of the paschal mystery are communicated“(Catechism of the Catholic Church 1076).



In the poem *Waste Land*, the image of the spiritual poverty and dying seems to be featured as a consequence of not recognizing the living Christ in the liturgy. The relation between devaluation of the Eucharist and the spiritual rebirth appears to be present in the following stanza from *Waste Land (What the Thunder Said)*:

*“In this decayed hole among the mountains  
In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing  
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel  
There is the empty chapel, only the wind's home  
It has no windows, and the door swings(...)”*(386-390).

The chapel as the wind's home and with the “door swinging“ might symbolize the loss of a sense of the transcendent value of the Eucharist pertaining to the transubstantiation or real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Gerontion seems also to see only “a draughty house“ in front of him, and seems having been not able to see the “Lord's temple“ within him and in the people (“tumbled graves“). The narrator appears to struggle with the ratio and his faith simultaneously. He does not possess any “ghosts“ implying the narrator's frustration due to the spiritual draught and death, which the narrator from *Waste Land* seems to have described as a “decayed hole among the mountains“.

The spiritual death due to the debasement of the sacrament Eucharist is likely evident in the actions of the people mentioned in the poem *Gerontion* as well:

*“In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering  
judas,  
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk  
Among whispers; by Mr. Silvero  
With caressing hands, at Limoges  
Who walked all night in the next room“ (21-25).*

The images of the Host and Holy Communion as the “dogwood, chestnut and flowering judas“ in the above verses seem to represent the people's degraded perception about the nature of the liturgy and its saving effects. In other words, “[t]he lines convey intensely a hint of baffled, then briefly flourishing, then degraded spiritual and physical power“ (Scofield 1988: 104). Furthermore, “the 'caressing hands' suggest both erotic caresses and the manipulations of [a sinister kind of communion]“ (Scofield 1988: 104). Eating Christ's body and drinking His blood “among whispers“ and “with caressing hands“ might therefore suggest the spiritual death due to the implied blasphemous and not genuine participation on the Mass.

Bowing among religious paintings of the Italian painter Titian and shifting candles seem to moreover imply the image of the church. The church in the following lines is here described as “a dark room“ indicating once again the spiritual draught and the degradation of the holy Eucharist. The “darkness“ indicates the four people's spiritual death as well, since they are not able to see the presence of Christ. Their spiritual sight seems to be replaced with the carnal sight, which might prevent these four people in the church to adore and worship God “in spirit and in truth“ (*King James Version Bible*, Jn 4. 23):

*“By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians;  
By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room  
Shifting the candles; Fraulein von Kulp  
Who turned in the hall, one hand on the door“ (25-28).*

Finally, the dark room or church in *Gerontion* seems to resemble the room in *The Love Song* of J. Alfred Prufrock as well, in which “the women come and go /talking of Michelangelo“ (13-14). The objective correlative of the debasement of the Holy Mass and the celebration of the Eucharist seems to be highlighted with the narrator's saying “let us go [to the church] and make our visit“ (12).

The draughty church in *Burnt Norton* seems to nevertheless enact the moments of the exaltation of the Eucharist using the image of the reconciliation of the past and future as a reference to the Incarnation in *Dry Salvages* and the Eucharistic body of Christ in *East Coker*. In contrast to “the dark rooms“ of the church in the previous poems, the church in *Burnt Norton* seems to imply the spiritual rebirth through the images of the “Incarnation“ and “time“. Additionally, the voice in the poem seems to declare that “time is conquered only through time“ (95) implicitly referring not only to the Incarnation and birth, but also to the Passion and death.

The sacrificial nature of Eucharist appears to be therefore explained with the intertwining opposites of the birth and death. Considering the verses about “the conquered time through time“ (95), the narrator possibly enacts that “the conquered time“ may signify the Incarnation and birth of Jesus, whereas “the time“ His Passion and Via Crucis. The parallels to the Christians' birth and death in the context of the spiritual conversion seem to be

present in the third section of *Burnt Norton*, where each soul is born again and reconciled, once she embraces her own “passions“ in the lifetime and accepts them as the death of her sinful nature.

The narrator seems to conceive of the “stillness“ or rebirth as being not in “the twittering world“ (116), but in the “not world“ (119) of the soul, where the epiphanies may occur. Furthermore, the juxtapositions “the twittering world“ and “not world“ may recall St. Paul's statement: “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.“ (*King James Version Bible*, 1 Cor 15. 52-53). The narrator appears to feature sharing Christ's suffering, which leads to sharing his glory in terms of our mortal bodies being transformed by life (*King James Version Bible*, Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 4:4). The transformation of the human souls in the likeness of Eucharistic Christ seems to be described in terms of the internal darkness, where one does not obey the desires of one's natural self. The voice in the poem seems to provide us with the images of the mystical death of the soul to “the property“, “sense“, “fancy“ and even “spirit“ in terms of its “inoperancy“ and detachment to the spiritual high (121-124). The narrator seems to declare that the soul's glory relates to the rebuilding herself after having destroyed her sinful self.

In *East Coker*, the narrator appears to have poetized more precisely the transformation of our old being. He seems to have extended his poetical images of the spiritual conversion to the work and effects of God's grace. His following images and objective correlatives of Christ, and soul's „illness“ appear to suggest that the spiritual conversion or rebirth does not occur per se through the imitation of Christ adopting His humility through the asceticism. The transformation of the human soul, as the narrator urges, requires belief in Christ's Transubstantiation and His grace:

*“The wounded surgeon plies the steel  
That questions the distempered part;  
Beneath the bleeding hands we feel  
The sharp compassion of the healer's art  
Resolving the enigma of the fever chart”*(327-331).

Christ in the above stanza seems to be depicted as the one who “resolves“ all of our enigmas about ourselves or “trieth the hearts and reins“ (*King James Version Bible*, Ps 7.9), heals our “distempered parts“, restores and converts our souls by plying our “steel“ and sinful nature. The chosen verbs for the catalogued objective correlatives in this stanza appear to be used most likely for the purposes of the narrator's illustration of the Christian doctrine about the Eucharist and its effects in terms of grace. The motif seems to recall the statement from the epistle to Hebrews: “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.“ (*King James Version Bible*, Hebrews 10.4). “The grace is given to behold the glory of [the] transfiguring Christ, who is Creation's alpha and omega, beginning and end“ (Gatta 2011:44). More precisely, the narrator's list of the features of the second Divine Person might implicate the narrator's tendency to convey that the individual could not expel corruption on his own, but rather that Christ's “presence in mortal men expels death and drives away corruption because it contains within itself in his entirety the Word who totally abolishes corruption“ (st. Cyril of Alexandria 2013: 929).

The narrator seems to furthermore emphasize the work of grace in our bodies and lives by implementing the image of “the dripping blood“ and “the bloody flesh“ as our “only

food“ reiterating that Christ's body is “the channel through which life flows once more into us“ (st. Cyril of Alexandria 2013: 421):

*“The dripping blood our only drink*

*The bloody flesh [is] our only food.*

*In spite of which we like to think*

*That we are sound, substantial flesh and blood—*

*Again, in spite of that, we call this Friday good“ (347-*

*351).*

Additionally, the narrator's ironical voice at the end of the poem appears to demonstrate the people's disbelief in the mystery of the transformation of the Host and wine into real Christ's flesh and blood. Eventually, the narrator seems to implicitly declare that in spite of the fact that our only food is blood and flesh of Christ, the human being renounces it and believes rather that he or she may control her or his own habits, manners and sinful nature through their own efforts. The irony seems to be more apparent when one reads the last verse: “Again, in spite of that, we call this Friday good“, which again might suggest that those who struggle to believe in the very mystery receive with their carnal sight only host or bread, however not the Host or the real flesh and blood of Christ. Finally, the narrator appears to underline that the soul cannot be transformed only by the sheer bread, but through the body of Christ and His work of grace in the human's mortal bodies, referring again to the image of the baptism, where the narrator recurrently emphasizes that one is not born again only of water, but of Spirit as well.

### 3.3. Church- Bride of Christ

The church for which God wants to “do Passover“ or to “dye“ in order to experience spiritual rebirth and be resurrected is manifested through the lenses of the narrator, who sympathizes with the humanity. The narrator seems not to be an authoritative commentator, but rather an observer of the human fallibility. The very attitude made the narrator available to be “buried“ with the humanity or with the rest of the Church.

The protagonist displays the sympathy with the suffering humanity in that he demonstrates his own weakness to entirely accept the death of his own self, which is “without enchantment, offering no promise/ But bitter tastelessness of shadow fruit“ (*Little Gidding*: 759-760). Yet the christ-like protagonist ironically appears to suffer persecution from the society, since his prophetic words seem to have “fallen on deaf ears“.

The spiritual revolt of the decaying Church may be suggested through the image of the woman, whose purity is being corrupted. The image appears to be the objective correlative of “the great whore“ or “the Mother of Harlots“ from the book of Revelation. As a contrast to her, the poet implemented the image of Virgin Mary in the poem *Ash Wednesday* as well. In order for the Church to “shine in brightness“, she should “honour the Virgin in meditation“ (51).

In the poem *A Game of Chess*, the moral corruption of the Church seems to be represented indirectly through the extended image and objective correlative of a woman, who was putting makeup on herself. This is especially evident in the first stanza, where the certain parallels to “the great whore“ from *Revelation* can be discerned:

*“The glitter of her jewels rose to meet it,  
From satin cases poured in rich profusion;  
In vials of ivory and coloured glass  
Unstoppered, lurked her strange synthetic perfumes,  
Unguent, powdered, or liquid—troubled, confused  
And drowned the sense in odours” (84-89).*

The satin cases, jewels, vials of ivory as the possible allusion to the “purple and scarlet“ colour, “gold“, “precious stones“, “pearls“ and “a golden cup“ of “the great whore“ from Revelation reveal its synthetics and artificiality in the following verses. The real content of the woman's satin cases and vials of ivory appear to be false, “strange“ and “synthetic“, alluding to “the abominations and filthiness of her fornication“( *King James Version Bible*, Rev 17. 4-5). Moreover, the seductions of the evil may not, as the narrator implicitly seems to suggest, manifest through its wicked nature, but it will rather lurk while it drowns the human's sense in his troubling and confusing odours. The images of unguent, powder and liquid might emphasize the falseness of the woman's beauty or the apparent beauty of the humanity's sinful deeds. By using these images, the narrator seems to illustrate the moral ugliness or wickedness of the humanity through the image of the physical ugliness of the woman surrounded with “the glittering jewels“and the “strange synthetic perfumes“.

The image of the physical ugliness of the woman as a “Mother of Harlots“ seems to furthermore implicate the spiritual death of the Church. The infertility of the woman in the following verses could additionally display the very denial or death of the faith and transcendence:



*“You ought to be ashamed, I said, to look so antique.*

*(And her only thirty-one)*

*I can't help it, she said, pulling a long face,*

*It's them pills I took, to bring it off, she said“(156-164).*

The image of aborting a baby might allude to the inhibition of the spiritual growth and eternal life of the soul. The antique look of the woman or the Church and her sadness (“pulling a long face“) in this stanza might refer to the human growing old without any implications of the maturation, and merely human sadness, that causes death (*King James Version Bible*, 2 Cor 7.10) instead of self-critique. Rather, the Church as “the woman with the long face“ seems to implicate the disaffection, the unhappiness and reluctance to discipline herself or to dye to “the earthly herself“ in order for her to become spiritually fertile.

In order for the Church to become fertile and born again, Eliot seems to have used the Virgin Mary as a contrast to “the great whore“ from *Revelation*. This is most evident in the poem *Ash Wednesday*, where the Lady is represented as “a silent sister“, who “made strong the fountains and made fresh the springs“(127). The narrator appears to extol the effect of Mary's intercession for the eradication of the inheritance of Original Sin and “spitting from the mouth the withered apple-seed“ (Spurr 2007:182).

The poem's narrator's prayers to the Virgin Mary could moreover suggest his vision of the Church, which would go “in white and blue, Mary's colour“ (123), contemplate and live the ignorance and knowledge of eternal dolour in time. The paradoxical image of the union of the innocence and suffering appears to recall the description of the Bride from the Canticles:

“I am black and comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem“ (*King James Version Bible*, Cant 1.5), where the Church is “black through the frailty of her human condition, comely through grace; black, because consisting of sinners, comely by the sacrament of faith“ (st. Ambrose 2015: 35). Furthermore, Eliot seems to have used the image of Mater Dolorosa in order to refer to Mary's sadness, which opposes to the sadness of the woman from *A Game of Chess*. The sadness that Eliot's Church should immitate is the transcendent sadness, or “godly sorrow [which] worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death“ (*King James Version Bible*, 2 Cor 7.10).

The denial framed by affirmation or the blue colour framed by the white colour appears to be also present in the pagan figure in the poem *Ash Wednesday*. Playing on his flute and dressed in green colour, the pagan figure might implicate our pilgrimage and the material world, where one may be susceptible to its alluring ways (Spurr 2007: 180). On the other hand, this very pagan figure is also dressed in blue, Mary's colour. Finally, the colour contrast might represent the monad of the Mary's influence on our ascent to perfection as we are struggling with the worldliness.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As we have seen, the Christian symbols seem to be the staple of Eliot's poetic expression, where emotion always accompanies thought (Kermode 1957: 314). In other words, Eliot appears to have used the Christian motifs in “disguise“ through the objective correlatives, which moreover appear to convey the Christian “emotion“. For instance, there are many connections and allusions to the Bible, the church fathers (st. Ambrose, st. Basil and st. Cyril of Alexandria) and to the saints of the Catholic Church (saint John of the Cross and saint Augustine) as one could elicit from the analysis. In addition, the more complex example could be the symbol “thunder“ from the poem *Waste Land*, which is generally present in the buddhist holy scripts. However, the “thunder“ seems to be rather an allusion to Christianity in Eliot's poems since the explicit buddhist object is accompanied by the Christian “emotion“ or its intertextual hint to the God the Father from the Old Testament, as we could have seen from the references to the Sermon on the Mount as the symbol of the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

Eliot's essays *Religion and Literature* and *Tradition and Individual Talent*, in which he criticized the humanism and its evident concentration only on the time-bound space not considering the history or the timeless sphere, may additionally confirm that Eliot objectified the very Christian “emotion“ in his poems.

What most corroborates the Christian motifs in Eliot's poems is the Christian doctrine about the Paschal mystery, which is evidently present as the core theme in all above analyzed Eliot's poems. In addition, the above mentioned allusions to the Christian teachings testify that all symbols and images in the poems are “united in a single infinite and eternal verbal

symbol“ (Frye 1957: 299), which is the Logos' mystery of the Incarnation and Passion. Furthermore, Eliot seems to have used the symbols not to describe or comment life, but rather to observe life and reality which he identified with the infinite Word of God, [and his work of redemption realized in] the person of Christ (Frye 1957: 302), by designing “representative illustrations“ or “making pictures of facts“ (Wittgenstein 1963: 300), or in this case, objective correlatives. Hence, life itself seems to be contained prior to described “in a system of the verbal relationships“ in Eliot's poems (Frye 1957: 300).

The impersonal response of Eliot's voice to God's revelation in the poems seems to intensify and even more clarify his particular usage of Christian motifs on the grounds of the Paschal mystery. More precisely, Eliot's approach to Christianity in the analyzed poems significantly appears to consider the poet's “continual extinction of personality“, that is to say his “self-sacrifice“ (Eliot 1917-1932:17), which seems to recall again Christian doctrines about the Incarnation and Passion. Furthermore, his impersonality as a poet seems to be evident in the balanced contrasted Christian emotion. The “floating feelings“ (Eliot 1917-1932: 20), which seem to be “the negative attractions exerted by the earthly body on the celestial soul“ (Toroczkai & Preda 2013:129), seem to have an affinity to the “structural emotion“ or “the strong attraction to the beauty“ in his poems. The human struggle against his or her own passions seems to be terminated through the “destruction“ or “death“ of the “fascination by the ugliness“.

The two above mentioned “emotions“ in a combination “give us a new art emotion“ (Eliot 1917-1932: 20) in Eliot's analyzed poems. The “new art emotion“ in his poems, as the analysis indicates, refers to the experience of the present renewal of life. Eliot seems to have focused in his poems on the eternal life present already by working of God's Spirit in the

human personality. One may as well notice the assurance of the poems' narrators concerning the Age to Come or the full expression of the eternal life in the future. The future and eschatological possession of the believer (*King James Version Bible*, Rom 8.11) may be seen moreover in Eliot's poetizing of the Eucharistic images (“(...) dogwood and chestnut, flowering judas, /To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk“) since they seem to demonstrate the humans' present incomplete and imperfect experience of the celestial life and the mystery of the Transubstantiation. The poems appear to reflect rather a “more 'realized' or the present actualization of the life of the Age to Come, without denying that such actualizations will come to full culmination in the future“ (Gowan 2003: 115).

A new quality of the human existence according to the narrator's voice seems to be demonstrated in terms of a series of contrasting images between birth and death. The actualization of the eternal life in the history or time-bound space appears to be accomplished through the reconciliation of the eternity with the time. Moreover, Eliot generally poetized the Incarnation and Passion in relation to the ordinary life of the Christian soul in the time-bound space. Therefore, the poems reveal the intense focus on Jesus as the mediator of the 'eternal life' (Gowan 2003: 116). The analysis of Eliot's poems may suggest the anagogy that the true restoring of the humanity occurs only in the likeness of Christ, where one suffers in order to create and dyes in order to be born again already in the earthly life.

The transience of human life and the brutality of the human nature are very likely the most frequent motifs in the analyzed poems in relation to “the Logos (...), [who] mediates divine life to a world that is alienated from its Creator and so under the domination of death – both spiritually and phisically“ (Gowan 2003: 116). Eliot's narrator seems therefore to struggle against the hardships of life and the nature of his earthly body. The poet urges that

the only response to the very transience and vulnerability of the human life is dying to the sensual worldly offers through the imitation of the work of the Incarnated Word, who redeems the time or “history“ by His own Passion for the humanity. Finally, by emphasizing the need for the God's grace and a believing response to the person Jesus as a prerequisite for receiving a new life especially in the chapters Baptism and Eucharist, Eliot underlines its transcendent value and extols the most essential doctrine of Christianity.

## 5. SUMMARY

As the analysis demonstrated, the Christian motifs in Eliot's poems were used generally to thematize the Paschal mystery. The mystery of the Incarnation and Passion were observed through the Christian motifs *Holy Trinity*, *Baptism*, *Eucharist* and *Church*. Moreover, the interrelation between Jesus's birth and death seems to be projected onto the ordinary activities and hardships in life. Eliot seems to have used the Christian objective correlatives in order to show the realities of the doctrine itself and its work in the everyday life. He urged in his poems that one should be a patient bearer of the cross on the earth, dying to one's sinful self so as to be available to be born again or to experience a spiritual rebirth.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbas, S.K. „Spiritual and Emotional Sterility in T.S. Eliot's „The Hollow Men.“ *Misan Journal for Academic Studies*. Vol. 697X, no. 30, 1994, pp. 20-35.

Camacho, M.B. and Perez, M.R.. „Searching for the Gift in T.S. Eliot's Ash Wednesday.“ *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics*. Vol. XXXIX, no. 1-2, 2016, pp. 33-52.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH - Latin text copyright (c) Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano, 1993.

Corcoran, N. *Shakespeare and the Modern Poet*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Butcher, Joshua. „Narrative and the Secrecy of the Hermeneutics.“ *Another Reader's Review*, [http://anotherreadersreview.blogspot.hr/2006/01/narrative-and-secrecy-of-hermeneutics\\_23.html](http://anotherreadersreview.blogspot.hr/2006/01/narrative-and-secrecy-of-hermeneutics_23.html). Accessed 23 January 2006.

Bryer, J.R. *Sixteen Modern American Authors*. Duke University Press, 1990.

Eliot, T.S.. *Izabrane Pjesme*. Grafički zavod Hrvatske, 1991.

Eliot, T.S.. *Ideja Kršćanskog Društva*. Verbum, 2005.

Eliot, T.S. „Ash Wednesday.“ *Collected Poems*. Faber and Faber, 1909-1962.

Eliot, T.S. „Four Quartets.“ *Collected Poems*. Faber and Faber, 1909-1962.

Eliot, T.S. „Gerontion.“ *Collected Poems*. Faber and Faber, 1909-1962.

Eliot, T.S. „Journey of the Magi.“ *Collected Poems*. Faber and Faber, 1909-1962.



Eliot, T.S. „The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock.“ *Collected Poems*. Faber and Faber, 1909-1962.

Eliot, T.S. „The Waste Land.“ *Collected Poems*. Faber and Faber, 1909-1962.

Eliot, T.S. „Tradition and Individual Talent.“*Selected Essays*. Faber and Faber, 1917-1932, pp. 13-22.

Freer, Scott and Bell, Michael. *Religion and Myth in T.S. Eliot's Poetry*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016.

Frye, Northrop. „Anagogic phase: Symbol as monad.“ Sutton E.,Walter, pp. 296-303.

Frye, N. Northrop Frye's Notebooks and Lectures on the Bible and Other Religious Texts. University of Toronto Press. London. ed. Robert D. Denham 2003

Gatta , J. *The Transfiguration of Christ and Creation*. Wipf and Stock, 2011.

Gowan D.E. *The Westminster Theological Wordbook of the Bible*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2003

Graham, G. *Philosophy, Art, and Religion: Understanding Faith and Creativity*. Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Harper, G. (2013) *New Ideas in the Writing Arts*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Newcastle

Kermode, Frank. „Dissociation of Sensibility.“ Sutton E.,Walter, pp. 304-317.

King James Version Bible. Crown Copyright, 1611. BIBLIJA.net~ the Bible on the Internet,<http://www.biblija.net/biblija.cgi?Bible=Bible&m=&id7=1&pos=0&set=3&l=en>

Kirk, R. *Eliot and His Age: T. S. Eliot's Moral Imagination in the Twentieth Century*. Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2016.

- Kramer, K.P. *Redeeming Time: T.S.Eliot's Four Quartets*. Cowley Publications, 2007.
- Maddrey, J. *The Making of T.S. Eliot: A Study of the Literary Influences*. McFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers, 2009.
- Roberts, N. *A Companion to Twentieth-Century Poetry*. Blackwell Publishing, 2003.
- Saint Ambrose. *On the Mysteries and The Treatise on the Sacraments*. Aeterna Press, 2015.
- Saint Basil the Great. *The Book of Saint Basil on the Spirit*. Aeterna Press, 2016.
- Schneider, E. W. *The Pattern in the Carpet*. University of California Press, 1975.
- Singh A. *Literary Secularism: Religion and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Fiction*. Cambridge Scholars Press. Newcastle
- Spurr, B. *See the Virgin Blest: The Virgin Mary in English Poetry*. PALGRAVE MACMILLAN™, 2016.
- Toroczka, C.I. and Preda, D. „Religion and Literature. Case study – Mythanalysis.“ *European Journal of Science and Theology*. vol. 10, no. 1, 2014, pp. 125-132.
- Sutton E., Walter, editors. *Modern Criticism: Theory and Practice*, edited by The Odyssey Press, 1963.
- Walsh, M. *Witness of the Saints: Patristic Readings in the Liturgy of the Hours*. Ignatius Press, 2012.