

**EXISTENTIALISM IN THE WORKS
OF
WILLIAM GOLDING AND DORIS LESSING**

(Thesis submitted to the Nagaland University for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English)

By

Dalia Bhattacharjee

Ph.D. Regd. No. 464/2011

Under the Supervision of
Professor N.D.R. Chandra
Department of English
Nagaland University
Campus: Kohima, Meriema



Department of English
Nagaland University
Campus: Kohima, Meriema

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Dr. N. D. R. Chandra

M. A., M.Phil., P.G.D.T.E, Ph.D.
Professor of English

Vice Chancellor

Bastar University
Jagdalpur, Chattisgarh.
Cell - 09425590001

E-mail = chandra592001@yahoo.com

Date.....

SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Existentialism in the works of William Golding and Doris Lessing” is a bonafide record of research work done by Dalia Bhattacharjee (Regd .No. 464/2011 dtd. 12-6-2009) during 2009-2014. This thesis, submitted to Nagaland University in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English, has not been previously formed the basis for the award of any other degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other title and that the thesis as such represents independent and original work on the part of the candidate under my guidance. Dalia Bhattacharjee has completed the research work for the full period as prescribed under clause 9 (5) of the Ph.D.regulations and the thesis embodies the record of original investigation conducted during the period she worked as a Ph.D. research scholar.

Professor N.D.R.Chandra

Supervisor

Department of English

Nagaland University

Campus : Kohima.

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I do hereby declare that the thesis entitled “Existentialism in the Works of William Golding and Doris Lessing” is a bonafied record of research done by me under the guidance and supervision of Professor N.D.R. Chandra, Department of English, Nagaland University, Kohima during the period of my research (2009 - 2014) at the Department of English, Nagaland University and it has not been submitted either in full or in part to any other university or institute for the award of any other Degree, Diploma or Title.

Place : Kohima

Date :

(Dalia Bhattacharjee)

Registration No. 464/2011

Research Scholar

Department of English

Nagaland University

Campus : Kohima, Meriema.

COUNTERSIGNED

Dr. N. Das

Head

Department of English

Nagaland University

Kohima Campus, Nagaland.

Supervisor

Professor N.D.R. Chandra

Department of English

Nagaland University

Kohima Campus, Nagaland.

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Place : Kohima

Date :

Dalia Bhattacharjee

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PREFACE

It all began with William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* raising the question of the existence of man through the famous soliloquy "To be or not to be...." Such questions, enquiring the very existence and purpose of human life often visited my mind and left it disturbed. With time and gradual addition of knowledge, I could realize the magnanimity of the field of my enquiry. Marlow's *Dr. Faustus* too forced me to think on the purpose of human life. Then came Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and on I continued my search. Soon my mind was struck by a new concept of "Existentialism" and paused to ponder over it.

In its literary manifestation, Existentialism is varied and many sided. We find aspects of it in different writers as Leo Tolstoy and Proust, Kafka and Moravia. However, even when we note that existentialism has been latent in the Literature of the past 500 years, we recognize that only within the last century has it swelled into a fully compelling philosophical movement, with its emphasis upon the alienation of man from an absurd world and his estrangement from normal society, his recognition of the world as meaningless or negative, his consequent burden of soul scarring anxieties, bringing with it his need to distinguish between his authentic and unauthentic self, his obsessive desire to confront his imminent death on one hand, and his consuming passion to live on the other. With these emphasis it is not unusual that existentialism should have developed in a time of swift change when the sensitive individual finds himself fragmented and virtually destroyed by the exigencies of modern life.

Existentialism can be thought of as the twentieth- century analogue of nineteenth century romanticism. The two movements have in common the demand that the whole fabric of life be recognized and taken into account in our thinking and acting. As such, they express a form of resistance to reductionist analysis of life and its meaning for human beings. But there are also significant differences. According to Irvine, existentialism is typically ‘focused’ on individual human lives and the poignant inevitability of suffering and choice for each individual, whereas romanticism tended to be more oriented to the whole of nature and saw human beings as a part of that wider picture. Furthermore, romanticism flourished before the wars and genocides of the 20th century whereas existentialism is born amid those horrors (1998:1).

Existentialism is a philosophy of disorientation and the literature that has developed concomitant with its influence is a literature of despair. One of the best sources of this sense of modern despair is Coleridge’s poem “Dejection: An Ode” addressed to Wordsworth on his coming marriage in 1802, an odd occasion indeed for such a document. Coleridge is principally concerned not with Wordsworth and his marriage but with himself, with his own loss of creative power, which would be equivalent in an ordinary man to his loss of self or to his feelings of despair at his lack of uniqueness. Coleridge speaks of himself as suffering ‘this dull pain’ which the renewal of his imaginative power might perhaps lighten.

This dryness of soul experienced by Coleridge is that the existential philosophers beginning with Kierkegaard, forty years later, were to examine, as the peculiar crisis of civilized life. Existentialists made familiar that only subjectivity, not objectivity and reason, can count in a world in which objects may well be meaningless and reason absurd. Within this frame of reference the individual-stripped of tradition, custom, or belief must make his

own decisions, find his own truths, like in the words of Kierkegaard, 'bloody truth' that reveal the anguished journey of the spirit through the dark night of nothingness. This lone man is exactly the search that I am to begin. In order to delve deep into such individuals, I have taken the canvas of William Golding and Doris Lessing for my meticulous perusal.

2. A BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON EXISTENTIALISM

(i). Karl, Frederick R. and Leo Hamalian. 1973 *The Existential Imagination*. London: Pan Books Limited.

The Book contains fictions by de Sade, Brecht, Beckett, Malraux, Praust, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Sartre, and many others. This book is a collection of fictions expressing existential ideas by seventeen authors, who explore man's situation and his relationship to his self. The introduction is an illuminating part of the book which gives a careful and complete description of Existential Imagination, and introduces us to the concept inherent in each fiction to be followed. It is an intellectually stimulating and artistically satisfying for the beginners entering the realm of new Philosophy.

(ii) Kulkarni, Prahlad A. 1994. *William Golding A Critical Study*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publisher.

Starting with an account of William Golding's life, Kulkarni discusses the vision of William Golding and examines the Novels for a significant thematic pattern. This piece of literary work comprises of an illuminating introduction and a rich analytical study of the various novels under a division of five chapters. The Novels are pinned under the themes like Panoramic Apocalypse, Non-Believers and Believers, which help the readers to understand and to view William Golding in proper perspective.

(iii) Mac Donald, Paul S. 2000. *The Existentialist Reader: An Anthology of Key Text*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

The Existentialist Reader is an anthology of key text across a broad range of themes by eight Existentialist philosophers: Simon de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel, Morice Marleau-Ponty, Jose Orlega Y. Gasset and Jean Paul Sartre. It presents a very comprehensive introduction which describes the intellectual and philosophical scene between the wars and emphasizes on the central characteristic of the various existentialist's approaches to immediate and pressing issues of their time. There is also a careful analysis of distinctive themes, such as absurdity, anxiety, alienation and death and the various ways in which the thinkers understand human being. Each selection preceded by a short biography of the writer, a list of writers' principal works and suggestion for further reading

(iv). Majumder, Bimalendu. 1982. *Joyce Cary: An Existentialist Approach*. New Delhi: Associated Publishing House, New Market, Carolbagh New Delhi.

This is a highly educated piece of Literature which speaks about Joyce Cary (1888-1957), a significant British novelist of the modern period. The introduction gives us a vivid description of his biography. There are six chapters, the first chapter speaking on "Men fulfil His being by Existing," The third chapter talks about the impartiality and objectivity of Cary's art. The fourth chapter is a refreshing attempt in exploring the process of Cary's creative style. The culminating chapter talks on Religion as the Art of the Soul. The book is complete discussion on existential queries of Joyce Cary. The book can be helpful in understanding the practical aspect of existentialism.

(v) Masten, Elizabeth. 1994. *Doris Lessing*. Plymouth: Northcote House, The British Council.

This is a serious piece of literature which delineates Doris Lessing to the fullest and presents before the reader simplifying her literary potential for early absorption. It has a nourishing piece of introduction followed by seven chapters, Delving into the various dimension of her creativity. This is a concise and scholarly book offering a critical insight into her all the novels and a representative selection of her non-fictional prose and short stories.

(vi) Patrik, Linda E. 2001. *Existential Literature: An Introduction*. Australia: Wordsworth/Thomson Learning.

The treatise deals with Existentialism and Existentialist writers. This anthology includes selection from existential literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries with supportive materials on the philosophical ideas contained in this works. Short explanation of basic existentialist concepts supplements the literary selections. French existentialists Beauvoir, Camus and Sartre and Nineteenth Century thinkers like – Soren Kierkegaard, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Friedrich Nietzsche are discussed in detail. Finally, two twentieth century writers Franz Kafka and Richard Wright are included in this anthology.

(vii). Ray, Mohit. 2001. “Camus’s Existentialism as a Strategy of Revolt” in *Studies in Literary Criticism*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publisher. pp. 2006-11.

It is a volume of critical essays, diverse though they may be broadly divided into four categories: essays on critical issues, essays on individual authors, essays in Comparative Literature and essays on Language.

My main concern is a critical essay on “Camus’s Existentialism as a Strategy of Revolt”. The essay is a valuable piece of study which gives us insight into Camus’ revolutionary attitude towards convention, traditional notions and so called allegiances. He found that man themselves created or foisted meanings in this life which was a form of self deceit. Camus used the idea of the existential absurd in order to prove the meaninglessness of human attitude.

3. OBJECTIVE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This discourse will examine the chief concern of Existentialism in the works of William Golding and Doris Lessing, which is a significant area of intellectual exercise in the contemporary literary circle. The novels voicing the burning problem of existence of human being, importance of the individual, importance of choice, anxiety regarding life, death, contingencies and extreme situation will be critically analyzed to give a deeper understanding of the contemporary thought. The main objective will be to unearth the underlined conflicts in the works of William Golding and Doris Lessing based on the theme of existentialism. It would also be my endeavour to compare and contrast the two writers and place them in the context of contemporary existential writers.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

This discourse will engage extrinsic approach to literature. The investigation and interpretation would be mainly based on a close analysis of the socio-cultural and religious aspects of the writers and their works. The research will have a modest study on the aspects of the existential theory as well as strains of Existentialism in each individual writer. In fact, the theory of existentialism will be applied in analysis of selected works of William Golding and Doris Lessing. The researcher finally argues to justify the title of the research by consulting and surveying the relevant primary and the secondary sources.

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION OF WILLIAM GOLDING AND DORIS LESSING

WILLIAM GOLDING

William Golding was born in Cornwall in 1911 and was educated at Marlborough Grammar School and at Brasenose College, Oxford. His father was a schoolmaster and his mother was a suffragette. Apart from writing, his past and present occupation includes being a schoolmaster, a lecturer, an actor, a sailor and a musician. Writing with the sensitivity of a poet, he has been hailed by some as a modern Conrad. Using the technique of allegory to portray man's constant struggle between the civilized self and the darker side of his nature, Golding has earned himself the reputation of contributing more towards the modern British novel than any other novelists of the time. He was born into an English Middle-Class academic family and had a childhood which was rather idyllic and isolated. After graduating from Oxford, he spent some time in a theatre, and later became a schoolmaster at Bishop Wordsworth's School. With the outbreak of the war, he joined the Royal Navy and gave his service till the war lasted. But the wars were a sort of furnace for him, for he was a changed man thereafter. The wars awakened both the man and the writer in him and through his fiction, he tried to preserve sanity and morality in a world torn by two wars and tried to construct a religious perception relevant to the contemporary man.

He was brought up to be a scientist, but revolted. After two years at Oxford he read English literature instead, and became devoted to Anglo-Saxon. He spent five years at Oxford and published a volume of poems in 1935. He taught at Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury. Joined the Royal Navy in 1940 and spent six years afloat expect for

seven months in New York and six months helping Lord Cherwell at the Navy Research establishment. He saw action against battleships (at the sinking of the Bismarck), submarines and aircraft. Finished as Lieutenant in command of a rocket ship. After the war he returned to teaching and began to write again *Lord of the Flies*, his first novel, which was published in 1954.

On September 1953, Golding sent the typescript of a book to Faber and Faber of London. Initially rejected by a reader there, the book was championed by Charles Monteith, then a new editor at the firm. He asked for various cuts in the text and the novel was published in September 1954 as *Lord of the Flies*. It was shortly followed by other novels, including *The Inheritors*, *Pincher Martin* and *Free Fall*. Golding's often allegorical fiction makes broad use of allusions to classical literature, mythology, and Christian symbolism. No distinct thread unites his novels, and the subject matter and technique vary. However, his novels are often set in closed communities such as islands, village, monasteries, groups of hunter-gatherer, and ships at sea.

William Gerald Golding began his career as a novelist quite late in his life. He was a poet in the beginning, and therefore his prose became poetic in expression. Within a period of Twenty years of his writing, Golding became the recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1983. Since his childhood, he has developed his love for words, which ultimately became the power for him to convey his ideas. The passion of knowledge that burnt within him was to know what a man is and whatever man is in the eyes of God. The themes of his novels, which sprang from his imagination have emerged out from this preoccupation and have been of such a kind that they might take him a little nearer that knowledge. Therefore, the themes have been related to man at an extremity, the man tested like building materials,

taken into the laboratory and used to destruction; man alienated, isolated, obsessed and drowning in a literal sea or in the sea of his own ignorance. William Golding suggests that man is responsible for his fault. He is responsible for his fallen state and his mismanagement of his affairs on the earth throughout history and which is a cause of his certain doom. Golding is pre-occupied with apocalyptic themes, such as widespread death in war, personal tragedy, pride, monocentrism, ego, lust and then a possibility of revival of faith. This attitude of Golding may be divided into two aspects, namely, 'Panoramic Apocalypses,' as in the case of *Lord of the Flies*, and he deals with, 'Personal Apocalypse' as in the case of *Pincher Martin*, *Free Fall* and *The Paper Men*.

William Golding is different from his contemporaries not only in handling the form of the genre but the content too. He is one of the major and original literary geniuses. In his pre-occupation with the human tragedy, he resembles the great Greek writers Euripides and Aeschylus. In his emphasis on human existence and his thematic concerns with man's alienation, free will, guilt, universality of Evil and original sin, he is close to Melville and Conrad. Golding belonged to that generation which had its foundation in the post war period a period of disillusionment and disenchantment. The explosion of the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki decided the end of the war, but it originated a war within the mind of the thinkers like William Golding. The residue that the war left behind were vile and gruesome and he was appalled to see that what was heartlessly done was not by some primitive or barbaric tribes, but were done skilfully, by an educated man, who had the tradition of civilization behind them, to being of their own kind. Thus, the true nature of men stood revealed before him and it grew his conviction of man as a fallen being gripped by 'original sin.'

According to Golding, the war was unlike any other war fought in Europe. Other than the viles of politics and the follies of nationalism, it revealed the nature of man. Golding learnt that all evils were in the 'will' of man. This inability of man to understand and control this nature of his, ultimately brings about the disaster of mankind. He was convinced that humanity was suffering from a terrible disease and as a writer he should aim at examining the ailment and endeavour to raise the consciousness of the people and help man to regain his paradise which man seems to have lost.

In an interview with Owen Webster, Golding stated to have noted that the basic problem of the modern man is learning to live fearlessly with the natural chaotic of existence, without the influence of any artificial patterns on it. According to Golding man's greatest fault lies in the fact that he stands in opposition to his own creation. Life would have been easier and much more peaceful had he accepted to live in compliance with the universe. But man feels happy only in establishing authority over others. Thus, this natural compulsion of asserting oneself superior, even to the Almighty, contributes in his nature, the evils of hatred and fear, that dominate modern human life. 'Ego' becomes the sole concern of man and takes precedence over all other things. This emphasis on 'self' forces man to soon realize that, his 'self' can neither lead an independent existence nor function. William Golding's concern has been to diagnose the ills of human nature and to look at what is permanent in man and to study him in relation to his cosmic situation. Through his fictions Golding tried to communicate that he believed that evil in the form of darkness emanates from the man himself. A darkness which conquers the core of man's being, controlling his characters becomes the central organizing principle. Taking the garb of egoism, it leads on to hatred, pride, immorality and atheism, which ultimately becomes the cause of his destruction. This

darkness has shifted the mockers man far away from the root of his being. Modern man's capacity for evil stems from his extreme selfishness and insufficiently evolved consciousness. This egoism, which is the root of violence and wickedness, if not tamed and disciplined in time, will bring further destruction. Human nature, clinging to egotism and combative animality, gives rise to sin which is not a cosmic accident. Even animals fail to be as vicious cruel, dangerously violent, and persistently wicked as man has shown himself capable of in the last few wars. His selfishness, wedded to his intellectual cunning, has wrought widespread havoc.

His first novel *Lord of the Flies*, 1954, dealt with an unsuccessful struggle against barbarism and war, thus showing the ambiguity and fragility of civilization. It has also been said that it is an allegory of World War-II. *The Inheritors* (1955) looked back into pre-history, advancing the thesis that humankind's evolutionary ancestors 'the new people' (generally identified with homo-sapiens), triumphed over a gentler race (generally with Neanderthals) as much by violence and deceit as by natural superiority.

The Spire, 1964 follows the building of a huge spire onto a medieval cathedral church, generally assumed to be Salisbury cathedral; the church and the spire itself act as potent symbols both of the dean's highest spiritual aspirations and of his worldly vanities. *Pincher Martin*, 1954, concerns the last moments of a sailor, thrown into the north Atlantic after his ship is attacked. In 1967 novel *The Pyramid* comprises three separate stories linked by a common setting (a small English Town in the 1920s) and narrator. *The Scorpion God* (1971) is a volume of three short novels set in a, prehistoric African hunter-gatherer bands, an ancient Egyptian court and the court of a Roman emperor.

Golding's later novels include *Darkness Visible*, *The Paper Men* (1984), and *The Comic-historical Sea Trilogy. To the Ends of the Earth*, comprising the Booker prize winning *Rites of Passage* (1980), *Lose Quarter* (1987) and *Fire Down Below*. 1989. In fact, Golding is a religious writer, but his religion is not based on dogmas and doctrines. His religion is based on man and his relation to society and to God. He tries to probe deeper into the reasons of the fall of man and suggests some ways to 'regain the paradise.'

DORIS LESSING

Doris Lessing was born to Doris May Tayler in Persia (Now Iran) on October 22, 1919. Both of her parents were British; her father, who had been crippled in world war-I, was a clerk in the Imperial Bank of Persia, her mother had been a nurse. In 1925, lured by the promise of getting rich through maize farming, the family moved to the British Colony in Southern Rhodesia (Now Zimbabwe). Her mother adopted to the rough life in the settlement energetically trying to reproduce what was, in her view a civilized, Edwardian life among savages, but her father did not, and the thousand-odd acres of bush, he had failed to yield the promised wealth. Doris's mother installed Doris in a convent school, and then later in an All-Girls High School in the capital of Salisbury, from which she soon dropped out. Lessing has described her childhood as an uneven rise of some pleasure and much pain. The natural world, which she explored with her brother, Harry, was one retreat from an otherwise miserable existence. Her mother obsessed with raising a proper daughter, enforced a rigid system of rules and hygiene at home, and then installed Doris in a convent school, where nuns terrified their charges with stories of hell and damnation. She was later sent to an All Girls High School in the capital of Salisbury, from which she soon dropped

out. God does not endow anybody acquiring a certain standard of formal education, with a gift of power to converse with nature and then weave the dialogues in the literary or scientific equivalence of a garland. A handful of geniuses, such as Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore being one of them, who stepped on this Earth to leave behind their immense contributions in the fields of science, art and literature. Such gifted geniuses ironically are often frustrated with the 'education as usual' system, which while it may suit the majority of students, do not suit their needs. Doris Lessing is one of such geniuses who found committing passages of textbooks to memory shelves and chewing the cud in the examination halls a caricature of storing one's mind with a million facts and still remaining entirely uneducated.

At thirteen she stopped her formal education and at fifteen she left her home to be with nature. Her childhood was an uneven mixture of some pleasures and much more pains. A self-educated intellectual Doris did not need to fancy highbrow traditions or money to really learn. Her labour pains in giving birth to literary flowers and fruits started when as a child she first saw and heard the pains and groans of her crippled father, who lost one leg in World War-I trying in vain to make fortunes through maize farming and her ambitious mother fruitlessly trying to reproduce an Edwardian lifestyle in the midst of Rhodesians. Doris's soul always looked for chances to escape from dilemmatic torments of life she witnessed inside her home into an imaginary world that she ardently fancied outside. But like other women writers from South Africa who did not graduate from high school, Lessing made herself into a self educated intellectual. Lessing's early reading included Dickens, Scott, Stevenson, and Kipling; later she discovered D.H. Lawrence, Stendhal, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky.

Lessing's life has been a challenge to her belief that people cannot resist the current of their time, as she fought against the biological and cultural imperatives that fated

her to sink without a murmur into marriage and motherhood. “There is a whole generation of women”, she has said, speaking of her mother’s era, “and it was as if their lives came to a stop when they had children. Most of them got pretty neurotic because, I think, of the contrast between them were taught at school they were capable of being and what actually happened to them” (*A Reader’s Guide* 1995 : 2). Lessing believes that she was freer than most people because she became a writer. Materials that nourished Doris Lessing’s emotion to read nature and human mind, emanated from her childhood memories and later from her encounters with politics, duality of cultures, inequality of races and the struggle within an individual’s own personality to find the truth in a world of falsities. She was declared a prohibited alien in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa as she exposed the brutality of the whites over the blacks and the sterility of artificial white culture in the pristine nature of Southern Africa.

In 1937 she moved to Salisbury, where she worked as a telephone operator for a year. At nineteen, she married Frank Wisdom, and had two children. A few years later, feeling trapped in a persona that she feared would destroy her; she left her family, remaining in Salisbury. Soon she was drawn to the like-minded members of the Left Book Club, a group of Communists “who read everything and who did not think it remarkable to read” Gottfried Lessing was a central member of the group, shortly after she joined; they married and had a son. During the postwar years, Lessing become increasingly disillusioned with the communists movements, which she left altogether in 1954. By 1949, Lessing had moved to London with her young son. That year she also published her first novel, *The Grass is Singing*. With *The Grass is Singing* published in 1950, she began her career as a professional writer. In this novel she dealt with racial politics between whites and blacks, a dreary and horrifying tale of a failed marriage, a feverish neurosis of white sexuality and fear of black

influence. It is a novel with depth and maturity of psychological study. Over the years, Lessing has attempted to accommodate what she admires in the novels of the 19th Century, their 'Climate of ethical judgment' to the demand of 20th Century ideas about consciousness and time. After writing *The Children of Violence Series* (1951-1959), a formally conventional Bildungsroman (novel of education) about the growth in consciousness of her heroine, Martha Quest, Lessing broke new ground with *The Golden Notebook* (1962), a daring narrative experiment, in which the multiple selves of a contemporary woman are rendered in astonishing depth and detail.

If she shares her theme - the fragmentation of society and of consciousness - with a great many modern writers, including Lawrences, her expression of it follows the example of Joyce, Faulkner, and Woolf, in their use of multiple perspectives upon common strands of modern experiences to convey its many - sidedness, and of stream-of-consciousness techniques to express both alienation and the quest to get beyond it to some kind of wholeness or connectedness (Riley 1976 : 300).

Even though Lessing's distant alignment with many modern writers can be traced, however, the uniqueness of her writing cannot be overlooked. Her sole quest was to reach the truth. Her adoption of the technique of compartmentalisation as a technique was to expose the conventional notions of unity as the most dangerous compartments of all, because they do not acknowledge other possibilities. Her concern was to create the conditions that would allow the future to evolve and make appearance.

“She works terribly hard, a living and at writing, and at her best she reveals the inner logic of human lives with a pain and a joy unmatched among living writers” (Riley 1976 : 299).

Her inner-space fiction deals with cosmic fantasies *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*. 1971. Dreamscapes and others dimensions *Memories of a Survivor*, 1974 and science

fiction probing of higher planes of existence *Canopies in Argos Archives*, 1979-1983) “She can tell the truth, as she sees it, ‘without snags and blocks of conscience’” (Pritchard 1995 : 318).

Doris Lessing’s other novels included *The Good Terrorist* (1985) and the *Fifth Child*, (1988); she also published two novels under the pseudonym Jane Somers. *The Diary of Good Neighbour* (1983) and *If the Old Could....* (1984). In addition she has written several non-fiction works, including books about cats, a love since childhood. *Under My Skin: Volume One of My Autobiography*, to 1949 appeared in 1995 and received the James Tait Black Prize for best biography.

In 1996 her first novel *Love Again* was published by Harper Collins after seven years. Late in a year, Harper Collins published *Play with a Tiger* and other plays a compilation of three of her plays ‘*Play with a Tiger, The Singing Door* and *Each His own Wilderness*.’ In 1997 she collaborated with Philip Glass for the second time, providing the libretto for the opera the marriage between Zones Three, Four and Five. *Walking in the Shade*, the second volume of her autobiography was published in October and was nominated for the 1997 National Book Critics Circle Award in biography/autobiography category.

Her new novel title *Mara and Dann* was published in the U.S. in January 1999 and in U.K. in April 1999. In U.K.’s last Honours list before the new Millennium in December 31, 1999, Doris Lessing was appointed a ‘Companion of Honour’ an exclusive order for those who have done ‘Conspicuous National Service’. In January 2000 the National Portrait Gallery in London unveiled Leonard Me Comb’s portrait of Doris Lessing. In 2001, she was awarded the Prince of Asturias Prize in Literature, one of Spain’s most important distinctions, for her brilliant literary works in defence of freedom and Third World causes.

She also received the David Cohen British Literature Prize. She was on the shortlist for the First Man Booker International Prize in 2005. In 2007 she was awarded the Noble Prize for literature.

William Golding speaks of and for humanity. He is a unique writer, who is never afraid to call a spade a spade; or fearlessly reveal that which is evil in human society and expose the mask worn by modern man. His description is vivid, with well-planned imagery and is keenly conscious of the malaise of his time. He is ruthless in revealing the hypocrisy and pretentious behavior of modern man. He wanted that man should understand his true nature and learn to save himself from self-degrading qualities. It pains him deeply to find that modern man is incessantly laborious to gain material benefits and spiritual value lost its meaning to them. He was gifted with a clear insight of things and with a serious mind. As a child everything appeared gay and lively but soon his vision was tarnished with the appearance of frightful, wicked, corrupt and sinful person and events. The wars only strengthened his conviction of the presence this dark world. What moved him greatly was that even the educated people were not free from inhumanity. He could understand that neither the present day society nor any political institution could curb this human vileness, because these institutions were far removed from the reality and therefore, abstract. Thus, he thought of a constructive method to bring about a realization in the society. Being a teacher by profession at that time, helped him to study human nature from all angles. To his knowledge he found that the society of boys was not very different from that of elders. Jealousy, greed, hatred, vanity, selfishness, and anger found amongst the adults, are present even in the young boys as he depicted in his novel *The Lord of the Flies*. His purpose was to depict that evil is inherent in human being and it masters his feelings, emotions, failings and weaknesses. However, he does not seem to have lost hope. He believed that one should never tire of

trying. His subsequent novels too, tell the stories of human behavior at different levels, different situations and in different manner. Each novel is a process of experiment and understanding. If experience is what teaches man, then Golding's works are experiences offered to the readers. His characters are like any one of us. What we fail to see in us can be read in them. By reading them we would get acquainted with our inborn good or bad nature. This would help us to understand not only ourselves but also others. Being true to ourselves we would be able to see the truth in others. Thus, with understanding, adjustment would come and with adjustment charity, love, kindness, sympathy and other positive qualities would guide our way. William Golding wants to give a clear message to the world that the world can survive only through a sense of piety, kindness and love and not through any violent methods.

Some people mellow with age but Doris Lessing is not one of them. Till death, at the age of 94 we find her standing undaunted and committed to the belief that all 'isms' along with most ordinary emotions are actually forms of self-delusions. She encounters a sarcastic and harsh sense of disillusionment with socialism, with romantic love, with the cultural experiments of the 1960s and the political movements of Africa's independent states, which becomes the great themes of her works. However, we do not find her as a cynic, for she still believes in the value of truth and unlike cynic, she lacks the harmful sense of self-pity.

Since William Golding and Doris Lessing both are concerned with the existence of human being on this planet, rather than occupying themselves with their essence of life, Existentialism was the system of thoughts that accommodate them. Both the writers are primarily concerned about their subjectivity and against the shackles of 'isms' of modern life. I would like to mention that even though they have the similarity of being under particular system of thought, yet they differ individually in their approach towards human problem.

To avoid an internal contradiction it is necessary to clarify that to call someone as 'Existentialist' imposes 'essence' on them. In other words, telling them what they are. This violates their absolute autonomy and freedom as it appears that they actually have something in common with some other people or other Existentialists. Therefore, Existentialism as a system of thought is too vague and difficult to define. Important themes like Freedom, Individuality, obscurity, contingency, guilt etc. which analyses an individual, delving deep into his self and try to expose the reality, can be considered under this system of thought.

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CHAPTER - II

THEORY OF EXISTENTIALISM

In its literary manifestation, existentialism is varied and many-sided. We find the glimpses of it in writers as different as Tolstoy and Proust, Kafka and Moravia. Though we find that the existential quarries have been latent in the literature of the past 500 years, we recognize that only within the last century, it evolved into a fully compelling philosophical movement. Trying to understand existentialism, we are confronted with certain elusiveness. It is so because the existentialist label gets applied to all sorts of people and activities that are only remotely, if at all, connected with existential philosophy. According to Jean Paul Sartre, this word 'existentialism' is now so loosely applied to so many things, that it no longer means anything at all. In the existentialist view there are always loose ends. According to the advocates of this Philosophy, our experiences and our knowledge are always incomplete and fragmentary; only a divine mind, if there is one, could comprehend the world as a whole, and perhaps even for such a mind there would be gaps and discontinuities.

It is true, however, that there is no common body of doctrine to which all existentialists stick to, compared to those central tenets that held together Idealists or Thomists in their schools. Therefore, existentialism is often described as a style of philosophizing, rather than a 'philosophy'. It is a style which may lead the followers to very different convictions about the world and man's life in it. This style of philosophizing begins from man rather than from nature. It is a philosophy of the subject rather than of the object. For the existentialists the subject is the existent in the whole range of his existing. He is not only a thinking subject but an initiator of action and a centre of feeling. It is this whole spectrum of existence that existentialism tries to express. Its emphasis is upon the alienation

of man from an absurd world and his estrangement from the normal society, his recognition of the world as meaningless or negative, his consequent burden of soul-scarring anxieties, fostering with it his need to distinguish between his authentic and unauthentic self, his obsessive desire to confront his imminent death on one hand and his consuming passion to live on the other hand, it is not unusual that existentialism should have developed in a period of quick change when the sensitive individual find himself fragmented and virtually destroyed by the exigencies of modern life. Kierkegaard, the Danish Philosopher who wrote towards the middle of the nineteenth century, stressed that man has lost his subjectivity, his own concrete life, and consequently, has virtually ceased to exist. Kierkegaard found that the chief problem was not epistemological, ontological, or even metaphysical, those traditional branches of philosophy that concern themselves with man's relation to God or the universe, but human: specifically, how was the individual to come to terms with existence in a technological civilization? As a result of man's new role, his doubt and scepticism have turned inward and led to despair, man has lost most of his familiar props, and those that still remain, prove insufficient. Within this frame of reference, the individual-unsupported by tradition, custom, or belief must make his own decision. Even the traditional baptism which the church provides at birth is useless, for that decision comes from without, while the chief and sole truth is subjective. It is only man and his consciousness which matter and all philosophy must be in terms of man's existence that is, existential.

This new kind of philosophy is pursued by many philosophers from whom a number of different schools derive their origin, which makes the meaning of the word rather confusing. But its original and fundamental meaning, in the sense of Kierkegaard's usage of it, is simple and straight forward. Existentialism is a rejection of all purely abstract thinking, of a purely logical or scientific philosophy, in short a rejection of the absoluteness of reason.

“The real (the existent) refuses to conform itself to the pattern laid down by rational thought.” (Macquarrie 1972: 66). Instead it insists that philosophy should be connected with the individuals own life and experience, with the historical situation in which he finds himself, and that it should be, not interesting abstract speculation, but a way of life. It should be a philosophy capable of being lived. The existential philosopher insists that what we really know is not the external world, but our own experience, for them the personal is the real. Philosophy therefore, should start from one’s own experience which is one’s own inner knowledge and it is this inner knowledge which should be qualified and enriched and expanded. One’s own experience must be admitted as evidence.

It is easier to understand existentialism when we understand the distinction between ‘essence’ and ‘existence’. “Essence refers to the true nature of things e.g. the humanness of man, or the horseness of a horse. I can be considered in an abstract way” (Roubiczek 1964:11). On the other hand, existence is not the humanity of man, but the particular man, whom I know, or the particular horse, which I possess or love. The existentialists claim that all preceding philosopher were too much concerned with essences, with ideas, with concepts and therefore became too abstract. As a reaction to such an approach the existentialists wanted to start from existence and to keep to it, so that the real things are kept intact, as intact as they occur in our actual personal experience. It is often been criticized that the existentialist often go too far in their exclusive emphasis on existence. We need both essence and existence to understand the truth. We shall not know a man without understanding his humanity and neither shall we comprehend humanity without paying attention to a single man and to our own inner experience. The claim that one can reach the truth only through the study of existence is as much a fallacy as the claim that the study of essences alone does justice to reality.

Our age is still largely dominated by abstract thinking, by impersonal, scientific, deterministic thought, by concentration on essences, by rationalism. We rarely pay attention to the meaning of our personal experience and of our feelings. This emphasis on abstract thought is impoverishing or even endangering the human world. The whole world seems to lose significance and man is estranged from himself. Our domination over nature seems to be more and more complete; man can make use of the most minute particles and soon perhaps, of outer space. Man is encroaching on the very structure of the universe and, by means of new medical techniques and new drugs, on human character. Yet, while the enigmas of nature are solved one by one, each man becomes himself a greater enigma, and there is more chaos in our own inner lives and in human affairs.

It is asserted that existentialism is a style of philosophizing rather than a body of philosophical doctrines; nevertheless it is true that this approach to philosophy concentrates attention on some themes which we find recurring in most of the existentialist thinkers. These themes are often different from those that have traditionally dealt with by the philosophers. The problems of logic and epistemology were the subjects of concern in the older schools of thought. But the existentialists seemed to pass over these themes lightly and concentrate their attention on problems that seem to be directly related to concrete human existence rather than on subjects that are abstract or speculative.

The matters that constitute the core of personal being such as, the themes of freedom, decision and responsibility are conspicuous in all the existentialist philosophers. It is the exercise of freedom and the ability to shape the future that distinguishes man from all the other beings on this earth. It is through free and responsible decisions that man becomes authentically himself. Some existentialists or near-existentialists like Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel have in recent times been pioneers in the investigation of interpersonal relations.

But mainly the existentialists are concerned with the individual whose quest for authentic selfhood focuses on the meaning of personal being.

Another group of recurring themes in existentialism is guilt, alienation, despair, death and finitude. We do not find them discussed in the traditional philosophy, yet we find them talked at length amongst the existentialists. While dealing with these topics some existentialists call themselves as pessimist, while some of them do reveal themselves as optimist or with hope. Yet, all of them seem to be aware of the tragic human existence. Man's freedom and his quest for authentic personal being meet with resistance and frustration. All individual existence ends in death. "For the existentialist, man is never just part of the cosmos but always stands to it in a relationship of tension with possibilities of tragic conflict" (Macquarrie 1972: 17).

Another contribution of existentialist philosophy is to be found in its treatment of a theme that recurs in the writings of its practitioners the emotional life of a man. They claim that it is through the changing feelings, moods, or affects that appear in the human mind, that we are involved in our world and can learn some thing about it that are inaccessible to a merely objective beholder. From Kierkegaard to Heidegger and Sartre, the existentialists have provided brilliant analyses of such feeling states as anxiety, boredom, nausea, and have sought to show that these are not without their significance for philosophy. Besides they also write on many other themes. The problems of language, of history, of society and even the problem of being are taken up by the existentialist philosophers and thus a vast field of exploration and development open up. But wherever his inquiries may lead him, we shall find that the existentialist remains in proximity to the fundamental personal concerns of human beings.

For a deeper penetration into the subject it would be helpful to distinguish existentialism from some related types of Philosophy. The boundaries that separate existentialism from other types of philosophy are not always clear-cut, but in principle, distinctions can be made, and they have the effect of clarifying what is most characteristic in the existentialist stance. To begin with, we shall consider the relation of existentialism to empiricism. This is probably the most dominant philosophy of the modern time. Existentialism has flourished mainly on the continent of Europe, whereas empiricism has prevailed in the English-speaking countries. Both the philosophies stand against the speculative rationalism of earlier times. They distrust all attempts to construct philosophy 'a priori' and they are less interested in the attempt to build comprehensive system than in seeking such limited knowledge as can be securely based on accessible data.

However, at this point the resemblances end. The existentialist tends to turn inward for his data, whereas the moderate empiricists allow some weight to 'inner experience' but the radical empiricist tends to equate experience with sense-experience, so that his philosophical inquiry is turned outward on the world. Even man himself is to be known by empirical observation rather than from subjective experience. The difference between existentialism and empiricism is a difference between two modes of knowing. The existentialism stresses knowledge by participation and that of empiricist is by observation. The empiricists claim that the kind of knowledge that it seeks has an objectivity and universality which confers the validity to the knowledge which the more subjective assertions of existentialist fail to confer. On the other hand, the existentialists say that in the case of knowledge of man the objectification and abstraction of empiricists distort the living concrete reality. The findings of such empirical sciences as psychological and sociology are based on

observable data, whereas the existentialist proceeds along the lines of phenomenological analysis of the existence in which he participates. The existentialist is not even concerned with man as an empirical instance of existence but rather with existence as such in its basic structures.

Next, we come to Humanism, though humanism is hardly a philosophy in the strict sense. It is one of the persuasive attitudes of our time. Existentialism is humanism in the sense that it is very much concerned with human and personal values, and with the realization of authentic human existence. There is another sense of the term humanism. According to Roger Shinn, there are two types of humanism, 'open humanism' and 'closed humanism.' Open humanism refers simply to the pursuit of human values in the world and would for instance, apply to the humanism of Berdyaev. The second type of humanism implies that man is the sole creator of meaning and value in the world. "This is the kind of atheism that Sartre embraces and it is for this reason that he asserts that existentialism is an atheism, because man is abandoned to himself, to create and realise in his world such values as he can" (Roubiczek 1966 : 29).

No less than Sartre does, Heidegger stresses the responsibility of man in the face of an open future of possibility. But it is an open rather than a closed humanism that Heidegger advocates. "Human life is set in the wider context of being. Man does not create being, rather receives his existence from being and becomes responsible for being and to being" (Roubiczek 1966 : 29). Broadly, we can confer that existentialism is a humanism but it is not always or necessarily a closed humanism. When we take Idealism in consideration, we find that though, both existentialism and Idealism are philosophies of the subject rather than of the object, Idealism begins from man as thinking subject, the existentialist begins

from man's total being-in-the-world. The Idealist begins from ideas, whereas the existentialist claims that they begin with the things themselves. Despite its stress on subjectivity, existentialist does not follow the same path as Idealism. To exist is 'to be' and face the real world.

While studying the relationship of existentialism with pragmatism, we find that both are in protest against abstract intellectualism, both stress the relation of belief to action, both acknowledge the risk of faith, and both look for the confirmation or falsification of faith in terms of its fulfilment or diminution of our humanity. But in spite of the resemblances, there are profound differences between pragmatics and existentialists. The pragmatists criteria for truth are biological and utilitarian, and there is less importance of that inwardness that is a mark of existentialism. Furthermore, the pragmatist is usually an optimist, concerned with success in some limited undertaking and very little aware of that tragic and frustrating side of life as expressed in most existentialist writings. Berdeyev clearly indicates the difference between the two philosophies. Acknowledging the pragmatists stand that truth is a function of life and that this criterion is acceptable when we are dealing with technical and scientific problems. Berdeyev further says that truth is actually in opposition to pragmatism. A flourishing state of affairs, success, profit, interest, and all these things are marks rather of falsity than of truth. Truth is not serviceable or useful thing in this world, rather it is destructive and ruinous to the way of the world. There are some existentialist who come close to pragmatism but even in their close proximity the existentialist distinguish themselves by their interest in the intensity of life, even in its tragic intensity, rather than in its outward expansion and success.

Existentialists are usually against the established fields of thoughts such as in the fields of politics, theology, morals and literature. They rebel against the accepted authorities and the traditional canons. Even the Christian existentialists have seldom been orthodox. Soren Kierkegaard's career culminated in his bitter attack upon the ecclesiastical establishment in Denmark. The atheistic existentialists like - Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus have carried the revolt much further and therefore have all at one time or another been called nihilists. The question that can arise is that can existentialism be regarded as a kind of Nihilism, or does it lead to nihilism when one follows out its consequences to the end?

But very few people have ever claimed to be nihilists. Also nihilism is always relative to some affirmative position that is being explicitly rejected. Perhaps the very idea of thorough going nihilism is self-contradictory. Nevertheless, we can perceive a state of alienation against the existing order so extreme as to approach to nihilism. Usually nihilism is a temporary or transitional attitude, necessary in order to clear the ground but not the final destination. Therefore, the existentialists who do come close to nihilism recognize its temporary character and try to move through it. Nietzsche believed that the west had come into nihilistic period, and although deplored this fact he was usually been regarded as caught in this nihilism. Yet he was certainly looking for a way beyond nihilism. Sartre has looked towards the other side of despair, and Camus has acknowledged the need to search for reasons that lead beyond absurdity. Yet perhaps all of these men would say that after the total rejection of conventional beliefs and standards of values that new possibilities would arise and a transvaluation of values would take place.

Although existentialism in its established form is a phenomenon of modern time but its origin can be traced in the history of philosophy and even into man's pre-philosophical endeavor to attain to some self-understanding. Existential philosophy has revealed the attitude of mind and a way of thinking of man that are as old as human existence itself and that have manifested themselves in varying degrees throughout the history of human thought. Sometimes this preoccupation with these thoughts or themes which we recognise as existential, have been found prominent in certain phase of culture. Whereas sometimes men seem to have been relatively unconcern with these thoughts or themes but certainly existentialism does have a definite lineage.

Since long, the question of mythology and of its interpretation has exercised a fascination for many scholars. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries attempts were made to rationalize myths by eliminating their fanciful elements and trying to reach to some supposed straight forwardly intelligible happenings that had given rise to the stories. But such an approach could not produce satisfactory result. More promising have been the attempts to treat myths allegorically but even this approach was not without criticism. Then myth was to be treated etiological that is to say, almost as a kind of primitive science which accounted for the causal origins of natural events or human institutions. That there is something of the etiological strain cannot be denied but again it was not at all satisfactory theory. "The most recent theories about mythology have revealed that it is expression of truths about man's own life and thought in a symbolic manner" (Roubiczek 1966 : 35). Psychological accounts have drawn attention to the parallels between myths and dreams and have seen in them projections of man's inner desires and striving. Finally, the existentialist sees in mythology man's first groupings towards an identity; to tell a story of human origins, or to confess a self-understanding.

Among all the possible approaches, the existential interpretation of myth would seem to be of basic importance because question of finding an identity for him or of gaining self-understanding would seem to be inherent in man's very mode of existence. As such certain intellectual curiosity is native to human existence. Further back we go in human history, the stranger the existential motivation would be. Therefore, it is revealed that the basic characteristic of self questioning of the existential manner of philosophizing was already struggling for expression in the period when myth was the medium of expression of thought. Alongside philosophical investigations into the being of man, the work of poets, dramatists and novelists also reveal the basic existential insights as in the stories of Dostoevsky, Kafka, and Camus as in the philosophical analyses of Heidegger and Sartre. Even at a pre-philosophical and pre-critical stage of his mental development, man was already preoccupied with those problems that have come to constitute the major themes of existentialist philosophy- the mystery of existence, finitude and guilt, death and hope, freedom and meaning.

Then there came a period when people came out from the world of myth to a world of critical thoughts and radical questioning. During this period the existential thoughts which were latent in the myths became more explicit. Karl Jaspers gives a better description of the period with his conception of 'axial age.' According to him it was a turning point in human history when man became aware of being as a whole of himself and his limitations. It dates back around 500 BC, when extraordinary and worldwide stirring of human spirit was perceived. It was a time of great Hebrew prophets, from Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah down to the time of the prophet of the Exile. "Meanwhile the tremendous flowering of Greek culture was taking place: the world's first efforts in philosophizing ran the course from Thales, Heraclitus, and Parmenides through Socrates to Plato and Aristotle; the Greek dramatists and poets speculated on human destiny and commented on society and its laws;

political institutions were developed, the first steps were taken in both the natural and historical sciences; while alongside all this the skepticism and radical questioning of the sophists made its appearance” (Macquarrie 1972 : 38). Not only in the western world, but also in many other cultures, such a spiritual upsurge can be traced. This was also a time of confusion and Lao-Tse in China, the time of Zarathustra in Iran; the time of Upanishads and later of the Buddha in India. It was the end of the age of myth and the roots of Rationalism and Existentialism can be traced in the period. Atheism as well as higher religious, the study of nature and mans study of himself took a firm footing during this period. A study of the three major areas of the culture in the axial age reveals how the existential questions, the precursors of the philosophy of existence, were taking shape in this early period. These areas are the Hebrew religious thought in the time of the prophets, the classical Greek culture and Eastern religious philosophy.

The strongly existential character of the teaching of the Hebrew prophets has been expounded in the books as Martin Bubers’ ‘The Prophetic Faith.’ “A key notion in their teaching is Teshuvah, which according the Martin Buber is better understood as a ‘turning of the whole person’ than as ‘repentance” (Macquarrie 1972 : 39). Thus, it implies a revolution in human existence, a quest for a genuinely human existence. It implied an acknowledgement of guilt, an acceptance of responsibility, a quest for individual integrity and for social justice. The prophet inspires men to face the radically temporal and historical character of human existence. Turning, guilt, responsibility, the quest for individual integrity, the acknowledgement of the reality of time and history are the themes dealt with by the prophets and there are also the themes recognized as important by the existential philosopher.

When we turn to Greek culture, we are confronted with a totally different phenomenon. They present a rationalistic and intellectualistic attitude towards life and world.

Even though the Greek philosophy begins with the physicists like Thales and his successors and therefore it seems to have been focused outward upon the world rather than on the specific being of man, yet it is among the pre-socratic philosopher that Heidegger has found the authentic beginnings of the western philosophizing and especially the knowledge of the relation between being and knowing, or between being and thinking. “The connection of being and thinking was a Greek insight and it precisely this connection that the modern existentialist are seeking to re-establish” (Macquarrie 1972 : 42).

Socrates is of special importance in the genesis of the philosophy of existence for with him, attention was shifted from nature to man himself as a fulcrum of philosophical quest in the Greek Philosophy. Self questioning became the method and self-knowledge the destination of philosophy. Importance shifted from conventional belief about piety, courage, justice and the focus was centered on understanding life. It is seen that two contrasting trends of thoughts merge in Socrates. On one hand, he is a firm believer in Reason and a great champion of Rationality. On the other hand, as an advocate of pursuance of truth, he is the most existential of the rationalists. He maintained that rationality is an essential element in any truly human and personal existence, and from Socrates to Karl Jaspers it has been a healthy tradition of the existentialist to acknowledge the essence of reason. Beyond philosophy, in some other aspects of Greek culture also we find the presence of existential thoughts. As such in their mystery religions with their quest for situation and the great tragic dramas we perceive the collision between the being of man and the being of the cosmos. Thus, it can be said that Greece, the first great home of rationalism housed existential themes in the axial age. Traces of existential thoughts are also seen in the Asian philosophy and religion for instance similarities are clearly seen in the works of D.T. Suzuki, in his version of Zen Buddhism and the thoughts of existentialism. Some of the themes of existentialism

are those which the Eastern philosophy, especially Buddhism, has been concerned for two and a half millennia particularly the notions of 'being' and 'nothingness', and the phenomenon of anxiety to which the encounter with nothingness give rise. Thus it can be clearly seen that the great themes of existential philosophy were already finding expression in the axial age, which is the initial age of conscious reflective thinking that has influenced all the thinking that has taken place in diverse culture as the Hebrew, the Greek and the Buddhist.

From the Axial period when we move on to the age of Christianity and Middle age, we are made aware of the presence of existential concepts around. The teaching of Jesus Christ continued and intensified the topic and themes of the Hebrew prophets. Jesus Christ too, protested against the mechanical and legalistic features of the established cult and called for responsible and inward obedience. The existential character of the teachings of Jesus Christ is evident in the emphasis laid on the death-time as a time of decision. It is a time to turn away or repent, to move away from formalism or radical obedience in readiness for the approaching end. Jesus preached about rewards and punishments and he saw that the chief motive of obedience in man was to achieve one's authentic being.

Apart from the preaching's of Jesus Christ much is seen in the *New Testament* that is perhaps best interpreted as a way of understanding human existence and a way towards its fulfilment. The teachings of St. Pauls give an outstanding illustration of existential types of theology. But St. Pauls understanding of existence differs from that of Jesus Christ and is expressed in a very different language. His whole theology can be expressed in terms of two contrasted understandings of man, one representing the state of man prior to faith and the other the state subsequent to faith. Another sect of Hellenistic world known as Gnostics resembles Christianity closely and both offers ways of understanding man and

his destiny and promised redemption from the powers that diminish and distort the true life of man.

“Gnosticism stands much closer to modern existentialism than does *New Testament Christianity*” (Macquarrie 1972 : 45). To the Gnostic, the world was utterly alien and demonic and the contrast between men’s being and that of the world was represented in such a way that echoed the similar contrast to be found in some existentialist writers of modern time. To the second edition of the book *The Gnostic Religion*, Hans Jonas added an essay with the title ‘Gnosticism, existentialism and Nihilism,’ through which he tells that when he first entered into the study of Gnosticism, he found that the hermeneutic key to an understanding of its strange teaching was provided by the concept of existentialism. In turn he finds that contemporary existentialism gets a reciprocal contribution from Gnosticism. The basis for this affinity he cites, that is due to a kind of ‘cosmic nihilism’ which affected man in those early days of Christian era and affects him even today. “In both the period men have felt themselves lost and alone in a vast alien world. These two philosophies embody in a different but related ways, a possible response to the sense of not being at home in the world” (Macquarrie 1972: 46). It is with St. Augustine (354-430) that we recognise powerfully existential presentation of Christianity since St. Paul, and it is of such an enduring significance that even today existentialist Christian and non-Christian alike, acknowledge an affinity with the great North, African scholar.

According to St. Augustine, man may be seen or heard speaking, but his thought cannot be penetrated. There is a deep abyss in man which remains hidden even from him. Truth and understanding are to be found not so much in proportions as by exploring the depth of one’s own existence, by direct experience of life. Thus, it can be concluded that

St. Augustine's understanding of the self is precisely the modern existential insistence on the restlessness of the self, as always going out from itself. As Christian theology moved on into the Middle Ages it became again rationalistic, propositional and metaphysical. But the medieval; antecedents of existentialism are to be sought in some of the intellectual currents that began to flow in opposition to the prevailing rationalism. There was a rise of a new style of mysticism that turned to the depths of human life; Meister Eckhart (1260-1327) is one of the influential representatives of this mysticism. His influence was felt on German philosophy and right down to Heidegger. The notions of 'being' and 'nothing' are conspicuous in Meister Eckhart's thought, together with that of man as one who experiences the solitude of a wilderness.

“As we proceed into the age of reformation, renaissance and enlightenment we find the great reformers Martin Luther (1483-1546) as the one in whose teaching the typically existential themes emerges clearly” (Macquarrie 1972 : 49). In this way to restore Christianity, its purer form and the existential elements in the Christian tradition, especially in the writings of St. Paul and St. Augustine, made a special appeal to him. He made prophetic protests against sacerdotalism, legalism, ecclesiastical rigidity and the corruption of religion. Martin Luther pleaded for the freedom of the Christian man and for responsible individual existence within the Christian community. Faith, as Martin Luther found it, had become too much a matter of giving assent to dogmas and too little a personal or existential relation between man and God. A more somber element of existentialist thoughts in Luther were, a sense of human importance and guilt, together with the desire for salvation and alongside this went a distrust of reason.

With the advent of Renaissance science we were introduced to a new knowledge that was to affect man's understanding of himself. A nascent cosmology, constructed on the basis of the work of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler and Newton, revealed earth's displacement from the centre of the universe and man became aware of his apparent insignificance in the immeasurably vast expanse of space and time. The confidence that man experienced when he thought himself at the centre of the universe has been replaced by a terror before the silence of the infinite spaces. Man's faith in God's existence and his eternal destiny seemed to have lost its ground. Thus, man encounter the essentially ambiguous character of the universe and to the fact that man must make his most fundamental decisions in risk, without definite knowledge.

From Descartes onward, the mainstream of western Philosophy was rationalist and intellectual to that extent that even the truths of religion could be mathematically formulated. Then the reign of reason was unquestioned. Nevertheless, even in this period some voices were raised on behalf of a position that we would now a days recognize as existentialist. Johann Georg Homann (1730-88) was a remarkable person of the period who is also known to be a critic of Kant and his Rationalism and who later influenced Kierkegaard with his existential questions. Like Kierkegaard, Homann had to struggle with Christianity and the problem of faith in the age of reason. He rejected the idea that reason can construct a system of belief which will include the matters of faith. According to him Faith is a leap beyond reason. More relevant to faith than reason of a mathematical sort, is self-knowledge and knowledge is of a passionate nature. Without entering into further details about Homann, we can conclude that he seems strangely out of place in the neat rational world of the eighteenth century, but we can recognize in him the continuation of the existentialist protest soon to be continued more intensely through Kierkegaard.

Towards the end of eighteenth century we find a period of conflict between rationalism of the Enlightenment and the rising spirit of Romanticism. There is a bleak strain of relation between Romanticism and existentialism in the sense that both oppose the dry Intellectualism. The existentialists have been not only against Rationalism but also against Aestheticism and Sentimentalism. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55) is the first European Philosopher who is known as an Existentialist. He is also commonly regarded as the father of modern existentialism. In many of the existentialist philosophers, a close connection between the life and thought is found. A brief glimpse of the life of Soren Kierkegaard reveals that he had a stern religious upbringing and seems to have been haunted by a sense of family guilt. Then there was his unhappy love-affair, and above all an introspective and melancholic disposition. For such a person the notion of the individual or the exceptional man would be the major concern and subjectivity and intensity would be the yardstick of truth and Genuineness. Under such circumstances reality would be perceived in the intense moments of existence, especially moments of painful decision. Life as known in such moments cannot be reduced to a system of Ideas, for it has fundamental discontinuities that cannot be avoided without distortion of the reality. Like Hamann, Kierkegaard was mainly concerned with religious problem and how to become a true Christian. Doctrines and ceremonies of the conventional Church were what was called as Christianity of that period and we find Kierkegaard increasingly violent in his attacks on Christian institutions towards the end of his life.

“To Kierkegaard man was an existent, a “moment of Individuality” he refused to consider him a mere paragraph in a system” (Kern 1970 : 2). He believed that truth can be found only by individual existent and again it can never represent finality but must remain a persistent striving or becoming. Life can never be explained unless it is lived. Kierkegaard

had no immediate successor. His works were not much appreciated in the nineteenth century as it is done recently. Yet strains of thoughts were inspiring many contemporary writers. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) is regarded as a key figure in the rise of existentialism like Kierkegaard; Nietzsche was from a clerical family and was therefore from a religious background. He was so sensitive that he ended up in madness. Though Kierkegaard and Nietzsche had their similarities yet Nietzsche's existentialism issued in a different form Kierkegaard's preoccupation was with becoming a Christian, whereas Nietzsche wanted to get beyond it. Much has been talked about Nietzsche's concept of the 'death of God'. In one sense this concept liberates man and on the other hand the death of God brings us into the period of Nihilism. Man's self affirmation takes place therefore against the background of a Godless and absurd world, whose law is the law of eternal recurrence. As with Kierkegaard, Nietzsche's Philosophy also ends in paradox, a paradox in which, one may think, the philosopher himself was destroyed. On one hand this affirmation of life and on the other hand the belief in dogma of eternal recurrence and his personal failures and sufferings have given rise to a great mental anguish which for Nietzsche was difficult to sustain. But subsequent German existentialists broke out of the impasse in which Nietzsche found himself. Karl Jaspers (1883-1969) is one such a thinker. He began his career as a psychiatrist and soon became occupied with what he calls the 'limit situation of life.' These are those extreme situations where we come against a wall or a barrier or a limit. According to Karl Jaspers Nihilism is not the solution for in such situations there opens to us the reality of Transcendence. We find Jaspers voluminous works exploring the relations between the human existent and the world on the one side and between the existent and Transcendence on the other. Jaspers such thoughts have taken him to a philosophical faith that cannot be proved and is not objective knowledge.

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) seems to be heading towards Nihilism many a times in the pursuit of his philosophy but he successfully avoids the nihilist impasse. Among the formative influences in his thinking are the phenomenology of Husserl, an interest in the question of 'being' derived from Brentano, and a pre-occupation with language, which he attributes to the days spent in a Jesuit Seminary. Noteworthy too is his interest in the pre-Socratics. Heidegger's major work, *Being and Time*, dating from 1927, is by common consent the most impressive analysis of human existence to have come out of this whole movement in philosophy. The prominence of such themes as care, anxiety, guilt, finitude and above all death, in Heidegger's account might be taken as indication of a trend towards a kind of nihilism. "This impression might be further strengthened by his famous inaugural lecture given at Freiburg in 1929 on the theme, 'What is Metaphysics?' for in this lecture we learn that Metaphysics has to do with nothing" (Maquarrie 1972 : 57).

Along with these German philosophers, there has been a related movement, the lineage of the thinkers of which can be traced to such philosophers of life and action as Hermann Lotze (1817-81) and Rudolf Eucken (1846-1926). This philosophy, though not exactly existential but was quite similar in the sense that it was increasingly interested in the problem of interpersonal relations and because existentialists concentrates on individualism, this approach provides a needed corrective. This interpersonal approach has had many representatives such as Eberhard Grisebach and Ferdinand Ebner, but best known of all is the Jewish Philosopher Martin Buber (1878-1965). Unlike other existentialists, Buber has been more interested in men's relations with each other and rightly advocated that there cannot be an existent apart from his relation to other existents.

Existentialism was best in the hands of the French existentialists. The non-Christian existentialists has its roots in German existentialism, especially that of Heidegger. Its root

can also be traced in the French experience of the twentieth century which involved abstract philosophies, all-powerful totalitarian states, misuse of scientific inventions, Frances defeat in the war and the tension between communism and American democracy. Jean-Paul Sartre is the French existentialist who in some respect can be considered close to Nietzsche. He believed in a God-less world and where man has to bear the burden of this whole world on himself. He is responsible for the world and for himself. In a Godless world man himself has to take the place of God. But according to Nietzsche, Man's desire to be God is self-contradictory and self-frustrating.

Along with Sartre, Albert Camus (1913-60) needs to be mentioned, for he developed existentialism of the absurd and has been described as an 'anti-theist' rather than an atheist. According to him Sisyphus and ancient hero is the symbol of mankind. Sisyphus was condemned to spend his days by rolling a boulder to the top of the hill, always to find it escape from him and roll down to the bottom of the hill. We also get another French existentialist which is more personal and draws on a native French tradition. Mourice Blondel (1861-1949) is not usually considered an existentialist, but his philosophy has certainly prepared the way for a personalistic kind of existentialism. Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) is the best example of this group of existentialists against the pessimistic elements in Sartre and Camus, he offers a 'metaphysic of hope', based on the theistic conception of the universe.

While Germany and France were the countries where existentialism attained its full maturity, but traces of its development is also seen in many other countries. The Spaniard Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936) and the Russian Nikolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev (1874-1948) was widely known as a representative of existentialism. Apart from the field of

Philosophy, many literary men of repute can also be classed under existentialism. Writers like Dostoyevsky, Kafka, Eliot, Beckett and a host of other writers expound in their writing something like an existentialist point of view.

From the period of man's pre-philosophic attempts to attain to some self-understanding, existentialism has taken a steady and gradual growth until in the twentieth century when it has become one of the major forms of philosophy. The reason of its attaining full maturity in the present time and in the continent of Europe is mainly due to the insecurity felt by the modern man, due to the ambiguities of the world and his awareness of his pilgrim status in it. Thus the philosophy of existentialism is seen to flourish in those lands where the social structures have been turned upside down and all values transvalued.

So far we have seen the development of the philosophy of existentialism from its genesis to the present stage of its development. It seems as old as the existence of human being. In order to grasp the basis of this new system of thought we have to analyze the idea of existence. With the help of etymology, we understand "the word to 'exist' is to 'stand out' or to 'emerge.'" (Macquarrie 1972 : 62). It originated from the Latin word 'existere.' To exist was to emerge or stand out from the background as something really there. Philosophically, it can be stated that to exist is to stand out from nothing. Modern interpolation is a bit passive to say as 'laying around somewhere.' To say that anything exists means that we will find it somewhere in the world, if we search it harder and for longer duration. To 'exist' is to have a place and time in the real world.

To understand the word 'existence' in its correct perspective we have to analyse the meaning of the word 'essence.' To say, that anything 'exists' is simply to point to the fact 'that it is'. Existence is characterized by concreteness and particularity. For a clear

perception let us take an example of a golden idol kept on the table. That it exists and is a particular object in the whole world has to be accepted as it exists. It cannot be wish out or in of existence. Only its form can be altered and this concept of form which can be altered takes us from the concept of existence to essence. For a better perception we can say that existence of anything is 'that it is' whereas the essence of a thing is 'what it is.' The essence of any object is considered by those basic characteristics that make it one kind of object rather than another. For example, the essence of the Golden Idol would be described in terms of shape, colour, metallic lustre, composition, weight specific gravity etc. It becomes necessary to consider all the characteristics which goes to make it the particular golden idol. Thus we can infer that essence is characterized by abstractness and universality and also essence involved the operations of rational thought analysis, comparison and synthesis which are rejected by the concept of existence. Existence belongs to the realm of contingent and changeable, while reason looks for unchanging and universal essences.

Modern existentialism begins with Kierkegaard's advocating the concreteness of existence against what he took to be the essentialism of Hegel. Essence refers to the true nature of things, the humanness of man, the horseness of a horse. It can be considered in an abstract way. Existence is not the humanity of man, but the man John whom I know, or the particular horse which I possess and love. Now the existentialists claim that all preceding philosophy was too much concerned with essences, with ideas, with concepts and that it thus became too abstract. They want to start from existence and to keep to it, so that the real things are kept intact as they occur in our actual personal experience. There is no doubt that existentialist often go too far in their exclusive emphasis on existence; to achieve true understanding we obviously need both, essence and existence. "We shall not understand

man without understanding his humanity, but neither shall we understand humanity without paying attention to single men and to our own inner experience” (Roubiczek 1966:11). According to existentialist philosophy the word existence is used to the kind of being that belongs to man. “Trees and mountains factories and highways, perhaps God and angels all are, they have reality and being. But in existential terminology, they do not exist” (Macquarrie 1972:65). What then was existence? To understand this peculiarity let us see how some existentialists try to define.

Kierkegaard, the first of the modern existentialists is a writer for whom ‘existence’ does mean primarily the unique concrete being of the individual person. “The existent then is the contingent, the particular that which refuses to fit into some system constructed by rational thought” (Macquarrie 1972:65-66). Kierkegaard was against Hegelianism which tried to bring men and all things into an organic structure within which contradiction would be overcome. But to be in existence means to be aware of that which is discontinuous with a system and which remain paradoxical. An existent does not conform itself to a pattern laid down by rational thought. Man is an enigma where he joins in himself the temporal and the eternal, the finite and the infinite and thought will never make sense, if we combine the two sides of man’s being in a unitary whole. Existence is not an idea or an essence that can be intellectually manipulated. Indeed, man becomes something less than human, if he allows himself and his being to be absorbed into some organic scheme of being or some rational system of thought. “Man fulfils his being precisely by existing, by standing out as the unique individual that he is and stubbornly refusing to be absorbed into a system” (Macquarrie 1972:66).

As we move towards Heidegger, we find that he employs three fold terminologies for a clear understanding of the word existence. At first he talked about the traditional German word *Dasein* which meant existence of various kinds, for instance the existence of God. According to Heidegger *Dasein* is to be used to being exemplified in man. It is an ontological term and it is used to designate man in respect of his being. If this being is found anywhere else, than in humanity, then the term *Dasein* could be appropriately applied. For the traditional term *existential* Heidegger proposes the German expression *Vorhandenheit*. This may be translated 'presence-at-hand'. It implies the passive meaning of 'lying around'. It is something that one may come across in the world. The third term that Heidegger uses is *existenz*. It is a designation of being and can be applied solely to *Dasein*. He further says that 'essence' (wessen) of *Dasein* lies in its existence and that the 'essence' of *Dasein* is constituted not by the properties, but the possible way of being.

In Sartre's conception of existence, we find that Sartre retains more of its traditional sense than it does in Heidegger, "Concrete individual being here and now is the definition of Sartre's 'existence' offered by Hazel Barnes" (Macquarrie 1972: 67). Like Heidegger he also uses his own terms to clarify the distinctions of the terminology from the traditional sense. He gives us the term 'pour-soi' meaning 'for-itself', that corresponds to the *Dasein* of Heidegger and to *Existenz*. With the sense of Negation and freedom we get attached with the term 'pour-soi' of Sartre. According to him the *pour-soi* comes into being or exists or emerges by separating itself from the *en-soi* meaning 'in-itself'. The 'en-soi' has its being in itself and this is essential being. The '*pour-soi*' is free to choose its essence and paradoxically its freedom is also its lack of being. Like Kierkegaard, Sartre too expresses an inner contraction in existence. It can be expressed as freedom and being, stand in inverse ratio to each other.

Karl Jaspers has his own way of expressing 'existence'. He used existence simply to refer to the fact that we find ourselves in the world. It is an unreflected or unquestioned experience of our life in the world. To avoid confusion concerning existence Jaspers has given three points: (i) Existenz is not a kind of being, it is potential being (ii) Existenz is freedom only as a gift of transcendence. (iii) Finally, Existenz is the ever-individual self, irreplaceable and never interchangeable (Macquarrie 1973 : 68).

So far we tried to understand existentialism through the study of some of the existential philosophers who are diverse and particular in their language and thoughts, sometimes so antagonistic to each other that it is difficult to find anything common in them. To class them under existentialism we have to start with the starting question of what is existentialism? While trying to define it, we find that there is not one philosophy called existentialism but several philosophies with profound difference. There is no set of principles common to them all. They do not share a well-defined method. Yet, they belong together, children of one and the same age, faced with the same challenge to which they have to respond. Though their answers are not identical but they move in parallel directions and even if they are opposed to each other, they are internally related. Though it is difficult to define existentialism but it certainly points to a certain state of mind or to a specific approach of attitudes, to a spiritual movement of the present circumstances and to a specific mode of thought.

Existentialism in all its form is the philosophy of crisis. Human institutions such as the state, the Government, civil service, the party, the factory have become impersonal and people try in vain to master enormous strength. This gives rise to the growing sense of frustration, anxiety and despair. But behind all these is man's estrangement from nature and

chiefly God, which is actually the source of all these troubles. This estrangement gives rise to Alienation and Alienation ends in Absurdity. Absurdity is at all times a possibility for human beings though not for animals. It is not the universe that is absurd but man, who projects his absurdity into the world. It is the price man has to pay for the inexhaustibility and indefiniteness of his nature. It indicates that a saturated point has been reached where the directions has to be changed.

The first function of existentialism is to bring about a revaluation of problems and to liberate us from certain traditional problems whether they are material or purely formal and technical. The existentialists maintain that the philosophers of the past overlooked the most pressing problems of man and of human existence. "What alone matters are problems that are lived, directly experienced, suffered and intimately connected with our being, problems in which we are engaged, which form part of ourselves, which we cannot escape" (Heinemann 1953:169).

To understand Existentialism in simple words, we can say that Existentialism, regardless of virtues and vices, began as a reaction to over emphasis on abstract-Metaphysical thinking. Its main concern is the uniqueness and the primary of 'Existence'. In other words, we can say that it deals with the inner, immediate experience of the self. This its basic urge is to exist and to be recognized as an individual. There is no knowledge, apart from the subject. 'Truth' according to the existentialist is revealed to the subject as he experiences his life. Since the existentialist emphasizes on the intimate and concrete aspects of man's experiences, they do not rely on any definitions but on the descriptions of a person or any event happening in his life. In order to express they make use of literary and other artistic forms of expression, because through these medium they can portray individual's feelings, moods and other possibilities.

Since subjectivity and personal experiences are fields of concern for the existentialists, they have to stress on 'freedom' and 'personal responsibility' as a yardstick. 'Freedom' is a reality to be experienced. Freedom can be interpreted as a working out of the demands of one's inner nature. It can also be said as expressing one's genuine or authentic self. It can be understood as facing choices, making decisions and accepting responsibility for the decisions that are made. As the existentialists deal with man's subjectivity, so they naturally do not fail to notice man's weaknesses, insecurity, limitation anxiety, despair, dread, fear, guilt alienation, human finitude and death, which cannot be dealt with any abstract sciences.

The feeling of anxiety gives birth to a sense of meaninglessness and meaninglessness brings the sense of absurdity. Thus, there develops a crisis and this crisis forces one to take a 'leap' into authentic existence. This sense of authenticity may come through faith in God or through 'a resolve' which is an act of one's will. Understanding Sartre we find that as long as we are conscious of what we are we can never entirely be what we are. We can never be completely ourselves because of our self awareness. We play at being ourselves which is a dishonest or 'inauthentic' way of dealing with the problem.

We can never escape from our self-awareness and 'Freedom' is related with this inescapable self-awareness. Self-awareness determines our choice also. Because we are always aware of ourselves and able to understand what is not the case, we can apply our freedom to stand back from the situation, evaluate it and then take a decision or make a choice. Human beings are unique in themselves. We can all remember sometimes when we know we are free but shun to make a choice. We want others to take decisions for us. It is because we are afraid of our freedom and of the responsibility which comes with it. Therefore, we make every effort to avoid it and get the feeling of relief by depriving ourselves from our

freedom. We sometimes forget that it is only human being who can make choices. It is because of this, that their 'existence' precedes their 'essence.' They are themselves before they are Christian, Cowards, politicians, socialists etc. We 'are' and we are 'free' before anything else. It is then that we are free to take on the qualities of a particular mode of being' we have chosen to adopt.

Modern life is a picture of egotistical self visions which is the prime reason of conflict in all human relationships. According to Sartre and Hegel, when two people are together, each try to force the other to look at him or her in the way that they would like to be seen. In other words, all of us have our own image about ourselves which we want other people to endorse. This forces us to see them first as a possible supporters of the view that we have about ourselves, which they in turn are trying to do the same to us. Thus, the result is a conflict in relationship as we try to control each others thought.

To 'exist' we have to face some fundamental truth, about 'the human condition' and decide what our response is going to be. Soren Kierkegaard's central theme is existence. It is not the existence of objects or ideas, but of human beings. He was occupied with the fact that we all exist, but in time, and not for very long. It is seen that we can stroll through life avoiding any thoughts about problem, yet survive perfectly well by copying what everyone else does. Under such circumstance we don't exist because there is no subjective concern. Sometimes we experiences a strange inexplicable discomfort, some kind of discontent, inspite of a very successful life in the eyes of other. Thus, we lead life at two levels. Sometimes we live a life of a detached observer, trapped in a world of abstractions and systems. Under such conditions the thought of what is to be a human being, arises. The realization is that we all are individual and all individuals are free. We all constantly have to make choices about what to do with our lives. This choice in course of time will accumulate and ultimately

determine the sort of human being we eventually become. Soren Kierkegaard was initially overwhelmed by the scope of Hegelian Philosophy but was soon disillusioned, for it was a world described from outside and had little to say about – How to live. According to Hegelian concept and individual is not a real person unless related to other person. An individual must be subordinated to the family unit, the family to society and society to the state. Thus, this modern age is an age where everybody has an opinion but not their own, based on opinions that are anonymous and derivatives. A new phenomenon of ‘crowd’ or ‘the public’ is born. ‘The public’ is a mass of spectators who are unable to distinguish between importance and superficial. They have no true opinions of their own and generally make second-hand, risk-free pronouncements about ideas and lives of others. Kierkegaard despised the exclusive definition of truth. According to him, if truth is to be true for all, as it is held by traditional philosophy, then it is no more than a consensus of generalized opinion.

Existentialism is based on the fact that truth of human conditions reveals itself in moments of anguish and terror. The state of anxiety, terror and loneliness are natural to man and anyone who seeks to escape from them is in ‘inauthentic’ state. “The choice of a way of life can be made only by the person who has to live it-which is what Kierkegaard means by his puzzling and famous phrase, ‘Truth is Subjectivity’ (Robinson 2003 : 71). Thus, each individual must make decisions based on personal desires, hopes, fears and longings. One’s existence is determined by the living, striving, suffering self and not by any ideology or ego from outside. In order to facilitate the analysis of the novels, I have tried to single out some themes that can serve valuable basis of my analysis as a yardstick of the vast theory of existentialism.

- i) Importance of the Individual : What does it mean to be existing as a human being?
This is a leading question that comes under this theme. The tenets under this head is that – there is a pressing question concerning what is right and wrong in a world of moral chaos. There is also daunting issue of what constitutes a meaningful way of life in a world in which all talk of purposes has become obscure. The imperative to “be an individual!” takes on great importance as a way of orienting human life.
- ii) Importance of Choice : This tenet is clearly visible in the existential thinkers like Soren Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. In order to understand this tenet we have the following factors in mind that –
 - We are constituted by our decisions.
 - We cannot appeal systems of law or convention or tradition as decisively furnishing instruction for life choices; every choice has to be personally appropriated.
 - Being human sometimes involves decision that transcends the realm of moral and conventional concerns.
- iii) Anxiety regarding Life, Death, Contingencies and Extreme Situation: Being human is finding oneself “Thrown” into a world with no clear logical, ontological or moral structure. We hide from death, from uncertainty, from our self, from being itself with enormous creativity but with self-destructive consequences. Extreme situation make our hiding impossible and so they often become the focus of philosophical and literary reflection on human anxiety.
- iv) Meaning and Absurdity : The theme of absurdity is largely dealt by the famous existentialist thinker Jean Paul Sartre. The important thing for Sartre is not so much

the distinction between essence and existence but the absence of God. For Sartre the absence of God has a larger significance than the metaphysics of Creation. Without God there is no purpose, no value and no meaning in the world. A world without purpose, value or meaning is literally senseless, worthless, meaningless, empty and hopeless. It is what the Existentialist call 'Absurd'.

- v) Authenticity : Jean Paul Sartre's opposition to bad-faith or self-deception is an example of what is meant by authenticity. Heidegger's expatiation of authentic existence is one of the most complete. We need to face up to our situation rather than making things worse with self-deceptive approaches to religion, metaphysics, morality or science. We need to make decisions courageously, accepting our own limitation and realizing that we cannot achieve certainty in the making of such decisions. We need to be honest with ourselves and each other. We must not settle for less than actual anxiety due to us.
- vi) Social Criticism : Many existentialist deconstructed social conventions and practices. Existentialist literature often carried out unmasking of convention and social patterns with enormous effect as in the novels of Camus.
- vii) Importance of Personal Relation : For Existentialists like Buber it is imperative to be an individual – in – community. Creating meaning if analyzed carefully, actually means the creating and discovering relation between people. Religious Existentialist see the God-human relation as the ground of all relations between human beings.
- viii) Atheism and Religion : It is one of the greatest disagreements among existentialists, testifying perhaps to the inescapable vagueness of the field of life within which human beings must make decisions that create meaning.

It has been said that the world is too small for more than one free reality. This implies that either God is free or human beings are, but not both. To say that both God and human beings are free leads to intolerable problems of theodicy and contradictions, while to deny freedom to both, leads to an intolerably meaningless and actually impossible world. Calvin and Spinoza said human beings are determined, in order to do justice to the freedom of God. Sartre said human beings are free, so there can be no God. It is the conviction of human freedom that drives the Atheist Existentialist's rejection of the reality of God.

- ix) Religion : Religion is a deeply contested point within existentialism. Some existentialist reject the reality of God, other existentialist have not problem with God and see an appropriate tension between divine and human freedom. However, all existentialist tends to be suspicious of religion as such.

Existentialists divide roughly between writers and philosopher. Albert Camus is the most famous existentialist writer. The philosophical existentialists divide roughly between the atheistic and the religious. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) is often considered to be the father of them all, but Friedrich Nietzsche is a crucial figure at the origin of the developing line of Atheistic Existentialism. Religious existentialists included both Jews such as Martin Buber (1878-1965) and Christian such as Paul Tillich (1886-1965). Other religious existentialist includes Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel and Karl Rahner. The atheistic existentialist includes Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), though he denied that he was an existentialist, and Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980).

As vastness and vagueness are the chief characteristics of existentialism, I would like to concentrate my study picking up some tenets of the system of thought. Studying

some fundamental aspects of the system of thought, I am made aware that science, being impersonal, cannot help us when we want to deal with personal experience. A scientist himself may be passionately interested in what he is doing, but his theories are not accepted, if they do not stand the test of impersonal observation and experiment. His personal feelings are excluded. This method is based on determinism which means, establishing a necessary relationship between cause and effect. But in our personal lives, it is impossible to accept determinism to do justice to our experiences on this basis alone, for we cannot deny freedom of will, our freedom of choice, decision and action to feel responsible for our action is one of our basic experiences and existentialism instructs us to accept experiences as evidence. Unless we admit that we are able to choose freely between good and bad or right or wrong, we are not responsible for our action and are thus unable to understand what we feel. Feeling described in an impersonal way cannot be understood. External thinking will not enable us to make reliable value-judgement, or even to grasp values at all. It cannot deal with the ultimate truth which is the basis of our convictions.

Without freedom of choice and decision we are not responsible for our actions and the whole concept of goodness and morality breaks down..... For example, if we are not responsible, any act of crime is simply a fact, to be prevented when harmful to society and to be used when beneficial to it, but not to be judged as a crime or sin. All totalitarian states act upon this principle and it has become, in our present age, the basis of reality, of terrifying action (Roubiczek 1966 : 6).

Transcendental reality too, remains inaccessible by the application of external thinking alone. For example, we do not know why there is a murder, why there are revolutions, why there is a constant source of wrath or why does man exist. We do not know some fundamental questions like why there is matter, the stars, the earth or why we are born and must die, can die any moment and that's why death is certain. Albert Camus the prominent existentialist puts it: "Why are we here all of us, condemned to death?" (Roubiczek 1966:6). These

questions haunt us as personal experiences and lead us towards some wider spiritual reality. We may never be able to answer them. We may believe that everything is meaningless - but the quest for meaning remains an essential part of our apparently meaningless life. But many of these personal experiences are explained in the works of art, in literature, wisdom and religion. Thus, we can conclude that the reason is not absolute and that we should find a way of thinking which could help us to deal with these real experiences.

Another important concept of existential analysis is the concept of 'Freedom'. The mystery of birth reveals that we are unable to choose our existence, it is forced upon us. "According to Sartre, we choose ourselves, not in our being, but in our manner of being" (Roubiczek 1966: 120). He also says that it is same with our past. It seems immutably fixed but can be transformed by the attitude adopted towards it. Kierkegaard too has a similar attitude towards external characteristics, such as social distinctions, which have to be made meaningful by interpretation. He means to say that by repeating our past constantly, we can transform it in the light of later experiences and therefore bring out increasing meaning constantly. Even in this may the desire to reach to an ultimate reality is far from reach. What we understand by studying Sartre is that man is not merely developing his personalities by understanding different aspects of human nature, but is creating himself entirely and arbitrarily. It is evident that our power of choice with regard to our essence is greater than with regard to our existence. "We are capable to develop, strengthen and purify the humanity within us, or degrade and destroy it, but by no effort can we become some other things than our nature" (Roubiczek 1966: 121).

The absolute existentialists who are against determinism seek to establish man's absolute freedom, asserting that he can create himself. In other words man is his own master.

There is no doubt that human freedom is real and in order to understand man, we have to start from freedom. On the other hand it would be a great mistake to overlook its limitations, for it is not only limited by external conditions, but even more by the essence of human existence. The concept of freedom should be introduced into the sphere of responsibility, morality, fundamental values and standards, trust and love. It should never be treated as a license. “We shall remain free, if only we choose actions which gives substance to freedom and increase it, if we merely act as we like, we may succumb to unnoticed compulsions from within or without and thus bury our freedom again” (Roubiczek 1964 : 122). Unlimited and undefined freedom is meaningless. Freedom as it comes before us is in two forms, ‘freedom of choice’ and ‘choice of freedom’. If we are free we must be free to choose, but while making a choice we can either make a choice that would set us free or a wrong choice which would enslave us again. For our analysis we would define freedom as acting entirely by our own free will but we must act in accordance with our true nature, so that it can find its full expression.

Another aspect of existentialism that would guide us in our analysis is the fact that the term ‘existence’ includes the historical situation in which we find ourselves. “For Heidegger, our being is a ‘being thrown into an historical situation’ which we cannot escape” (Roubiczek 1966 : 123). In order to safeguard our freedom we have to accept this situation by our own free will. Since we cannot alter it, we have to incorporate it in our existence, or we shall master our energy or even life in order to struggle against the things we cannot change. On the other hand, we should constantly struggle against the external pressure, which we can change, for otherwise we shall give in too easily to every compulsion, which would distort our characters.

Though it is modest endeavour to classify them but the classification make less sense the better we know them, because it is hard to disentangle theism and atheism in the context of existential reflection on human life.

A detailed study of the works of William Golding and Doris Lessing reveal a strong sense of individuality, importance of choice, authenticity, social criticism and renovation of faith and hope for mankind. In the works of Doris Lessing we often find that her literature carried out unmasking of convention and social patterns with enormous effect.

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CHAPTER-III

EXISTENTIALISM IN WILLIAM GOLDING'S - *LORD OF THE FLIES*, *PINCHER MARTIN*, *FREE FALL* AND *THE PAPER MEN*

William Golding's novels present before the readers a moral theatre in which the tragic drama of man's insatiable desire to create meaning in the face of chaos created by him, is enacted. The power that science and technology has given him had made him assume a pseudo divine autonomy. In his effort to understand mankind and its essential illness, he hits upon the moral pulse of his age and tries to convey the eternal truth, 'Turn to God there is light, turn away from Him, there is Darkness.'

William Golding through his novels discovered that the world is inexplicable and therefore, cannot be wholly described in words. He has achieved the distinction of being both a fabulist and a realist. He is excellent in the complex blending of seemingly irreconcilable opposites like spirit and flesh, good and evil, pleasure and pain, joy and grief in his novels. His pre-occupation with human tragedy draws him nearer the great Greek writers like Euripides and Aeschylus. His thematic concerns are with man's alienation, free will, guilt, primacy and universality of evil, the recognition of the 'great power of blackness,' inner depravity, and original sin, which reveals the secret of natural chaos of existence.

William Golding belonged to the generation which had its roots in the post war period, which is a period of disillusionment and disenchantment. The atomic bomb explosion of Hiroshima and Nagasaki decided the end of the war but it gave rise to another war, a war within the mind of people like William Golding. The vileness and the gruesomeness that went on in totalitarian state were unbearable for him. He was horrified to find that what was

gruesome was actually done very skilfully and coldly by the educated men, men who have a rich tradition and civilization behind them. “Man’s true nature was revealed before him and out of this grew his conviction that man was a fallen being gripped by ‘original sin’” (Iyer 2006 : Preface). It appeared as if the war revealed the true nature of man. Golding was opposed to the behaviorist assumption that human problems are related to the environment. This war has convinced him that the ills of human beings lie in the ‘Will’ of man. He was disturbed to realise that man is unable to understand and control this “will” which ultimately results in disaster for the entire humanity. Therefore, Golding concentrates on the disastrous events of war which leads to disintegration of human entity and disruption of the moral fabric of life. According to him, humanity was suffering from a terrible disease and through his writings, he was able to examine and analyse the problems which would help him to bring awareness in the minds of the people and help in making this universe a paradise, which man seems to have lost. William Golding in depicting the deep anguish of his age, seems to be particularly concerned about the problem of evil in human existence. In his novels he becomes obsessed with the issues of man’s moral freedom, his fall and its consequences. His quest is to look at what is permanent in man and to study him in relation to his cosmic situation. He believes that evil, in the form of darkness, emanates from man himself and this darkness that inhabits the core of man’s being controls his character and becomes the central organizing principle. Taking the form of egoism, it leads on to hatred, pride, immorality and atheism, which in their turn, brings ruin to the individual. This darkness has taken modern man far away from his being. Golding seeks to reveal the contemporary evils challenging the soul of man.

Firstly, the upsurge of violence, terrorism, war mania that has unleashed the beast in man to stalk innocent prey. Next, the evil of sexual perversions, man’s libido liberated from shame, guilt and fear. Thirdly, the predominant

disease of modern society class conflict or the evils of social stratifications that oppress man's sense of equality and joy. Finally, religion a personal matter between man and his maker, perverted in the twentieth century by fanaticism, nihilism and various evil practices (Kulkarni. 2003 : 3).

With consideration of the system of thought, in the theory of existentialism, I shall begin the analysis of the novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. As the story goes, *Lord of the Flies*, is a story of a group of English school boys left by an accident of the Third World War, on an Edenic Island, beyond the reach of adult supervision. Their first impulse is to form a government, a democratic organization which will be the instrument for keeping a rescue fire going, building shelters, doing the little bit of other work that must be done. But original sin takes over. The boys begin to feel an evil presence on the island beyond themselves. The beast whom they fear, finds an objective representation in the dead flyer, who parachutes in among them, but as the pig's head, the Lord of the Flies, tells Simon, the beast is human nature. "One by one the boys revert to their native savagery and kill Simon, the Christ, and Piggy, the rationalist" (Golding 1963 : 660-661).

The novel, *Lord of the Flies* is a fusion of two fictional modes; the realistic and the imaginative. The novel can be classed as an Allegory or a Parable or a Fable by considering the imaginative strength of it. But it transcends the realm of realists when it deals with the fundamental questions about the stability of the human society when placed against the odd and adverse circumstances. In other words, the novel portrays a debate between reason and instinct. The problems arise from within the fabric of the society and they are embedded in the complexities of society. The questions that arise are - will the society be able to withstand the threat of disintegration? Will a rational code of ethics and human behaviour survive against the brute force? Can civilization be created by intelligence and rational thinking only, or is it to be created by love, affection and moral behaviour?

These are some of the fundamental questions that the novel raises. William Golding in this novel suggests that despite all the progress made by man till today, man has made very little moral progress. In fact, despite all the present development, man himself could not evolve psychologically or spiritually.

As the theory of Existentialism goes, we find its application from the very beginning of the novel. According to this theory, being human is finding oneself 'Thrown' into a world with no clear logical, ontological or moral structure. We hide from death, from uncertainty, from our self, from being itself with enormous creativity, but with self-destructive consequences, extreme situation makes our hiding impossible and so they become the focus of philosophical and literary reflection on human anxiety. Similarly, when the novel begins, we find the group of school boys 'thrown' in an Edenic island, with no clear logical or moral structure. Ralph finds himself alone on the island. "All around him the long scar smashed into the jungle was a bath of heat" (Golding 1954 : 1).

As he began to pick his way towards the lagoon, enjoying the nature with a child's eye, he hears a voice calling him. We find him called thrice before the boy showed himself out of the thick undergrowth which caught and scratched his plumpy knees. He was Piggy, slightly shorter than Ralph but very fat. Thus, they find themselves independent, alone, with "No grown-ups!" (Golding 1954 : 2) into a new environment. Eventually we find a score of other boys joining them "A close reading of the novel will convey ideas of evil inherent in man, of savagery of the adoption of reason as opposed to passion and instinct and also a world full of common sense and goodness" (Guha 2005 : 78).

Subjectivity as Individuality is one of the primary requirements of existential analysis. Here we find all the major characters such as Ralph, Piggy, Jack, Simon and

Roger being created with their unique individual traits. Ralph is steady-minded and a leader who advocated Democracy. Piggy is intelligent and a rationalist, Simon stands for wisdom and vision, while Jack a follower of instinct and a leader with totalitarian attitude. His heart is the heart of darkness. He seemed to be cruel and without mercy. There is a constant feeling of Anxiety of life, Death and Fear. A dominant fear and a presence of the unknown continue to haunt the novel, giving it a mysterious sensation. In the chapter “Beast from water,” ‘little un’ expresses his fear of the beast and the remaining children get consumed by it.

“I was asleep when the twisty things were fighting and when they went away, I was awake, and I saw something big and horrid moving in the trees.” (Golding 1954 : 92). We find Piggy trying to pacify the children with his scientific approach towards the incident, but all in vain. Ralph too, with maturity tries to remove the deep-lurking fear in the minds of the children. Still, fear infects all the little children which heightens the sense of mystery and suspense in the novel. In fact their very existence on the island is threatened by an overwhelming fear. The question that arises now is that whether the fear is an external expression of the children or it is ingrained in their being. This existential search culminates in the character of Simon when he mutters-‘maybe it’s only us.’ Simon intuitively understands that evil is within themselves. William Golding uses stark realities to show how evil is inherent in man. Thus he says in his essay “Fable.”

One of our faults is to believe that evil is somewhere else and inherent in another nation. My book was to say: You think that now the war is over and an evil thing destroyed, you are safe because you are naturally kind and decent. But I know why the thing rose in Germany. I know that it could happen in any country. It could happen here (*The Hot Gates* 1965: 89).

Religion is a deeply contested point within existentialism. Some existentialists reject the reality of God, other existentialists have no problem with God and see an appropriate tension

between divine and human freedom. William Golding's religion is the religion of humanity. He is deeply concerned about the moral malaise of modern man and deeply occupies himself to solve the riddle of the man, faced with the problem of pain, death, social and moral responsibility. He depicts his religious message in this novel *Lord of the Flies*, through the character of Simon. Golding believed that some people are saints and he calls Simon a saint. Simon's wisdom lies in his understanding that the beast is within us. Simon's character also projects the need for beautification and vision in a society devoid of morality. "The irony is that Simon is able to understand the inherence of evil in man at the expense of being unable to communicate the truth to the other" (Guha 2005 : 80). "*Lord of the Files* is an incisive indictment of contemporary man's savage brutality, a story of moral regression" (Kulkarni 2003: 145). When Golding confronts evil through his novels, he is both compassionate and honest. "It is nobler for man to confront the reality of the Beast than cheat himself out of the truth of its existence within himself" (Kulkarni 2003 : 146).

When we proceed with a detailed study of the novel *Lord of the Flies*, we find that the episodes are circumstantial. It appears that the author tries to hold back the conceptualizing or interpretative intelligence of the circumstances. It can be better understood when we find the two boys Piggy and Ralph discover the conch. It is Piggy, who is first excited by the shell and it remains only a curiosity. It is Ralph's consciousness which keeps the readers moving. He hardly listens to Piggy. His sentences are never taken for conclusion. About Ralph's 'daydream,' his intelligence and social memory are laid asleep, and his physical senses alone remain sharply aware. In other words, the 'civilizing' intelligence is kept aside while the actual conch in its strangeness and beauty is made real to the senses. In the second half of the scene we find Piggy inventing the idea of a meeting which gives the shell a social purpose; but again, it is Ralph who captures the attention of the readers as his

interest was only in finding out how to blow it. Then again we find both the boys in unison, plays with the shell primarily as a physical object. For example, a farting noise fills them with equal delight. At this level their imagination is purely physical. What seizes them precisely is the sound of the shell. The scene is made real to us by the brilliant description of salt water, brightly coloured fish, green reeds, the shell's own strange cream and raised spiral, an art other than human. For Golding, physical realities come first and other meanings find their expression through them.

This is an instance of immediate physical experience. In the second half of the scene we find Piggy trying to grapple the essential meaning, or rather giving an idea of a social purpose to the shell. But again, it is more interesting to find Ralph's lone interest in finding out how to blow the shell. The glimpses of the existential behavior of the characters are strewn throughout the novel. Piggy is an overweight, asthmatic boy, who cannot see without eyeglasses. He is a wise counselor and is concerned with locating any other survivors and making a concerted effort to organize them until they are rescued. Unlike Piggy, Ralph is a dreamer rather than an active doer of deeds. But he is a likeable boy. He seldom sees the significance of things until someone points it out to him. Under pressure to make a decision, he seems to be unable to think out the problem and then make a wrong decision. According to William Golding, the Evil germinates in the mind of a human being or in the human consciousness. In *Lord of the Flies* we find that evil exists, but not on the external emblem in the form of a beast, but in themselves. About the conch shell also, a careful observation reveals that the shell is a unique physical existence whose being is its meaning. Yet, its symbolic meaning depends on the state of the children's mind. The conch becomes the symbol of authority in the hand of Ralph, at the suggestion of Piggy. He uses the shell to subdue and control the animal spirit of the boys. On the other hand, once power becomes

more real to Jack than the rules, the conch appears meaningless. Thus, the conch shell reveals the evil of the human breath that resounds through it. The meaning is in the boys and not the shell. The island is the campus, which gives the liberty to the boys to explore the world and themselves. A disaster, an atomic explosion and an evacuation by air via Gibraltar and Addis Ababa has brought them together. Their aircraft has been attacked probably over the Sunda Sea, and the detachable passenger tube has been released to crash-land in the jungle of an island. They meet with a terrible storm which resulted in the ghastly sound of the wind, felling of trees and the tube with some children still in it, being dragged out of the sea, by wind and wave, while some scattered into the thickets. A detail description of the story is not given to the readers, various pieced descriptions are to be gathered from the conversation of the children to develop an idea of the situation. Thus, it shows that the author laid more stress on depiction of the life of the boys as they were lone beings, in a new island, without the interference of the adult world. After the exhaustion of the terrible night, a sleep rejuvenates the boys into a new life without any scar left on their consciousness. They become one with the unspoilt beauty of the island, the excitement of trees, rocks and beaches. While formulating the existential creed, Sartre claims that-

At least one is in whom existence precedes essence, a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept, and that this being is man, or, as Heidegger says, human reality. What is meant here by saying that existence precedes essence? It means that, first of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene and, only afterwards, defines himself... Not only is man what he conceives himself to be, but he is also only what he wills himself to be after this trust toward existence (Marino 2014 Intro. XIII).

This passage from Sartre makes it clear that, Golding gives us an existential beginning in *Lord of the Flies*. Thus, the boys are thrown into an alien situation, they turn up and appear on the scene and then begin defining themselves. They conceive themselves as being and

later become what they will. All the individual character depicted in the novel has a 'lighted center' and there is also the co-existence of a latent potential for evil or darkness. In fact, it appears that the individuals are stripped of the restraints of civilization and left on their own to act out their 'will.' This novel appears as a debate between reason and instinct, the odds and adverse circumstances. The author seems to wonder at certain core questions regarding the integrity of the society. He tries to delve into the latent primitive and uninhibited savagery of man's evil nature.

As the novel begins, the initial representation of Ralph is that of 'hope' and 'innocence,' but when the novel ends we find Ralph yields to fear, loneliness and despair. Though this novel is widely read as a moral novel, but Golding never makes a reference to Grace, or to Divinity, but only to the darkness of man's heart. He talks about evil, but he is silent about salvation. Thus, his religion is the religion of humanity. This novel projects human depravity which is not limited to the Christian doctrine of original sin. The individual traits of the major character makes all the characters so very different from each other and successfully projects the symbolic implication. Ralph, one of the major characters of the novel tries to establish and preserve a civilized and rational society through democratic means. He takes to the conch as his totem, making it the symbol of authority and reason. At the beginning of the novel, we find him overwhelmed by the beauty of the Edenic Island where he discovers the conch which, through Piggy's intelligence gives it the essence of authority. Ralph stands for common sense and with its application he enthusiastically makes an effort to build shelters and keep the fire going to reach civilization. Thus, we find that after the fall, Ralph slowly grows with the help of experience. Similarly, all the characters finding themselves alive in the Island, at the point of existence slowly grow with the help of the individual experience. Thus, one of the major requirements of the existential theory is served.

When we read the novel, it appears that the character of Jack is more powerful. It is the most intense, lively and vibrant character. Jack depends primarily on instinct, while Ralph on reason. Jack is materialistic and utilitarian in his basic attitude towards life. He stands for hunting, through which the writer tries to hint at the primary instinctive craze of human being for wealth, lust and power. Jack is so obsessed with pig-hunting that it drained away his energy and the power to think. Jack and Ralph both seek power with a difference in the nature of 'will.' Ralph projects rational will, while Jack displays irrational will. What the character of Jack reveals to us, is that of an innocent boy at the beginning of the novel, but with 'experiences' the darkness of the character is focused. The author tries to reveal the truth that evil is inherent in human nature and a retrogressive tendency is revealed in him with experience, Jack develops insights into his own evil natures. Jack's character is a powerful revelation of primitivistic tendencies latent in man.

The line from Chapter-I "'Come on,' said Jack presently, 'we're explorers'" (Golding 1954:23). makes us feel that Jack finding himself "Thrown" into a world not known to him, tries to search out its meaning himself. The word 'Explorer' gives us a point of time of his life which is the beginning, the middle and the end, all unknown to him. Existentialists are usually against the established pattern of thoughts and they rebel against the established canons of authority. Such an existential rebellious behavior is depicted in this novel through the character of Jack. When Ralph and Piggy engages themselves in developing rational norms for social behavior, the canons laid down are being questioned by Jack and the warring faction. As we are all constituted by our choices, it is found that Jack follows his instincts and move away from Ralph to create a separate faction with an obsession for hunting. Here we also find the deterrent issue of what constitutes a meaningful way of life for an individual in an absurd world. Jack appears to be one of the richest characters of existentialism.

Anxiety regarding life, death, contingencies and extreme situation is felt in the entire story. From the beginning, we find them searching ways individually to keep themselves alive. Ralph chooses the way of civilization-building shelters for the children and keeping the fire going as a signal to be rescued. Jack chooses hunting pigs for meat to keep themselves alive. 'Fear' sets its feet in the second chapter when a small boy about six years old cries out about the existence of 'Beastie' in the island. This 'Fear' and 'Anxiety' of something unknown, overrides the entire island. The Democratic assembly that Ralph and Piggy tries to establish turned into a complete disorderliness. Jack challenges Ralph's authority and rules, and the children are gripped in fear and mystery of the unknown. The concept of 'Fear' remains in the novel till the last chapter, with a slight change in its objective representation. Initially, we find the object of 'Fear' in the snakelike 'Beastie.' Finally, the fear takes its objective representation in Jack and his barbaric faction. William Golding beautifully explodes the concept of fear by giving an external representation of fear. The saintly character of Simon intuitively understands this concept of fear and explains that the evil is within themselves. Golding created this myth to explain to the world that evil is inherent in man. The three main characters of the novel, Ralph, Piggy and Jack understand fear in their own individual context. Ralph realizes the disintegration, but fails to understand the reason. Piggy feels that this fear has no real basis. Piggy tries to deal with it with a scientific analysis, which is vague like the adult world. He lacks the intuitive awareness of Simon. While Jack's attitude towards this fear is dismissive and he ignores it as a bad dream.

Religion in this novel is a moralistic study of good and evil and it is also revealed through this novel that irrespective of age, the human inclination for evil is limitless. William Golding suggests that man is responsible for his fault. He is responsible for his fallen state and his mismanagement of his affairs on the earth throughout history and this is a cause of

his certain doom. Golding is pre-occupied with apocalyptic themes, such as widespread death in war, personal tragedy, pride, monocentrism, ego, lust and then, the possibility of revival of faith. The attitude of Golding may be divided into two aspects, namely, 'Panoramic Apocalypses' as in the case of *Lord of the Flies*, and 'Personal Apocalypses' as in the case of *Pincher Martin*, *Free Fall* and *The Paper Men*.

Pincher Martin, published in 1954, presents the characteristic feature of sensuousness, poetry and the use of unconventional language. It also excels in ingenious stylistic devices. For example, a sentence reads. "Time went drop by drop" (Golding 1966:33). The analogy between time and drops of water has the effect of poetry. The words like 'snarl' and 'cleaver' are used to describe the nature of Pincher. Pincher is intelligent, but it is not tempered with virtues like compassion, honesty and goodwill. The narrative techniques applied by the author in its subtle design are, dream sequences and hallucinations which take the form of flashbacks in film trailers, vividly depicting the scenes of past life. William Golding's familiarity with the sea and his isolated childhood hallucinations, has been artistically transmitted into a contemporary Promethean fable, exposing the dark underside of civilized human nature. The protagonist is identified with the figures from literature like King Lear, Hamlet and Milton's Satan. A constant focus is maintained on the predicament of a lonely man on a rock in mid-Atlantic.

The narration of the novel begins from the point where Pincher Martin is blown off the bridge of the torpedoed destroyer into the waters of the Atlantic during the Second World War. He is the lone survivor in the tragic mishap and manages to stay afloat by inflating his life-belt. He kicks off his seaboot and eventually reaches a large barren rock. Here for six dreary days Martin struggles to survive and endure the forces of nature and to

attacks of conscience. He struggles heroically to maintain his sanity till the final dissolution of mind and body. He struggles to tame the barren rock with grit and determination to survive against the fury of cosmic nature. “He clings to life with heroic tenacity and defies physical annihilation” (Singh 1987 : 50).

But flashbacks about the pursuit of Martin’s life are mysteriously woven into this heroic narrative to convincingly establish his character, which is arrogant, profoundly greedy and who is capable of betraying love and friendship in order to nourish his own ego. The flashbacks reveal Pincher’s determination never to miss an opportunity and never to be the loser in the game, which is to consume or be consumed. He is a born stage actor who can enact any role with effortless ease and his reputations, in the dramatic company earns him the mask of greed which fits him perfectly. He takes the best part, the best seat, the most money, the best notice, the best woman.

From the beginning of the novel, we find the author creates, in sharp, circumstantial details, the conditions in which Martins extraordinary will-to-survive operates. The sea, the rock, the creatures that live on it, the weather, all are meticulously set down. In such a circumstance we find Pincher Martin fiercely clinging to his ego or life so tenaciously against all odds which forces us to turn our analysis towards existentialism. His personality is not reflected from any human being but only in relation to the hostile nature and to itself. As a lone survivor defending himself against nature, he invokes our admiration. His endurance his will, his ingenuity is all heroic. He is a man opposing adversity and refusing to be annihilated. This aspect of his personality forces us to identify him with Milton’s Satan.

But meticulously woven into his heroic narrative are of Martin’s past that establish him as an unscrupulous egoist who leave no stone unturned to nourish his ego. Thus, on one

hand, he is a Promethean survivor and on the other hand, these very qualities which give him a lofty stature, makes him morally repulsive. Thus, we are struck with a moral dilemma, for the qualities which we condemn become the means of his survival. The striking feature of Martin's character is his ability to display his self-assertion in his struggle for survival. When Martin looks down into the sea from his rock and sees a red lobster, he realizes that perhaps his whole effort to survive-rock and all - has been a subjective creation or an act of the will asserting itself against the necessity. The apparent reality of Pincher's survival begins to dissolve and with it his own surviving personality. Thus, we find that we hide from death, from uncertainty, from our self, from being itself with enormous creativity but with self-destructive consequences. Extreme situation makes our hiding impossible and so they often become the focus of philosophical reflection on human anxiety. Thus, it reflects existential reflection on life. Heidegger's concept of *authentic existence* stands appropriate to further analysis. It says that we need to confront our situation rather than making things worse, with self-deceptive approaches. We need to make a decision courageously, accepting our own limitation and realizing that we cannot achieve certainty in the making of such decision. We need to be honest with ourselves.

Pincher Martin is so tightly and intricately interwoven as to read like a difficult poem; one must attend to its symbols and images in order to understand its narrative action, and indeed there is little that one could call plot in the book (Page 1985 : 128).

As it is difficult to grasp the theme of the novel due to its symbolic form, Golding gives his own account of the time when the novel was dramatised on the BBC Third Program. According to him, Christopher Hadley Martin did not believe in love, God or anything else other than his own life. He did not believe in Purgatory and because he was made in the image of God he had the freedom of choice which he used to centre the world on himself.

The greed of life is the ruling force of his life and it compelled him to refuse the selfless act of dying. He continued to exist separately in a world composed of his own murderous nature while his physical body lies afloat in the Atlantic; his ravenous ego creates a rock for him to endure on. The memory of an aching tooth in parts him identity. He is not a concerned with his physical survival, but for his continuing identity in the face of the black lightning, the compassion of God which will thwart it.

Though the authors' version of his work *Pincher Martin* is not all that the author has to say, but it can certainly give a lead into the analysis. A slightly deeper peep into the novels reveals glimpses of Nietzsche, who disliked monkish virtues. "He was clear-sighted enough to see that if God is dead it is man who has killed Him. It also follows that if values are no longer conserved in the Divine Nature they have to depend on man alone" (Ree 1998 : 22). The chapter 13 (thirteen) reveals a visionary interview of Pincher with a mysterious figure in seaman's clothes, who is God. God asks, "What do you believe in?" and Pincher replies, "The thread of my life." It focuses on the trait of Individuality of Pincher and thus the importance of subjectivity of existentialism. Again, when he replies to the statement, so you survived, "That was luck." It echoes the characteristic of contingency, which is a vital yardstick to measure existentialism "I will not consider! I have created you and I can create my own heaven" (Golding 1956 : 196). This line echoes Nietzsche, who believed that values are no longer conserved in the Divine Nature; they have to depend on man alone.

According to Sartre, men are not merely developing their personalities by a growing understanding of the different aspects of their human nature, but are creating themselves, entirely and arbitrarily. Human freedom is real; but "we shall remain free only if

we choose actions which give substance to freedom and increase it. If we merely act as we like we may succumb to unnoticed compulsions from within and without and thus bury our freedom again” (Roubiczek 1966 : 114). Therefore, we find Pincher Martin uses the choice of freedom which enslaves him again. Existentialists have dealt in details about Despair. Sartre claims that despair is “the sickness unto Death.” According to Kierkegaard, ‘Despair’ is the disproportion in the relation of the self to itself. It is a disturbance in the process of becoming a self. It is a kind of self consumption, a specific illness of man, a spiritual being, arising from his attempt to separate himself from the power which created him. In other words, Despair arises from the fact that man neglects what is eternal in him and forgets his spiritual nature. “Whoever has no God has no self, and who has no self is in despair” (Heinemann 1953 : 37.)

“Oh help help! I am dying of exposures I am starving, dying of thirst.....” (Golding 1954:188). These lines prove his despair and utter hopelessness. The notion of alienation also helps us to go deeper in our analysis of the character. According to existentialists, alienation is estrangement from one’s own being. Till the end of the novel, we find him struggling to continue his identity and reject the compassion of God. Death is a recurring concept over the novel. Of all the existentialist philosophers, Heidegger is the one who has carried out the most detailed study of the existential meaning of death. His way of dealing with death is to shift attention from death as the once-for-all observable fact at the end of life, to the existent inward awareness that his being is a being-towards-death. Though the precise moment of clinical death is uncertain and lies somewhere in the future, death is already present as a most certain possibility. In the mood of anxiety, we become aware of living in the face of death. Our existence at any time may vanish into nothing. To become aware of death is to accept mortality which is again to become aware of a boundary of

existence. “There is a great difference in existential attitudes between the man who lives in the face of an end and the man who systematically excludes the thought of death, or seeks to do so” (Macquarrie 1972 : 197).

From the very beginning we can feel the authors intention through this novel to make the journey into a man’s mind. At the onset we get the feeling of the presence of two being. For example “But the man lay suspended behind the whole commotion, detached from his freaking body” (Golding 2005:8). As we read the novel we find that the physical description are related far-fetched with the real man. Thus, an atmosphere of absurdity is created: “They were not articulate, but they were there in a luminous way as a realisation” (Golding 2005:9). It is the concept of our self. It cannot be articulated but a kind of luminous presence is felt. Consciousness at various levels is proved by the line: Of course my lifebelt” (Golding 2005:9).

By describing the different parts of his body behaving differently, the writer emphasises that each part were independent and treated as separate entities. As in this line “His mouth was clever. It opened and shut for air and against the water. His body understood too.” (Golding 2005:10). Thus, we get a sense of fragmentation of a complete whole. The ‘self’ or ‘being’ of pincher remains as a distant observer and the various parts of his body behaves as individual entity. The fear of death and the feeling of ‘Angst’ is evident from the line- “He began to be frightened again- not with animals panic but with deep fear of death in isolation and long drawn out” (Golding 2005:10). ‘Deep fear of death in isolating’ proves the presence of existential anguish. The line like “He began to think in gulps as he swallowed the air”(Golding 2005:11) gives us a sense of contingency of life. The memories like chunks of perception from the whole body of eternity. The terror of blindness and the terror of isolation, all signify a feeling of dread or anguish. In desperation he cried for ‘Help’.

This novel is a clear example of existential thoughts because it is purely subjective. We find Pincher in a moment of crisis. He lies between the two extreme realities i.e. life and death and takes decision every moment as it is revealed to him. His strong sense of survival and his ego is reflected in every line. The feeling of despair is distinctly felt in the line “Nat! Nathaniel! For Christ’s Sake! Nathaniel! Help!” (Golding 2005: 13). This line in desperation proves his egoism “I won’t die. I can’t die. Not me - Precious” (Golding 2005 : 14). “He made swimming movements again without thought and as if to follow in the make of that brightness was an inevitable thing to do” (Golding 2005 : 18). This line gives us a sense of Pincher in his ‘existent’ status. He makes physical movements reacting to the surroundings, without thinking anything. There is the juxtaposition of finitude and Infinity as when he says ‘infinite drop of the soft cold stuff below.’ A mystical portrayal of two level of survival is projected. Thus, at the level of existence, life appears to be absurd. The consciousness of Pincher was flickering denoting the instability of human life. The words like ‘without comprehension,’ ‘formless mad’ give us an idea about lack of determinism. Again, the words like ‘communion,’ ‘apocalyptic,’ generates a feeling of infinity, whereas the word ‘inconstant’ bring us back to the physical life of contingency. In this novel, words are being used as bombardment giving us powerful associative images. Pincher is depicted as a fragmented ‘self.’ However, it is the consciousness of ‘an aching tooth.’ in which he finds himself collected and organized as a single being. This recognition of consciousness gives him his essence. It was the external cry of gulls which brought back his consciousness. When he reflects back the chunks of memory, it gives him back his perception of entire personality. From the mental picture that flashed in his mind he could make words to express his thoughts which did not cross the barrier of his teeth. These bits of memories gave him the picture of his parasitic self or ego and soon he becomes attached with it. “His struggle with the sea is

metaphorically and symbolically a struggle with his ego. And finally, his ego overtakes him and destroys him” (Guha 2005 : 108). Pincher Martin is an existential character in the sense that he is thrown into a situation unknown to him and he struggles with the strength of his will power and courage to defy the irrational forces of nature and survive in his own terms.

Golding’s tale is both that of a man’s epic struggle for existence and that of a man who is already dead – and who lives only through the last flickering of his will not to be destroyed. Like much of modern writing, it concerns man living at the outermost limit of endurance, “on a stage as circumscribed as that of a Beckett or a Pinter, in a situation as circumscribed as Sartre’s *No Exist*.” (Oldsey 1965 : 76)

Pincher is an intelligent individual but he does not associate his intelligence with the virtues like, honesty, compassion and goodwill. He uses his intelligence in selecting the pictures and revelation. The whole novel talks about the revelation of his mind. Often we also find in this novel the feeling that Pincher is trapped inside his body. The issue that is dealt with in this novel is ‘crisis’ and the spirit or ‘will’ of survival in such moments of crisis, which is brought out with the application of poetic devices. This passage-

The chill and the exhaustion spoke to him clearly. Give up, they said, lie still. Give up the thought of return, the thought of living. Break up, leave go. Those white bodies are without attraction or excitement, the faces, the words, happened to another man in another place. An hour on this rock is a lifetime. What have you to lose? There is nothing here but torture. Give up. Leave go (Golding 2005:45).

It depicts his inner debate on one hand to relieve himself from the torture and on the other hand his indomitable spirit to live by his ego. He is heroic in his endurance, will, his capacity to oppose adversity and defy annihilation. Thus, he is a man admirable for his spirit to live against all odds.

The lives like “Chris Christopher! Christopher Hadley Martin –” (129) give us a sense of strong assertion of Individuality. From the beginning to chapter ten, we find Pincher Martin trying to gather himself, fighting the odds of nature and asserting his ego or individuality. However, within the heroic description of his struggle for survival, we also get the glimpses of his unscrupulous activity. Through the revelation of pieces of memory we come to know that his selfish concern of the parasitic self drove him to all kinds of depravity and betrayal. He injured not only his friend to win the motorcycle race, but seduced another man’s woman and with sadistic pleasure invites him to watch on the bed. Thus, in order to protect his ego he can betray his love and friendship. The remembrance of his crimes comes to him just before he is drowned. However, we do not find any repentance in his character, “Pincher’s fatal mistake is that he tries to seek an order through intelligence, will and rationality” (Guha 2005 : 112).

Often we find him emphasizing on words like ‘Intelligent,’ ‘will and identity.’ These are the words from the world of Rationalism or Determination. Thus we find him divorcing the virtues like love and compassion. Golding’s image of the parable of the Chinese Box is a stark example of the nourishment of his ego just as in the Chinese box a rare dish is produced after everything being devoured by a single Maggot, similarly, “Pincher is a huge successful Maggot, devouring the other maggots and crying, ‘I’ll live if I have to eat everything else in this bloody box!’” (Hymn 1976 : 129). These expression ‘I am what I always was,’ and ‘I am ! I am,’ reveals that Pincher struggle to assert that ‘he thinks, therefore he lives.’ Here we get an echo of the great philosopher Descartes who said that man proved his own existence from the inside out. “Starting with mind, he creates his own world in which all meaning and value is in self, and all outside self is meaningless mechanism, the material upon

which mind plays, and on which self feeds” (Hymns 1976 : 130). This it is a clear assertion of Pincher’s ego.

Due to his strong instinctive urge of survival, we find his character being drawn parallel to ‘Prometheus with a difference that Pincher’s heroism is a parody of it. ‘Prometheus’ stands for heroism with humanism and liberal qualities. Prometheus was a man-befriender and a god defier. He is a life-worshipping identity. Whereas Pincher’s heroism was only to nourish his self-creating egoism. Pincher’s extreme greed is the means by which he preserves his own personality. This was revealed to Pincher when he looked down into the sea from his rock and found a red lobster. Thus, he realized that his struggle for survival has been a subjective creation. It was an act of will asserting against necessity. He failed to realize that only boiled lobster’s are red in colour and that quano is insoluble. The illusion that he has arranged the rocks on which he survived, like the teeth in his own mouth was shattered at this point and the apparent reality of his survival as well as his fictitious surviving personality also vanished. Thus, Pincher Martin as a personality is annihilated. People generally want to postpone death but they fail to realise that death and temporal finitude are so much a part of the humanity that an unending life would be a torture for them. Pincher’s greed of life forced him to remain alive and deny the selfless act of death. He defies the compassion of God. Thus, to be Pincher for eternity symbolise extreme suffering.

Golding creates the world after the physical death of Pincher Martin s ‘the centre.’ Instead of the terms like ‘soul’ or ‘spirit,’ he simply uses a neutral word ‘the centre’ that parallels in special terms the temporal instant of death.

From this point without dimension at this moment without dimension, a second life and a second death for Christopher Hadley Martin are created and the shape they take reveals the gross shape that the center had created for itself in order to live in the world of space and time that it has just lost (Whitehead 1971:19).

He uses his technique of bracketing to focus only upon 'the centre.' Thus, the question of fact, time and space are kept as irrelevant. He does not use the word 'God' because it raises many theological questions that are possibly misleading. To avoid confusion, Golding uses the term 'black lightening' instead of the term 'God.' Thus, 'the centre' is what it does against the background of black lightning. "The black lightning, 'the ultimate truth of things,' is a 'positive, unquestionable nothingness'" (Whitehead 1971:20). All the doings of the center is to reveal or create, which leads inevitably to its own negation. The center, in *Pincher Martin* asserts its presence by the activity of 'eating.' Pincher eats to live. We find that Martin completes his life of eating, by eating himself. Thus, in the process of maintaining his identity he negates himself. Thus, education and intelligence, which Martin feels are the unique human qualities that will help in his struggle for survival, actually makes him more and more aware of the unreality of the island he has created.

Golding's moral assertions sometimes produce a blur picture of his stance as an existentialist, which he also rejects himself, being thought to be influenced by the philosophy. Although for Golding 'hard facts' and 'real world' are the matter of concern, however in *Pincher Martin*, we find the dimensionless world, where hard facts go limp.

This is the first novel by William Golding to bear the name of an individual for its title. It is the first story of the author to be told from a point of view within an individual consciousness. Pincher is revealed as he has always been. He is depicted as a character incapable of dying. His situation is revealed as it always was. This is because as an existentialist Golding was concerned with *being* and not *becoming* and therefore the concept of his character is static and not dynamic. This novel is like a maze in which all paths lead back to the centre and the centre is a single, simple image of being reacting to nonbeing.

Free Fall is also an interpretation of twentieth-century selfish materialistic life.

The author concerns himself to project annihilation resulting from our loss of human values. It presents man's extreme extroversion, animalistic passion and rampant selfishness. It presents a world undermined from within by an inner darkness, in which man's fall comes as a natural consequence of his own faulty actions. *Free Fall* concerns itself with the spiritual crisis of the modern man, pointing out that we live in a world where we have become quite blind to the higher purpose of human life and have put ourselves in a state of Free Fall. In this state, which is without any aspiration of goodness, tenderness, compassion and love, we continue to exist, which according to Golding is not truly alive. Under such a condition true life ceases and the whole world is benumbed, moral consciousness decay and the man wanders through a mist of uncertainties. Apart from original sin and free will, Golding is more deeply concerned with the patternless complexity of life, with scientific rationalism represented by Nick Shales, and with monotonous religious spirit symbolized by Romena Pringle who was frustrated, sadistic and irresponsibly severe on boys. As a result, Sammy, who as a child represented Adam before the fall, rejects the world of spirit and accepts the divisive and fallacious optimism of the rational materialistic world of his science teacher. Thus, on this choice depends his fate. Through this novel Golding tries to project the underlying thought that, man's destiny depends on his own choice. Apart from, deceptive simplicity, Golding's novel is also marked with deeper complexity. *Free Fall* too, opens on a scene of the concrete realities of life, but soon we are made aware that the protagonist is continually pre-occupied with deeper questions of life and existence, innocence and experience, good and evil morals and ethics, processes of growth and being and becoming. His dilemma is about himself, his identity, his mode of being and the unfathomable depth of awareness. In the first paragraph, Sammy is depicted as burdened with a past, a host of

memories and a self-searching soul. He is aware of the moment when he has lost his freedom, and his capacity to make choices. “When did I lose my freedom? For once, I was free, I had power to choose” (Golding 1961: 5).

We find here Sammy is continually exploring his sense of being and his awareness of his own existence. One of the central concerns of *Free Fall* has been the ever-referring dilemma between Sammy’s sense of being and awareness of becoming. The question of freedom and choice complicated his process of ‘becoming,’ and he is depicted as too ‘Individualistic’ and ‘Egoistic,’ to care for any preconceived systems or notions. “I have hung all systems on the wall like a row of useless hats. They do not fit. They came in from outside, they are suggested patterns, some dull and some of great beauty” (Golding 1961 : 6-7). Sammy is impatient of external systems, of thought and emotion, and is deeply aware of the importance of revelation in mind and art. The essential theme of *Free Fall* is the fall of Man, as the subject of Milton’s epic: Man has been driven out of paradise due to his erroneous will and his pride. Golding’s theme is theological, yet his protagonist Sammy Mountjoy is up against the need to connect the two worlds, the rocks of determinism with the streams of Free Will. The novel seeks to establish artistic activity as a form of reasoning in which perceiving and thinking are indivisibly intertwined and teaches us to think with the senses, to ‘see feelingly.’ It tries to bridge the gap between ‘sense and thought.’ Golding tries to seek, through his novel, the answers to the paradox of existence in time and space. As an individual and an egoist, Sammy can be held responsible for his action, can be judged for abandoning freedom and control to live out some terrifying selfish inner human necessity. As Sammy says, “I am looking for the beginning of responsibility, the beginning of darkness, the point where I began” (Golding 1961 : 47).

When we read the novel *Free Fall* the first thing that we feel is elusive. It is so because through this novel Sammy Mountjoy, the protagonist seeks to discover how he became what he is. We find him consciously and deliberately trying to explore his past in search of a conscious pattern of his 'Becoming' due to his own 'choice.' Revelation and Recognition of his 'Being' are central quest in the novel in order to discover his becoming. In this novel we find Golding abandoning his isolated setting and give us a social scene. The story in a nut-shell looks like the story of a character and environment giving us the portrait of a young man, the slum childhood, the tough schooldays, cultivating the ability to point the college of art and the first and overwhelming love. The 'Being' of Sammy Mountjoy is revealed throughout the novel and then it is accompanied with the quest of the protagonist to analyse rationally the incoherent chunks of his memory to understand his 'Becoming.' For example the lines:-

Why do I not walk round and round the lawn, recognizing my memories until they make sense, unraveling and knitting up the flexible time stream? I could bring this and that event together, I could make leaps (Golding 1961:7).

It reveals how he tries to capture various events from his memory to build up a coherent structure to understand what became of him. We also find him groping with the sense of responsibility which is an important tenet of existentialism, for 'Free Choice' has no meaning if it is made independent of the sense of responsibility. "The novel is the result of Golding's need to explore the tensions between Being and Becoming which *Pincher Martin* had raised for him, but which he could not deal with in that form" (Ian Gregor 1967:167).

The tentative questions that might have troubled William Golding are: - How does a man become what he is? How can he be said to choose and when does he lose his freedom? After experimenting through his writings he found that there were more than one

truths, and imaginatively one is committed to both the truths. In one novel two different kinds of novels were adapted to reveal the truth and this gave the elusiveness of the novel. Thus, many contradictions came into being. Revelation gave way to organized search. A voyage of discovery was taken into what, was already known. Sammy cannot accept any determinism in which all causes ends in the effects by unalterable laws. He was aware of his being, but he was also aware of the free-will to choose and change one's life. Therefore, we find him aware of the presence of his static picture of Being and also concern about his Becoming. Sammy begins to search for an explanation in his past in order to discover his becoming, but he faces some contradictions. He removes all systems of thoughts from him and desperately desires for an all-embracing pattern through writing. But his two-modes of vision reflect in different ways of experiencing time. One is made of being, the other of becoming. Mere chronology is a 'dead' or 'static' thing. To keep the life and truth, the tale must unfold as it appears to the imaginative eye, but Sammy inevitably finds himself pulled in different directions because he has a double vision. He sees himself as a faithful transcriber of events, for he does not take responsibility for some of the pictures. But he is also a self-conscious artist, ordering his narrative which would enable him to go back and select. But he knew that to select is to falsify and that any pattern is reductive. Thus, we find him always in quest to know what became of him.

Another important aspect of analysis in this novel is the concept of 'Free will' which is again a yardstick of Existentialism. Just as various species have lost some physical characteristics through disuse and lack of need for them, similarly all men are born with free will but that very few ever use it due to freed disposition eventually developing a danger of losing his power of choice through inactivity. Man like to adhere to ideological systems instead of responding spontaneously to each new choice or decision that presents itself

before him. To understand 'human choice' and 'human quit,' we have to refer to what Bergson says about process of time. According to Determinists, time is a row of homogeneously arranged events, each of which take place by what comes before it and, in turn, predetermines what will follow. Bergson insists that it is rather a 'dynamic intensity of psychic states.' It is heterogeneous in nature in which each moment of one's life intermingles in the memory with a given set of other previously experienced moments. They mingle with each other and color the understanding of each other. Golding too, believes on the same basis when he says "Time is not to be laid out endlessly like a row of bricks" (Golding 1961:6). "Sammy feels that the answer to his psychological and moral dilemma lies in the way the data from his past experience manifests itself to him" (Crane 1972:137).

To establish the relationship of temporal process and the workings of free will, we take Golding's conception through Sammy when he says: "What men are is what happened to them" and "what we know is not what we see or learn but what we realize" (Crane 1972:137). In other words, what Golding means is that a person's character is the intense interpretation of memories he achieves. Events melt into one another rather than arrange themselves alongside one another as a row of bricks. Thus, present experiences associatively interact with selected memories of the past. It can be explained for Sammy Mountjoy that every present perception calls forth certain recollections from the memory which guides one's behavior at the present moment in anticipation of future consequences. We can also say that at a given moment of time an individual can make a free choice, mainly because the memory can call forth analogies which are more useful than the present perception in choosing the correct alternatives through an analysis of future consequences. In other words, he chooses on the basis of the man he is and he wants to be. It can be said that it is

the whole soul which gives rise to the free decision. Free will is the relation of the concrete self to the act which it performs.

Such a detailed study of Bergson's theory of Free will is necessary to understand the concept of Free will which Golding wants to depict through this novel *Free Fall*. Free will of an individual can be destroyed, if the concrete self or the character can be insulated from contacting a present choice. Habit is one of the common insulators where man responds automatically rather than dynamically to a choice, thus, failing to exercise his free will. Under such a circumstance one tends to develop a parasitic self which get affixed to the concrete self. It gives the false and acquired aspects of one's personality which, demise the instructional power of the memory. A detailed analysis of Free will is required to understand the concept of Free will presented by Golding while creating the character of Sammy Mountjoy. In the novel we find the concrete self of Sammy struggling for survival against the multiple parasitic or inauthentic selves. The chaotic, childhood memory store of Sammy prepare him as a fearful young man badly in need of an ordering principle for his existence. Therefore, we find him trying different 'hats' or patterns. He imposes various patterns like Communism, Religion and Scientific Rationalism on his existence of concrete self. Sammy loses his free will, principally, because he would be happier gratifying his 'Ego.' The stark reality of Sammy's consuming ego is summed up by this line of Dr. Halde. "You do not believe in anything enough to suffer for it or be glad. There is no point at which something has knocked on your door and taken possession of you. You possess yourself" (Golding 1961:144).

While studying the incident of the seduction of Beatrice by Sammy who wanted only her beautiful body. He has come to desire her so much that he was not conscious fully

of the headmaster's words of cautions. He was young and he thought that the perennial flow of life would go on forever and he will sacrifice 'everything' to get her. Thus, in his decision his concrete self is insulated. "A parasitic self reduces him to the level of libidinal instinct" (Crane 1972:140). Under such circumstances, goal rather than man's character, rules the choice. By this freely made single decision, Sammy bargained his future 'Freedom.' The feeling of 'guilt' which is one of the important elements of the concept of existentialism, becomes conspicuous after the insanity of Beatrice. Insanity of Beatrice is an important event in Sammy life which forces him to realize that he had a hand in the mishap but he refuses to accept any moral responsibility. When Dr. Halde interrogates Sammy, his parasitic self is revealed, initially through conversation and later when he was shut in a dark, mop closet, to endure himself. It is in isolation that he could confront himself and suffer for his evil, gaining self knowledge, he emerges purified.

As in *Pincher Martin*, *Free Fall* also presents the element of crisis. The difference that these two novel, presents is that the protagonist of *Pincher Martin* does not live, while Sammy becomes a changed person after the psychological crisis in the closet. After this incident Sammy's interest in spiritual entity of human existence reinstates. Extreme fear marks the incident of his confinement in the dark closet. He was brought in the state of doubt which paved the way for his absolute self-knowledge. The result of this self-knowledge is to see things not as relative, but as unique and integrated. Everything that exists for Sammy as physical is transfigured and exists on a spiritual level. It is the beginning of the collapse of Sammy's self-deception. He discovers in himself a "Vital morality" that understand people. Thus, he was aware of the wholeness of Beatrice as a human being rather than an object of unresponsive beauty as he had imagined her to be when Sammy achieves self

knowledge. "I stripped off and plunged in and I experienced my skin, from head to foot firm, smooth confinement of all my treasures" (Golding 1961:236). He chooses sex as an instrument of his will for the subjection of Beatrice and this marks his loss of innocence. It is at this juncture that the enigma of the title of this novel unfolds its meaning. Sammy is free to choose, but having made a self-centered choice, he had to rely on the logic of cause and effect and, therefore, be dependent on events as relative to each other in order to justify his actions. Thus, he confined himself to become mechanical as matter. Like matter, he is in Free Fall, apparently stable, but in fact falling as all things fall, relative to each other simultaneously in space. What I find in the novel is William Golding has sacrificed a full scale portrayal of Sammy and emphasized more on his mental state. He tried to depict how Sammy seeks to find a pattern of meaning in his absurd life, through self-awareness provided by his visionary experience. The strength of the novel lies more in the process of the search than in the involvement of Sammy as a person.

Broadly, we can infer that this novel can be divided into two sections. The first section is the 'Being section,' which includes Ratten Row and Boyhood, the cell and the transfigured camp. The 'Becoming section' includes the affair with Beatrice and the closing section. Through this novel William Golding tried to define human existence. He brings in these two world of Being and Becoming as the two modes of existence. Both have their own patterns. "There is a pattern of Becoming, where cause and effect operate, man chooses and becomes what he chooses by acting" (Gregor 1967:195). The human being is free to change, but from one state to another. They cannot combine both the states. There is a responsibility and therefore, forgiveness is possible through understanding. There is nothing that cannot be explained. Conversely, 'Being' also has a pattern. Man chooses to be one thing or another and this choice determines all his actions. It means-if we are a particular

type of being we do particularly that type of things, and have no freedom to do otherwise being cannot change. There can only be a change of vision, which clarifies the nature of the Being it inhabits. There is responsibility, but no forgiveness. There is no explanation, but revelation, apocalypse and recognition. The point at which, both these modes crosses mark the 'Free Fall.' In *Sammy* we find both these modes and they cross each other at two points. At first they cross when Sammy becomes what he chooses and they cross again at the moment of resurrection, when he utter a cry at the cell.

In Chapter-VI, Sammy tries to defend himself on the existential ground by revealing the cotangential nature of time and individual self. He says- "Nothing is permanent, nothing was more than relative. Sex is a private business." These can be seen as self-deceptive attempts to deny human nature. To talk about Beatrice, she is rather a passive character, constantly victimised by Sammy, who destroyed her due to his ego and then abandons her. After the World War-II, when Sammy again finds her, she is a patient in a mental hospital, unable to identify or relate to others and her experiences at all. Anxiety is the only sign of her life, and this mental turmoil is brought out by Golding depicting her as unable even to control her bladder and urinating on the floor. "For Golding, that single-mindedness, relentless insistence on self, and exclusion of the rest of the universe in order to satisfy the imposing demands of the ego, is the definition of original sin" (Gindin 1988:47). In one of the flashbacks Sammy could finally locate the origin of his guilt and loss of freedom which, completes his understanding of 'guilt,' he cannot expiate. He knew that his fallen nature cannot be changed. What Golding tries to deliver through this novel is that the imposition of ego and the sacrifice of everything to itself is sin. To use carefully and intentionally, human experience only for itself is to violate a sense of human community and connection. By nature, a human being is both isolated and connected to others. He is both

rational and spiritual, both body and mind. Through the knowledge that we gather from the end of the narrative, Golding keeps on insisting that 'There is no bridge.' *Free Fall* does not provide any bridge and does not provide any solution to human dilemmas. It tries to convey that both the worlds are real. The polarity and co-existence of soul and body is intrinsic to human nature and cannot be reconciled by human beings. Thus, this novel traces the process through time of an individual who is social and historical and becomes representative of contemporary revelation of evil.

Though Golding's statements about the human being are fundamentally religious, yet he follows no particular religious doctrine. He believes in a God that is beyond the triviality of man and not a God as 'confident authority' or a system, but God as a principle of universal creation. According to him the theorists like Marx, Darwin and Freud have glorified man and consequently ignored or reduced the concept of God. According to the theory of Existentialism, the word Existence signifies a constant *striving*, a recurring *Choice*, uncompromising *freedom* and *responsibility* with a sense of *Angst* or despair for which most part of it is lived without authenticity and in *bad faith*. As the character of a human life is never *given*, existence is *without foundation* or basis. Thus, it is *abandoned* or even *absurd*. While, analysing *Free Fall* under this concept of existentialism we find the novel fulfilling the presence of all these tenets.

A man is a being who can reflect upon his own being and reflection upon man's own being. And reflection upon man's own being gives a view of man in his totality. This view is given to man in this experience of dread or *Angst*. Such an extreme situation of dread we find in Sammy Mountjoy, in his cell. Obscurity, a distinctive feature of existential writers is inevitable when the experience is by looking at a human life through a pair of eyes,

each of which sees in a different way and consequently sees different things. This novel is the result of Golding's need to explore the tensions between being and becoming. Sammy is sure of his being, but equally sure that it lies in the human will to choose and change one's whole direction. Therefore, against the static, eternal images of being we find a language of Becoming asserted. "Free-will cannot be debated, but only experienced, like a colour or the taste of potatoes" (Golding 1961 : 5).

Another novel *The Paper Men* is the most socially realistic of all Golding's novels through which the author tries to depict the writer's plight and also reveals that literature and learning are nothing but papers. The principal characters of this novel, Wilfred Barclay and Rick Tucker are two men incapable of much feeling and this novel question on the nature of the 'social reality' portrayed by fiction in general. Apparently, the central action of the novel is, Wilfred Barclay's running away from Rick Tucker, a literary critic who desires to become Barclay's official biographer. But at a deeper level, this novel is an examination of the metaphysical concept of being which, according to Barclay is the indescribable and inexplicable. Wilfred Barclay, who is a writer of some reputation, tries to understand his past in relation to the present and wants to avoid his future biographer. Apparently, the two protagonists in the novel, Barclay and Tucker, are not two different identities. They represent two sides of the mind, Tucker is the inner mind, who wants to bring everything in light and Barclay, the outer mind who wants to conceal everything from others-a constant struggle in a conscious mind.

"*The Paper Men* reveals the story of an aging, mean-spirited, alcoholic English writer named Wilfred Barclay, who is insecure about his fading talents, contemptuous of the literary scene that awards undeserved fame and fleeting fortunes and alienated from his

family because of his own egotism and insensitivity” (Dickson 1990: 127). He is pursued throughout the novel by a young American scholar, Rick L. Tucker, who has achieved his reputation by counting the number of relative clauses Barclay has used in his novels as an index to his style. He now wants to write Barclay’s biography and in his relentless pursuit of any scrap of paper relevant to Barclay’s life, Tucker pressurizes Barclay to sign a paper authorizing his status as the official biographer which Barclay resists. One night, hearing scuffling among his dustbins, he runs out, his pyjamas slipping to his knees, and shoots at what he assumes to be a raiding badger, to find that he has slightly wounded Tucker, the badger rummaging for bits of paper that Barclay may have discarded. The incidents lead Liz, Barclay wife to discover a scrap of paper, a part of a letter to Barclay from another woman and it leads her to divorce him, while Barclay wanders through Europe and the Mediterranean, trying to hide in places being pursued by Tucker for his signature, he remembers his seedy past. He has been entirely egotistical, a debased person, a bad bank clerk, a dishonest journalist, a self serving naval man during the war, numerous adulterous affairs with women, and sudden accidental success as a novelist. Tucker’s unhandy way of offering his wife, Mary Lou to Barclay reveals the slipshod manner of his working. Barclays inability to accept her is indicative of his weakness. Halliday is a man responsible for the whole operation. Tucker was a mere representative of Halliday, who has been given only seven year’s time to complete Barclays Biography. Due to his mysterious nature Halliday acquires the stature of a God found standing on top of a church. Barclay hoards his own paper, scraps, letters, all the trivia of his life and his career as an author. The novel proceeds and at a time when Tucker stops pursuing Barclay and Barclay becomes deeply troubled, he reverses the roles and phones Tucker to meet him at the same hotel in the Swiss Alps where Barclay had earlier rejected Tucker’s insistence for signature. In an earlier episode

one day climbing in the fog, Barclay slipped and thought he had been rescued by Tucker, a claim on his gratitude and being, that in his defiant guilt and defensiveness he was determined to resist. During the later meeting in the Alps in the bright sunshine, Barclay sees that the ledge is suspended only a few feet above a soft, pleasant meadow, and he consequently turns, the guilt that generated the situation against himself and his symbolic desire to be rescued. The deception like the pursuit works both ways, and during the later meeting in the Alps, Barclay finally signs the paper, granting Tucker the permission to write the official biography. Tucker and Barclay are locked in the constant symbiotic struggle to combine and break away. They attack each other's paper, each other's defences and each other's gestures towards accommodation and forgiveness. The two characters who are apparently different practitioners of fiction, novelist and biographer, pursued and pursuer, both existing only in terms of their papers.

As we read this novel, an underground current of a constant struggle between two selves is discernable. In fact, Barclay and Tucker appears to be two selves of an individual, where the writer Barclay is an egoist, self-absorbed, constantly trying to conceal and reveal only that much which his conscious mind instructs him. While Professor Tucker is the other self 'this is parasitic by nature.' It aims at thriving at the cost of others concealed realities. In this novel, Golding presents the conscious and the unconscious self of an individual, trying to reveal that, man lives at the point of intersection of these two flows of thoughts which are incompatible but both of which they must inhabit. Though existential elements are illusive in this novel, yet a brilliant example of Barclay's encounter with his original self can be seen when he drops into space while walking with Tucker in the foggy Weiswald. He experiences 'blind terror' and "His paralyzing fear makes him an instinctive beast" (Kulkarni 2003:29). Golding says- "Here was no dalliance of the mind with the

worthlessness or worth of life” (Golding 1984:87). According to existential thoughts, the moments of crisis reveals one’s self to the self. Such moments of crisis, cast away all determinism and allows a being to react instinctively.

Authenticity is something which is not present in this novel. Both the character Wilfred Barclay and Rick Turner are not genuine in their dealings. The various incidents that take place are all farcical. They are the paper men because they wander through a wasteland, devoid of any values. Rick Tucker is a single minded opportunist who values Barclay’s work only as a potential passport to his own career to establish himself as a critic. On the other hand, Barclay rejects Tucker because a detailed biography will reveal the unpleasantness, infidelities and ugliness of his own life. Thus, both the characters were the victims of self-deception. Through this novel William Golding wants to convey the message that self survival is the only quest of this age. To achieve this end men use all kinds of despicable means. He can be sly, tricky, merciless and adamant to achieve his goal. Tucker in order to achieve his goal follows Barclay wherever he went and tried to present himself as a good man. In order to earn the good will of Barclay he ever offered his wife to him. When this scheme failed, he stage-managed an accident to prove himself as Barclay’s saviour and earn his gratitude. Thus, all sorts of ugly schemes were employed just to fulfil his selfish motive. “Recognition and promotion, at whose altar wife and self-respect can be sacrificed, become the end for which Tucker pursues scholarship” (Bhattacharjee 2011:74).

It was Barclay’s habit of collecting every scrap of paper with his writing on it. These records were valid proofs of sordid and shameful events of his life, the revelation of which would be dangerous for his relationship with his wife and also loss of dignity. Therefore,

these papers have become a burden for him, and a sense of being trapped by the heap of paper is evident from these lines. “It was the Venus Flytrap, the sundew. It was those footsteps in the sands of time that I now saw I preferred not to leave behind me” (Golding 1984:16). These lines indicate his realization of the futility and the vulgarity of his pursuits. Thus, in these lines a feeling of absurdity of life is also discernable. Human being builds huge sky-scraping dreams which in their turn suffocate them. All efforts marinated to fulfil a selfish dream result in the feeling of absurdity. “I repeat there was nothing in it for me but a bit of flattery, a tiny, perhaps absurd, feeling that my country needed me, and the occasional interest of an exotic place” (Golding 1984:21). This line proves the presence of dual self. Barclay is aware of his natural feat and the public acclaim which his parasitic self craves for, but also suffers from a sense of uneasiness. Actually through this novel, Golding intends to point out the drawbacks of a system, which tends to lift writers to such a high pedestal and accept their words as the ultimate truth, that he ultimately feels suffocated. Broadly, Golding wants to reveal that a critic pursues a writer as long as he is creative and innovative. The moment a writer slows down his pace of progress, he is engulfed by the critic. As long as Barclay moves ahead, Tucker pursues him and as soon as he drops his pace, he is killed by Tucker. Alienation is an important aspect of the analysis in the novel *The Paper Men*. Barclay’s alienation from humanity is the reason of coldness in his behavior towards his wife and daughter.

Towards the end of the novel Barclay and Tucker get into a fierce and violent fight over who owns which trivial document in the Barclay’s London Club. Later, full of guilt and self-justification at Liz’s funeral, Barclay sees himself as a comic Martyr, who takes into himself the sins of being human. In a nearly final reversal, Barclay decides to withhold

himself and plans a fire to burn every scrap of his paper to keep it from Tucker. Yet, feeling mercy, he relents and claims the ground of moral superiority. Tucker, enraged by the claim, as well as in retaliation for Barclay's shooting him at the beginning of the novel, ends the novel by stalking, shooting and killing Barclay. The Metaphor of the two voices of the stream is suggestive of the two levels of meaning:

The stream... had two voices, not one. There was the cheerful babble a kind of frivolity as if the thing, the form, enjoyed its bounding passage downward, through space. Then running under that was a deep, meditative hum as if despite the frivolity a surface prattle the thing sounded from some deep secret of the mountain itself (Golding 1984 : 83).

Barclay wanders in the world of numinous forces, records experiences of the spiritual world which are direct but unusual and beyond him to interpret correctly. Thus, it was absurd. The reality behind the surface existence, the day-to-day being, is revealed to Barclay by the sound of the stream. When we find Barclay standing on the roof, near where Holliday had stood and on looking down, experiences a harmony everywhere, Barclay raises questions about his own identity, of which as he believes nobody knew except Halliday. Thus the meditative tone of the narrative depicting Halliday is to be the omnipotent one. "Barclay and Tucker, *The Paper Men*, wandering through a wasteland, devoid of values as informing myths, recall Eliots 'Hollowmen'" (Bhattacharjee 2011: 73).

"Who cares so long as the money's good." In writing fiction, money, more than quality becomes the primary concern for Barclay. He is the product of the twentieth century. He is callous and self-absorbed and is bankrupt both morally and aesthetically. He is empty within and trapped in his own ignorance. Recognition and promotion are the primary concern of Tucker in his pursuance of scholarship for which he can sacrifice his wife and self respect. He is enslaved by his ambition to the extent that he is unable to protest when treated like a

dog by Barclay and compelled to lap up wine from the saucer. Barclay is aware of this weakness in Tucker and calls him a paperman. Barclay and Tucker have lost the connecting link with humanity and have truly become paper men. Thus, alienation, an important concern of existentialism reveals itself in the novel. There is also a feeling of dread in Barclay. Fear is entirely different from dread, according to existentialist. What is feared is always a definite thing or a definite person. In dread, the world in which we are involved collapses. The object of dread is wholly indeterminate. It cannot be pointed out. The dreadful is not really anywhere, yet it is so close that it takes our breath away. We find Barclay running and hiding with his papers with a feeling of dread which is quite uncertain.

Besides being an inferior writer, he is limited in a more fundamental sense. He is vain, tedious, immoral, cowardly, cruel and indifferent to even those who are nearest to him. Feeling himself an alien in his own house, his wife's death and his daughter's tears makes him feel repulsive. He is convinced that the world is a hell and where man is constantly damning himself. "Barclay's intense self-absorption and solipsism fix him in a state of being in which his encounters with the divine cannot alter his nature" (Bhattacharjee 2011 : 81). This understanding of himself is evident in the following passage from the novel.

I lay for-oh' for a long, long time. I saw so many things with great clarity as if the light of the previous day, if it was the previous day, had filled me with its dreadful luminescence. I could not think anything or see anything but the truth. I saw that I had been planned from the beginning. I had my place in things. It didn't matter what I had done or would do. I had been created by that ghastly intolerance in its own image. (Golding 1984 : 124).

He sees himself as predestinate damned. He also says "that I could only remain integrated by immorality." Sticking to his own sinfulness and self-regard, he is able to understand his nature to be encased like a hard shelled lobster. This novel delineates the interplay of the actual and superficial, like what the narrator appears to be and his cognizance of his real

nature, which he attempts to hide. It also depicts with subtlety, a critic's research, which amounts to searching in the dustbin of the author's life, while the author's exposure results in the falling of his trousers revealing his shady past. Thus, in the social life of a human being his authenticity is put to stake.

The following lines from the novel prove this determination of his nature. "You are what biologist used to call exoskeleton. Most people are what they called endoskeleton, have their bones inside. But you, my dear, for some reason known onto God, as they say of anonymous bodies, have spent your life inventing a skeleton on the outside. Like crabs and lobsters. That's terrible, you see, because the worms get inside" (Golding 1984 : 114). The worms of memory, consuming everything inside the lobster shell, a symbol of determination, to isolate and protect one's ego, bring fear of death. Barclay bears a close resemblance to Pincher who for the sake of his self absorption defies God. Barclay, conscious of what is precious beyond everything defies death on the mountain and clutches with all his might, the object near at hand. His overwhelming ego gives rise to a terrible fear of death, which finds expression in a dream in which he sees himself followed by Tucker who chases him in a hearse.

The first half of the novel concerns itself with Barclay's flights from Tucker, while the second half deals with his encounter with the numinous, his escape from God. Contrary to Pincher's refusal to acknowledge his degeneration and defeat, Barclay, being more of a realist, understands the direction he advances. Thus, he admits so to Johnny. "I am old, I'm going faster and faster." Barclay's self-absorption can be felt in these strong words:

It seemed to me that everyone in the world, but I could see, had some sort of access, and only I was trapped inside myself, ignorant, bounded by my own skin with none of the antennae they seemed to have in order to reach out and touch my secret self (Golding 1984:114).

Various echoes of alienation and egoism is strewn in the novel, which raises the fundamental questions regarding the quest of the character. There is an underlying struggle of the character to reach a destination which is absurd. Barclay, steeped in his own sin, imagines God in his own image which is akin to Satan's and the world as hell. Such a belief of the protagonist is also shared by the author who also believed the world to be a hell where man damns himself. "Barclay may be annihilated by Tucker but he is also pursued by him for all kinds of knowledge about his life, thoughts and beliefs" (Bhattacharjee 2011 : 86).

Regarding the narrative method and structure, *Lord of the Flies* is Golding's simplest novel. It lacks the ironic mystification of *The Inheritors*. It is also free from the cryptic involvement and the sudden forceful twist of context, which is a characteristic feature of the stream of consciousness technique. This method is adapted in *Pincher Martin* and *Free Fall* to give the richness and deeper revelation of human mind. But it should be admitted that the end of the novel presents a sudden shift of viewpoint. The effect produced is that the boys who have grown huge in their struggle are suddenly reduced to their original stature as mere boys. Thus, the message inherent is that, if the boys are fighting the battles of the adult human being, then mankind has still not reached its adulthood.

Thus, *Lord of the Flies* ends as no act of hope or charity or even contrition. It is an act of recognition. The tone is peculiarly calm: Golding keeps his distance from his materials; he does not interfere or preach; and the material is made to speak for itself through a simplicity of prose style and a naturalistic allegorical form. The vision of Golding is through both ends of the telescope (Oldsey 1963:99).

It cannot be categorized as a parable because it is too long and lack point-by-point parallelism, necessary to satisfy the definition. Nor it can be called a fable as it deals primarily with human beings and not depend on fantastic materials. It does not provide distinct moral

for our convenience. It is actually allegoristic for it has the rich and vibrant use of suggestions. It can be best accepted at the level of suggestive analysis. However, Golding's novel do not fall strictly into any pattern. The four major characters give us powerful suggestions like- Jack with blood and dung suggests primitive tribalism, Piggy with pig's meat suggests sloth, appetite and eventual sacrifice, and his glasses suggests intellect and science. Ralph with his conch and signal fire suggests his call to duty and communal hope. Simon, a vague character suggests not only mysticism, intelligence, fragility, but also his association with bees and butterflies speak about his sweetness and innocence. "It is through the character of Simon that Golding wants to present his paradoxical optimism 'human spirit,' writes Golding, 'is wider and more complex than the whole of the physical evolutionary system....'" (Oldsey 1963:98) . Golding says that the change in the fields of politics, religion, literature and art will come because the human spirit is limitless and inexhaustible. *Pincher Martin* is another survival narrative along with the *Lord of the Flies* and *The Inheritors*. It is different in the sense that it projects a nearly contemporary setting. It is a story of dead man.

It is about a consciousness so self-centred and so terrified of the infinite that it creates for itself, even in death, a fantasy existence which, however arduous and painful, nevertheless still permits it the luxury of personal identity (Peter 1957:589).

Thus, through this novel Golding wants to project the extreme struggle to maintain ones 'ego' or self Identity. Martin clings savagely to his idea of survival, inventing the conditions mentally for his existence on a rock. The existence that he enjoys is the creation of his own will. However, in his enlightened center of most secret recesses of his being he remains terrified at the awareness of its unreality. He is even scared to sleep for under this state he would have to surrender his control. He is terrified to see the red lobster and forgets that guano is insoluble. His intellect of which he takes pride missed to capture these details. The

result is that his imaginary existence wane away producing two alternatives before him. Either he has to face death or remain insane. Death represented to him as ‘unquestionable nothingness’ and he accepts insanity.

The absolute black lightning of which his friend Nathaniel Walterson had spoken, the instrument of divine vengeance for all who lack “the technique of dying into heaven,” comes to annihilate the theatrical paper world he has made for himself, and he lapses into the death he has repudiated, the compassion (as Golding expresses it) that is timeless and without mercy (Peter 1957:290).

In the words of Jean E. Kennard, “Golding believes man’s salvation lies in a recognition of the macrocosm in which he is a microcosm” (Granafsky 1990:50). In most of his novels, at least one major character undergoes a process of revelation which helps him to recognize his position in the larger scheme of things. In *Lord of the Flies*, the readers experience a revelation concerning the nature of man. In *Pincher Martin* and *The Paper men* revelation comes to the protagonist, which they refuses to acknowledge, while in *Free Fall* revelation causes a change in the central figure’s outlook on life. An aspect that is commonly seen is that the character in question experiences an ordeal, which proves the concept of ‘man at an extremity,’ and it becomes instrumental in bringing about a change in outlook.

At the level of characterization we find aspects of existentialism in the sense that all the characters are Individualistic or subjective. The protagonists also suffer from overbearing egotism and reductive rationalism. They are all on the verge of emotional collapse because they refuse to admit that there are aspects of human existence which are important but cannot be seen.

Circumstantial existentialism is discernible as the circumstances are produced for the protagonist to pass through an ordeal, which would lead him to an extreme situation of suffering. Being alienated from human society, the characters encounter their self, which

become instrumental in realization. A situation of crisis is developed for the protagonist to experience the truth of their authentic being. William Golding creates everyone of them with the freedom of choice, consequent guilt and bearing the responsibility of their freedom. Existential themes inherent in his novels are his concern for reductive rationality and egoistic search of identity, extreme urge of survival as projected by the lone maggot. In his novels we find the depiction of existential plight of man alone fighting for his identity and survival in an alien universe. However, a subtle presence of a concrete self which is depicted as a bright centre in the inner darkness is also seen. He creates the characters like Nathaniel and Simon to give us the message that only by desisting from selfish acts, can man hope to live in peace and find salvation.

We can see *PaperMen* as a case of moral-degeneration, where the protagonist is trying to realize himself in an unconventional, irreligious way. The question of sin and redemption also becomes an integral part in this novel. The suffering of Barclay and Tucker is the result of their own failure to live upto certain time-tested values like detachment and self-abnegation. The novel is a fine portrayal of the spiritual paralysis that has gripped the present world. The writer is mortal and fallible like other men, with a subtle suggestion of something beyond mortality that he cannot translate into meaning or pattern. Thus, the inherent absurdity is evident in the novel. The bold perception of existentialism is not discernable in the novel, yet its illusive presence is felt throughout.

Thus, the novels of William Golding, selected for the analysis reveal the presence of existential thought of the author.

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CHAPTER – IV

EXISTENTIALISM IN DORIS LESSING'S - *THE GRASS IS SINGING*, *THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK*, *UNDER MY SKIN* AND *WALKING IN THE SHADE*

Doris Lessing's writing is deeply autobiographical; much of it evolving out of her experiences in Africa. With the help of her childhood memories and her serious engagements with politics and social concerns, Lessing has written about the clash of cultures, the gross injustices of racial inequality, the struggle among opposing elements within an individual's own personality and the conflict between the individual conscience and the collective good. She explores new ways to view ourselves and the society we live in and gives us fresh answers to such enduring questions as how to think for ourselves and understand what we know. Her life has been a challenge to her belief that people cannot rebuff the currents of their time, as she fought against the cultural and biological imperatives that fated her to sink into marriage and motherhood. Doris Lessing believed that she was freer than most people because she became a writer. She is ruthlessly honest as she aims to free herself from the chaos, emotional numbness and hypocrisy afflicting her generation.

Doris Lessing has shown to the world the convenience of searching the truth concealed in nature by her natural education instead of wasting time acquiring the formal education in schools. At the age of thirteen, she gave up her formal education and at fifteen, she left her home to be with nature. Her childhood was a mixture of some pleasures and much more pain. A self-educated intellectual, Doris did not need a highbrow traditions or money to bring out all that nature had gifted her with. Her literary development started flowering when as a child she first saw and heard the pains and struggles of her crippled father, who lost one leg in world war-I, trying in vain to make fortunes through maize farming and her ambitious mother fruitlessly trying to reproduce an Edwardian lifestyle in the midst

of Rhodesians. Under such circumstances her soul always searched for chances to escape from dilemmatic torments of life that she witnessed in her home into an imaginary world that she ardently fancied outside. The only escape from an otherwise miserable existence during her childhood she could explore was, in the world of nature. Her insatiate childhood seems to have incited her to satiate her adulthood thirst and hunger through writing. Materials that build up Lessing's emotion to read nature and human minds emanated from her childhood memories and later from her encounters with politics, the duality of cultures, inequality of races and the struggle within an individual's own personality to find the truth in the ocean of falsities. A prolific writer Lessing once described writing as a kind of 'wool-gathering' - A slow, tedious and difficult process.

Readers were attracted towards Lessing largely because of her delving deep into the inner space of the human mind and outer space of the cosmos and her commitment to major issues, such as Communism, Feminism and Sufism. In her struggle to reach the ultimate truth, she continued writing one fiction after another as if she was tirelessly climbing a tall flight of stairs with books considered as her stepping stones in the quest of that knowledge which is fleeting and missing for ages before her arrival at the theatre of this planet. Her interest in Sufi mysticism helped her to climb high enough to reach the realm of truth of spirituality. Her science fiction in series, probing higher planes of existence (*Canopus in Argos: Archives*, 1979-1983) was greatly influenced by the Muslim scholar Idries Shah, whose writings on Mysticism stress the evolution of consciousness and the belief that individual liberation comes about only if people understand the link between their own fates and the fate of the society. The universality of Sufism is what attracted Doris Lessing and we find the influence of this mysticism in her writings. The three major influences that are discernable in her writings are: the first is communism that lasted from 1944 till 1956, the second was feminism that began in the 1950s, and lasted through the 1960s when she

turned to Sufism. She was dubbed an African writer, a communist writer, a feminist writer, a psychological writer, a science-fiction writer and lastly a mystic writer.

Doris Lessing's first novel, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) is set in Southern Rhodesia (Now Zimbabwe) where she grew up. It is a story of a white woman Mary, who leaves the poor family farms on the veld to live a happy single life in the town until she is persuaded by her friends into seeking a husband. "Disastrously, she marries Dick Turner, a poor and stubborn farmer, and in the frustrations of a life mirroring her own mother's, gradually deteriorates into breakdown and in so doing crosses a taboo line: from despising and hating 'natives' in the way conventional within her own cultural context, she comes to rely physically and emotionally on her black servant, Moses" (Maslen 1994:4).

The Grass is singing was written before Doris Lessing left Rhodesia and published the year after she immigrated to England, where she wrote most of the stories later collected as *African Stories*. When *The Grass is singing* came out, the reviewers described it as a fiction about the colour problem which she denies in her preface. This novel like her later novels is resistant to a single interpretation. "At the most obvious level, it depicts a complex clash of value systems" (Pickering 1990:19). Apart from the great chasm of Whites and Black there is another value system that complicates the issue.

"In white settler society, men outrank women even more than they do at 'Home' in Middle-Class England" (Pickering 1990:19). This apparent 'natural' relationship of dominant man and submissive women becomes troublesome in this society only when man is black and the woman is white. On the other hand, if the sexes are reversed, there is no problem at all. "In 1978 Michael Thorpe noted that since 1903 in Rhodesia it has been a criminal offense for a black man and white woman to have sexual intercourse, but no such law applies where a white man and a black woman are involved" (Pickering 1990:19-20).

Thus, the taboo line was strictly enforced and the intensity of despair in Mary Turner was strong enough to enable her violate it, inadvertently. The common humanity which Charlie Slatter fears and which is shared by the entire British community is closely perceived by Mary Turner, even in the twisted form of mental breakdown. Apart from the theme of racism or feminism, we also find the subjectivity of Mary being highlighted. Her individual traits, her psychology and her weaknesses are what that made her up.

Mary's childhood was so close to the poverty line that she had almost been relieved when her two older siblings died from dysentery. Their deaths relieved the family from the constrictions. For a short while her parents also stopped their endless quarreling. Her father was a railway pump man and an alcoholic, whom she hated "When first the mother and then the father die, Mary is presumably at least partially freed from what Martha Quest is later to call 'The tyranny of the family'" (Sprague 1987:21). Before her move to the town, boarding school was the only happy place for her. As a young woman she represses all her childhood memories and tries to live a contented life in town as an efficient secretary, as a valued elder member of the club of unmarried girls where she lives; she has many men friends, with whom she carefully avoids sexual entanglements. This secured but fragile self, disintegrates when she overheard some of her friends criticizing her because sexuality seems out of her makeup.

Sometimes her friends felt obscurely, to listen, to advice, to act as a sort of universal shoulder in the world to weep on and give back nothing of her own. The truth was she had no troubles. She heard other people's complicated stories with wonder, even with a little fear. She shrank away from all that. "She was a most rare phenomenal: a woman of thirty without love troubles, headaches, backaches, sleeplessness or neurosis. She did not know how rare she was" (Lessing 1994:38).

Through this paragraph her individuality is depicted. We are acquainted with her queer self. She did not know herself. Because she was unknown to her, what she overhears destroys her self-image. A vast hollowness enters within her, which makes her oversensitive to what others are thinking about her and on this illusory state of mind, she takes the decision to marry Dick. Soon after their marriage their total incompatibility was revealed. They have entered marriage filled with illusions. For example, Mary thought it would be really nice to be close to nature and Dick expected a farm wife, a worker, and a mother. Their unyielding different minds caused their mutual disintegration. The writer projects in addition to some simplified polarities of male and female, town and farm, human and veld, the factor of racism, which is the most destructive addition. Moses enters into the Turner household when Mary was passing through a period of deep crisis. "Moses enters Mary's life when she is almost totally broken, listless, indifferent, no longer energized by her various projects-chicken a tobacco crop, a store, having a child and so on-and still recovering from her failed flight back to tower to reclaim her old job and life" (Sprague 1987:22).

Thus, we find that Mary has been thrown into a situation at birth, which she could not alter until the death of her parents. This unhealthy situation creates emptiness within herself and when she overhears some of her friends criticizing her, she develops a vast panic within her, as if there was nothing in the world to hold a grasp on. Under this state of mind, she decides to marry Dick. What Mary fears most is the repetition of her mother's life and this repetition she accomplishes by marrying Dick. Marriage returns Mary to the poverty and rage of her childhood and to the cage, she had hoped to escape. Thus we find an element of bondage in her life which she wants to free herself from. According to existentialists, fear is one of the fundamental experiences of human being when one encounters

one's being in existence. This element of fear in Mary gives her the real status of existence. The element of despair and the experience of growing into nothingness can also be traced in Mary's life. We also can see her struggle with the sense of authenticity because Mary is made a victim to the dictatorship of the anonymous 'them' and she cannot experience authenticity within her and thus takes the decision to marry Dick.

"This fear is not simply about his 'powerful, road-built body,' not even fear of black men in general, but of unknown Africa itself and, echoing Conrad, the impulses in her the Dark Continent represents" (Pickering 1988:29). We feel the presence of Fear, rather Anxiety in Mary. According to existentialism 'Fear' refers to something definite, where as 'Anxiety' refers to something indefinite. "It is the uncanny apprehension of some impending evil, of something not present, but to come, of something not within us, but of an alien power" (Heinemann 1953:36). Such a feeling of Anxiety is present in Mary. Human freedom is real, but it would be a blunder to regard it limitless. "We shall remain free, if only we choose actions which give substance to freedom and increase it; if we merely act as we like, we may succumb to unnoticed compulsions from within or without and thus bury our freedom again" (Roubiczek 1966: 122). Mary under the pressure of external criticism decides to marry but in the process, she curtails her freedom.

Existentialism is a rejection of all purely abstract thinking. It is a rejection of absoluteness of reason. On the other hand, the great discovery of modern psychology, the subconscious or the unconscious have made us aware of the fact that not only intentions and impulses are responsible for human action, but also our urges, instincts, impressions, biological factors and childhood experiences of which we remain unaware. These are embedded in our subconscious and cannot be fully known unless they are brought to the

surface by difficult procedures. Even then the knowledge of the subconscious is not complete. Consciousness is the basis of reason. Therefore, if we accept the reality of unconscious, we are limiting reason simultaneously. “This psychological limitation of reason is perhaps the most definitive, because the age of reason and its influence had been based on the identification of man with his consciousness, if the unconscious has real power-which now seems beyond doubt-reason cannot be absolute” (Roubiczec 1966:4).

Thus the personal experiences determine a person and in order to understand an existent, we have to peep into the unconscious mind of the existent. Psychoanalysis becomes an important tool in the hand of an existentialist, and this novel, *The Grass is Singing* gives ample opportunities for psychoanalysis. One of the major impacts of existentialism upon another discipline has been upon psychology and its application in psychiatry. As an effect, a whole new school of existential psychiatry has grown up. According to some psychiatrist, existentialism offers a better way of understanding the nature of selfhood and personality, both in health and in disorder. Therefore, Dreams are the key to Mary’s inner realities. “Dreams free the limited character from the confines of limited consciousness, for only in dreams can Mary unite her past and her present” (Sprague 1987:22).

When Dick has another bout of Malaria, Moses insists on staying overnight so that Mary may take rest. That night she dreamt of childhood, which explicitly connects with her father figure. It was during that night that she permitted the breakdown of the barrier between white and black, sobbed in front of Moses and allowed him to put her to bed. In another dream she dreamt Dick was dead. She felt relieved, exultant and guilty. The incestuous conflation of father, husband and servant become clear when we read. He approached

slowly, obscene and powerful, and it was not only him, but her father who was threatening her. They advanced together, one person, and she could smell, not the native smell, but the unwashed smell of her father. It filled the room musty, like animal. He came near, and put his hand on her arm. It was the voice of the African she heard. He was comforting her because of Dick's death, consoling her protectively, but at the same time it was her father menacing and horrible, who touched her with desire" (Sprague 1987 : 23).

In order to unearth the existential aspects of the novel, a slightly intense analysis is required. The lines like, "It was the way one lived, a question of standards" (Lessing 1950:11) proves the burden of various standards of social life which bounds a being from being its authentic self. These superimposed social codes of conducts helps the people collectively to decide upon the cases and incidents, as in this case, people pitied Dick Turner while for Mary, a fine fierce indignation, as if she were something 'unpleasant' and 'unclean.' It appeared as if it served her right to get murdered. In a latent level Lessing wanted to reveal that Mary had her own justification for her conduct. While describing the mother of Mary too, we find that, Lessing satirizes the inauthentic behavior of the mother to draw attention and sympathy of the onlookers, parading her sorrows. ".....that she really enjoyed the luxury of standing there in the bar while the casual drinkers looked on sympathetically; she enjoyed complaining in a hard sorrowful voice about her husband" (Lessing 1994:33). Her father's drinking habit leading to poverty in the family, thereby ensuing constant quarrels at home. Consequently, a stark reality revealed itself before Mary after the death of her brother and sister that the loss was more than compensated by the happiness of living in the house where there were suddenly no quarrels. This is an authentic interpretation of a crisis of life. These subjective experiences of life made Mary like things to happen safely one after another in a pattern and the author insists that she liked particularly

the friendly impersonality of it. She likes to be alone in life. Thus, Lessing tries also to hint at her concept of the relationship of the individual to the collective. Mary's subjective experiences of life had made her alienated from the society. Thus, her knowledge about herself was only about her life, shut in a cocoon without any 'measuring rod' of interaction with other selves. Any determinisms like, 'class' or 'race' was not a part of her life. She was happy as she was, and had a smooth and comfortable life without any tag of the society. But soon her calm and plain life was filled with ripples when she overheard the discussions made about her strangeness by her friends. This incident brought about a gush of haphazard feelings within her. She felt the contingency of life. Lessing says that, "she certainly did feel, at times, restlessness, a vague dissatisfaction that took the pleasure out of her activities for a while" (Lessing 1994:39). Through this line the author tries to convey the ever stretching and ever striving nature of our existential being which is never exhausted. Even in the state of happiness that Mary was in, could not fill the hollow within her. It was awaiting some more new sets of experiences which would help her to break away her confinement and discover the newness. She did not like to remember her home, which bounded her in many ways.

Thinking about marriage too, she felt uncomfortable experiencing the pre-conceived notions regarding her father's behavior. Lessing says "Mary liked other people's children, but shuddered at the thought of having any of her own" (Lessing 1994:39). Thus, she experienced anguish due to the pre-conceived notions which were not always directly identified. "For she did not know what she wanted. Something bigger, she would think vaguely-a different kind of life. But the mood never lasts long" (Lessing 1994:39). These lines clearly hint at the absurdity of human life. The things that appear prior and most important to us may lose significances in no time. Thus, ultimately all marks appear meaningless. Our mood too is contingent. It fluctuates without stability. Human being, under such circumstance,

gets frustrated for its being, always seeks something permanent in nature. Thus, it moves towards transcendentalism.

Another authentic description about Mary is that she is deeply wounded that her friends could discuss about her such. She could not recognize herself in the picture they had made of her. It had a profound effect on her. She who would never think about herself, took to sitting in her rooms for hours at a time, wondering. The most disturbing and unhappy thing about it was when she would be around; they would just seem as usual, treating her with their ordinary friendliness. She was unable to detect this hypocritical face of the society. “She began to suspect double meanings where none was intended, to find maliciousness in the glance of a person who felt nothing but affection for her” (Lessing 1994:41). Thus lack of authenticity gives rise to absurdity and meaninglessness. It creates a hollow and nothingness of intellect or reasoning, of which human civilization is proud of.

Then Lessing describes how Mary adopts pretensions in order to put herself into the frame that her friends have framed for her and she felt ill at ease. For the first time in her life she also felt uncomfortable with men, which she was quite unconscious of, earlier. These minute changes in her were again so vague and subjective. We find her individuality being revealed by the author. The author also says that these changes in her were put into her because she started considering herself as a social being which she never thought of previously. ‘Society’ the abstract concept was never in her mind before. Therefore, when her friends wish her to get married then Mary considers that there might be something in it. Thus, herself and its freedom have been overpowered by the abstract society. This binding of the wishes of the society, curtails her freedom and despair sets into her life. An example of deep anguish can be felt in these lines- “She felt as she had never done before, she was

hollow inside, empty and into this emptiness would sweep from nowhere a vast panic, as if there were nothing in the world she could grasp hold of” (Lessing 1994:44).

Getting married to Dick took away her cherished freedom from her. She often dreamt about that beautiful lost time when she worked in an office and lived as she pleased, before she got married. Lessing here talks about the determinisms of the society as – “The conventionality of her ethics, which had nothing to do with real life, was restored by the thought of those friends, and the memory of their judgments on other people” (Lessing 1994:97). But, again and again she thought of nothing other than getting away from this life, which she never felt hers. She could feel the huge gulf between what she was now and what she had been. This gulf is actually the differences of her authentic self and the parasitic self. But being out of the character instilled fear in her. Finally, when she decided to go back to her previous life and take the help of Charlie we find her experiencing guilt. Human beings have to take the responsibility of his own work for it is then that freedom holds its meaning. ‘Guilt’ an existential concept emerges from this sense of responsibility. The existential concept of choice is also applicable here. It is the freedom of choice that constitutes an Individual. Therefore, Mary is what, her choices made her. Coming out of the farm which was more like a confinement for her, she felt she could float and spread by the air there. When she was reminded of the rule against married women by the matron, her ‘irresponsible happiness’ was destroyed. Standing motionless in the hall, she found the unchanged setting. Everything looked so glossy and clean and ordered. Thus, Lessing gives us the sense of order and precision which again belongs to the world of abstracts. The world of discipline, order and determinism were not preferred by Doris Lessing. It forces us to believe with the author that the enigma of life remains unsolved. Mary wanted to escape from the life of a farm and from being just a wife of Dick in their previous carefree life of service in an office. But to

her surprise she found the behavior of her previous relations to have changed. On reflection, she too admits that the strife and strain of her new life have changed her from within. On returning back to her farm Dick is taken ill, which endows her with the responsibility of ruling over her native workers. We find her a strong woman with a slight tinge of sadism in her personality. "The sensation of being the boss over perhaps eighty black workers gave her new confidence, it was a good feeling, keeping them under her will, making them do as she wanted" (Lessing 1994:112).

It reveals that human being experience life at every moment and all momentary decisions make him what he becomes. These lines from the novel – "Involuntarily she lifted her whip and brought it down across his face in a vicious swinging blow" (Lessing 1994:119), proves her action at the existential level. It is followed by her immediate reaction, which made her tremble and stupefied, as if the whip had a song out of its own accord, without her willing it. Thus, it proves the presence of two selves within us. This incident is followed by a subjective analysis of Mary at the plight of the natives and her anger at the sentimentalists and theoretician who interfered with the natural right of a white farmer to treat his labour as he pleased. Thus, traces of sadism can be felt in her character which is revealed at the suitable circumstance.

'Crisis', according to existentialist is an important vent to realize the truth. As we find Mary an ego-centric character, she is ever engrossed with her 'self.' Her hopes and aspirations are all related to pacify her. It is said- "She needed a man stronger than herself, and she was trying to create one out of Dick" (Lessing 1994:127). She hated herself for being tied to a failure. She was made for material success. Therefore, with drought, crisis developed in their life and Mary could not take it. Though immediate indications of despair

were not visible, but the effects of mortal shocks only manifest themselves slowly. Hopes were no more there to sustain her future prospects. “There was nothing Nil. Emptiness” (Lessing 1994:132). This line echoes ‘despair’ and ‘nothingness’. Finding herself in a state of emptiness; she longs to have a girl child who would give her company, just as she did to her mother. Thus, she could identify her plight with that of her mother. Kierkegaard, the founding figure of existentialism, believed that the truth can be found only by individual existent and again it can never represent a finality. It remains a persistent striving or becoming. According to him, life can never be explained unless it is lived. In the life of Mary too, we find a persistent struggle to reach the truth which is again not finality. A sense of ‘nothingness’ is also felt in Mary’s life. “She felt as if a touch would send her off balance into nothingness; she thought of a fully complete darkness with longing” (Lessing 1994:140). But such moments of nothingness or emptiness are moments to give a new start. Thus, these are moments of true existence of existents. Reality is perceived in the intense moments of existences, especially in the moments of painful decision.

Mary developed her identity on roles assigned by the society, ignoring her own nature. This generated a gap between her inner and outer self which in the course of time became so great that, she disintegrated into madness and invited death. Through this novel, Doris Lessing tried to reveal the connection between what human beings are in their innermost selves and how they behave collectively. She also refuses to blame the collective or society in order to exonerate the individual. “Influenced by the existentialism of the post-World War two years, she maintains that individuals cannot take refuge in collective judgment, but must take responsibility for the conditions of their existence” (Pickering 1990:34).

To delve deep into the subjectivity of Mary, we find that she is being stretched by two forces at the conscious level. On one hand her hatred for the natives made her a tyrant to Moses. “She was tight and controlled in his presence; she kept him working as long as she could, relentless over every speck of dust and every misplaced glass or plate- that she noticed” (Lessing 1950:148). On the other hand, Dick’s warning that he could stand no more changes of servants, kept her poise. She would do her regular work, but as if in a dream. Often, when she would collapse into a chair, thinking nothing; but the knowledge of Moses alone in the house with her, remain like a weight at the back of her mind. Even in a very sullen state of mind, the presence of this native servant, linger in her mind. Thus, this is the experience that is not determined by any outside force. This is on her existence level. His touch is like a nightmare where one is powerless against horror. Alertness comes back to her features at his presence near her, although he behaves as if he is an abstraction. This line from the novel proves her helplessness, - “She felt the usual anger rise within her, at the tone he used to her; at the same time she was fascinated, and out of her depth; she did not know what to do with his personal relation” (Lessing 1950:153).

We can clearly view the existential strain of the novel through the line which says- “She behaves simply as if she lives in a world of her own, where other people’s standards don’t count” (Lessing 1950:187). Due to the unpredictable nature of human being, Mary, who bind herself in a relationship in which she could never be herself, lives on her own account. Collective concept can no more dictate the decisions of her life. She also moans in front of Tony, revealing her anguish at things happening in her life without her control. Thus, life becomes meaningless and absurd.

Self-estrangement or alienation is clearly projected through the character of Mary. Mary loses her interest in all activities, after her marriage. Towards the later part of the novel, we find her personality disintegrated. She lives as if in a state of trance, becoming alert only at the presence of Moses. She runs through a variety of emotions and in the process becomes aware of the feelings she has repressed. The dreams are very fertile projection of her subconscious mind. Through her dreams Moses becomes identified with her actual father. She also joyfully dreams that Dick is dead and Moses comforting her protectively is also like her father horrible and mean, touching her with desire. Her anticipation of complicity of her death gives us a sense of suicidal tendency of which she herself seems unaware. Only death seems to be the possible solution to her conflicting impulses. She believes her death as inevitable and a logical outcome of her situation. To talk about logic, we find Doris Lessing avoiding a clear relationship of cause and effect. She avoids giving a pronouncement for the murder of Mary, highlighting the absurdity and peculiarity of human life.

The final chapter indicates that Mary has some insight into the cause of her breakdown. Her perception that the rains will come after her death indicates that she finally understands that her sterility of spirit is the reason for her disintegration. "Mary's murder portrayed from her own point of view, is thus represented as an act of liberating fulfilment" (Wang 2009:42). Mary's redemption depended on her death, after which she is released from the impossible struggle to live according to her own conscience that was liberated to feel something for the black other than sheer hatred.

Thus, Moses functions as both her father and deliverer. Mary, who feels involved in her father's death, kills her husband Dick in her dream which would mean his psychic unimportance in her life, but cannot kill Moses. On the contrary, she nearly invites Moses to

kill her. By submitting to death, Mary performs a vague act of penance. Through the analysis of dreams we find her, face to face with her *being*, which is an essential element in the study of existentialism.

The Golden Notebook was first published in 1962 and it was considered as a landmark novel of twentieth century literature. It is the story of Anna Wulf, a divorced, single mother and novelist, laboring against writer's block in 1950s London. Fearful of going mad, she records her experiences in four coloured notebooks. The black notebook records her writing life, the red her political views, the yellow notebook her emotional life and the blue her every day events. But it is the fifth notebook-the golden notebook-that brings the strands of her life together and holds the key to her recovery. Thus, initial disintegration culminates in unity. This novel captures the period when not only novels but also the political certainties were dissolving. It is an attempt of work on a large scale covering a wide-ranging engagement with contemporary society seen through the eyes of women. In the preface which she added nine years later, Doris Lessing describes the shape of the novel:

There is a skeleton, or frame, called *Free Women*, which is a conventional short novel, about 60,000 words long, and which could stand by itself. But it is divided into five sections and separated by stages of the four Notebook, Black, Red, Yellow and Blue. The Notebooks are kept by Anna Wulf, a central character of *Free Women*. She keeps four and not one because, as she recognized, she has to separate things off from each other, out of fear of chaos, of formlessness- of breakdown. Pressures, inner and outer, end the Notebooks; a heavy black line is drawn across the page of one after another. But now that they are finished can come something new, *The Golden Notebook* (Maslen 1994:17).

Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* was a significant novel for many women. It was a kind of raising awareness about their own lives, relationships and feeling which made many women active feminists. But Lessing herself has always been skeptical about feminism as a movement and has been unwilling to identify herself as a feminist. Doris Lessing was a

communist throughout her twenties and thirties and only left the party after the invasion of Hungary in 1956.

The heroine of the novel, Anna Wulf, is, as Lessing, involved in the British Communist Party. She is living off the royalties from her first novel, about her experiences in South Africa, but she now has writer's block. She feels that anything she could write would be pointless when there is such horror in the world because it would merely create an untruthful version of reality (Watkins 2001:64).

Therefore, through the character of Anna Wulf the author attempts to explore the realities in different dimensions. *The Golden Notebook* is set against the background of the emergence of the cold war and the decline of communism. It discusses in detail about left-wing political activism and orthodox Marxist theory, but Anna's growing sense of disillusionment with the doctrines of the party is also clearly depicted in the text. The novel is related to her understanding of herself as a woman, and her struggle to define what a 'free woman' is. Thus, at the very outset of 'free woman' we get the glimpse of an existential peep into the concept of freedom. In the preface to *The Golden Notebook* she says: "As in the political sphere, the child is taught that he is free, a democrat, with a free will and a free mind, lives in a free country, makes his own decisions. At the same time, he is a prisoner of the assumptions and dogmas of his time, which he does not question, because he has never been told they exist" (Lessing 1972:15).

These lines clearly emit the existential sense of the author. She tries to explore the actual sense of freedom which remains as an illusion in the minds of the people. People are prisoners of established thoughts, dogmas and value systems and when they are given the liberty to choose, their choice is influenced by the false dichotomy ingrained in the heart of their culture. Thus, subjectivity is what she strongly advocates. "The concept of freedom - artistically or otherwise - rests on the belief that there can exist a subjectivity untouched

by ideology - free, autonomous and unified” (King 1989:44). In order to overcome the division to restore a sense of wholeness, Anna attempts to dive deep into her subjectivity in conversation with the psychoanalyst, she nicknames Mother Sugar. Mother Sugar suggests that her repressed subjectivity which has been suppressed due to her refusal to write fiction, is surfacing in her dreams. Throughout the novel, we find the author exploring the multiple selves of Anna and trying to face the being in Anna. We find her searching for authenticity of self. She analyses her various fragmented selves through the different parts or sections of the novel. The text is a model for the construction of the self by the self rather than through any ideology. We find Tommy accusing Anna of limiting herself in those notebooks out of her fear of moral chaos. It is this fear which had made her feel incapable of being a novelist in the true sense of the word. She felt she lacked the strong moral passion and intellectual ability to create an order. “But this desire for order was a conservative impulse, belied by her entire existence: the contents of her Notebooks constantly threaten to break through the boundaries she has attempted to impose on them” (King 1989:53). In her preface to *The Golden Notebook*, she says, “the essence of the book, the organization of it, everything in it, says implicitly and explicitly, that we must not divide things off, must not compartmentalize” (Lessing Preface. 1972:10). Anna therefore strives to pull all of herself into one book, *The Golden Notebook*. But this ‘all’ splits and becomes contradictory and open. Through the ‘projectionist’ of her dreams, passing a beam of ray into her repressed self, Anna is able to review the script of her life in different versions and with a new emphasis. Her life is like the shape and form which her memory gives to it. It reveals many shapes and forms and not a single, fixed reality. We find Anna striving to find herself and through her intellectual perception she is able to discover her fragmented selves and face them authentically.

While going through the preface of the novel *The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing, the readers are made aware about the structure of the epoch making novel and the background thoughts that ultimately produced the work as it stands today. It is said that there is a frame or skeleton called 'Free Women,' which is a conventional short novel with about 60,000 words and which stands by itself as a story. The creativity is applied here, when it is divided into five sections and separated by stages of four Notebooks, which are Black, Red, Yellow and Blue. Anna Wulf is the central character of the story and she kept the Notebooks to separate things off from each other. She fears, chaos, formlessness and breakdown. After completion from their fragments evolved something new, which is named *The Golden Notebook*.

Betsy Draine, while trying to understand Doris Lessing as a postmodern writer, says- "Perhaps the distinguishing quality of the form found in postmodern fiction is that order is forced to acknowledge and even to incorporate the force of chaos, the source and destroyer of all form" (1980 : 31). But the firm stand has been improved upon and it is accepted that the author can no longer hope to impose this pattern on the material or bringing order out of chaos. It is more an expression of the dynamic interplay of order and chaos. Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* does not aim at covering up the chaos; neither does it allow chaos to play freely. Instead, the novel presents in its structure and story a powerful tension between chaos and order.

Throughout the novel, we find people have theorized, dogmatized, labeled and compartmented the concepts. In other words, the character occupied themselves in abstract thinking and trying to bind everything in strict discipline. Their voices were so general and representative of the time that they appeared anonymously. Still, at the end of the novel, we

find Anna Wulf is more mature, more life affirming and more creative than her mentor Saul. Saul's schizophrenic leap from one role to another is a madness that is a cure to the excessive sanity of Anna. Anna always tried to keep herself within the confines of narrow roles. She was so conscious about herself that she kept separate notebooks to divide her perceptions but "Saul forces her into a chaotic state of dreams and visions where she embraces at last the fullness of her experiences including, at last, all the roles she has denied herself" (Draine 1980 : 44). Confining herself only in certain roles did not allow her to give vent to the exuberance of passions that she consistently denied herself in the past. Thus, in the inner *Golden Notebook* things have come together, the divisions have broken down and there is formlessness with the end of fragmentation. There is a triumph of the second theme, which is the triumph of Unity. Anna and Saul Green 'break down,' they become crazy, lunatic, mad and stay in their 'will.' They 'break down' into each other and into other people. They break down the pattern and formulas they have made to store them and each other. Lessing in the Preface, also says that this theme of 'break down' which is a way of self-healing of the inner self's dismissing false dichotomies and divisions, has been written about by many of her contemporaries. "Here it is rougher, more close to the experiences, before experience has shaped itself into thinking and pattern – more valuable perhaps because it is rawer material" (Lessing 2007 : 8). The above mentioned lines without a doubt prove that she wanted to reach the inner self of her character and reveal the functions of the being. She wanted to peep into the innermost recess of the mind of her protagonist to understand human life. Thus, the very motivation proves the presence of the strain of existentialism in her works. Another vital point that Lessing refutes is the claim of reviewers as her being concerned about the sex war. She does not refuse to support Women's Liberation. However, according to her, it is the time when the whole world is being shaven into a new pattern by

the cataclysm through which it was passed. By the time we get through and survive in the new world the aims of Women's Liberation will look very small. Therefore, she could feel that enough had been thought and taken for granted and this flat, stirless world would soon present new challenges in front, which required more authenticity and greater dimensions to work.

In this Preface, she tried to educate her readers about the works which are inspired by the revolutionary existential thinking. She holds the entire Education system responsible for this process of indoctrination. What one is taught is an amalgam of current prejudice and the choices of this particular culture. Again, while studying the history the impermanence of thoughts are revealed. We are taught by people who have accommodated the thoughts within themselves, laid down by their predecessors. Some of the people may have a strongly developed Individuality, who will defy this self-perpetuating system and find ways of educating their own judgment. Those who cannot, are being moulded and patterned to fit into the narrow and particular needs of this particular society. Thus, through the preface of the novel she makes it clear that she would write the fiction not accommodating the thoughts that have been written previously, but she would go closer to her characters and project that which would be revealed to her in its unique form. She would also learn life, as she would delineate her character.

As we constrict our eyes in search of existentialism into the novel the first thing that we perceive is that the characters – Anna and Molly are described with subjective details – “Molly was altogether more worldly-wise than Anna who, for her part had a superiority of talents” (Lessing 2007 : 26). Again, about the marriage of Molly, she was not happy with the tie because she had to marry considering the need for security and respectability. After the birth of Tommy, their son, they had to be separated due to their

incompatibility. Thus, other than authentic feelings of compatibility, dry determinism does not work in the serious relationship like marriage. Again absurdity of human relationship is revealed when Richard and Molly, soon after getting divorced, becomes friends. Later, Marion too becomes her friend. Thus, what is thought to happen and what really happens is vastly different. From the beginning, we find the major characters like Anna, Molly, Richard and Tommy are very different from each other. Stress develops amongst the characters whenever one tries to control another's thoughts. Both the women are Individualized and admit that – 'we are a completely new type of women.' We find the two women thrown into the world with unique talents which they seek to develop. Molly was gifted naturally with a variety of talents, which was overshadowed by her marriage, and Anna has that one talent which she needs to carry ahead. The difference between the two characters, were drawn in details which gave the individuality. Anna's nonconformist attitude to rules and disciplines is proved by – "We've always refused to live by the book and the rule" (Lessing 2007 : 32). Molly too says, "but I'm not a theoretical type" (Lessing 2007 : 32) . These lines confirms that these two women were leading a life without any compromise with the outside pressure or pre-conceived notions. Life reveals to them with time and thus they learn in the process. According to Heidegger, it is an essential constituent of 'Dasein,' that there is constantly something still to be settled. Dasein must become what it is not yet. Thus, there are always some outstanding potentialities for 'Being.' "Why do I always have this awful need to make other people see things as I do" (Lessing 2007 : 31). It implies that she has a sense of incompleteness in trying to understand herself. The human being is thrown into the world without any pre-giving interpretations of our lives that we can possess. According to Sartre, there are no signs in this world. Each of us must determine how we see and live our life.

As we go through the novel, we find the author opens up various channels of thought. At one level, she depicts the action and reaction of the characters and each developing the underlying thought that the author wishes to project. While on the other hand the characters twin thoughts are analyzed in details – for a closer identification of the readers with the presented characters. We also find them taking the responsibility of their action. For example Anna says – “We’ve chosen to live a certain way, knowing the penalties, or if we didn’t we know now, so why whine and complain” (Lessing 2007 : 62). Along with the depiction of the inner turmoil of Anna and Molly, we also find their actions and reactions to the outside world. Their opinions regarding the social conventions and political developments are presented before the readers. Thus, we get an opportunity to witness the relationship between individual to an individual and individual with the collective i.e. Society. Thus, the novel is an endeavour of Lessing to reveal the various patterns and formulas created by human being to build a platform for him. These patterns give rise to various compartments, which falsifies our being. Based on this thought she projects the dilemma and crisis of a writer trying to create a work of fiction in the midst of Chaos. This is a world of Newsprint, facts hypocrisies and self-deception. Her search is to find a center of subjective experiences, which would stand as truth or reality.

At the beginning of *The Notebooks* Anna admits her despair and suffering from writer’s block. She says that she perceives ‘darkness’ and ‘terror’ of the city. “Fear of being alone” (Lessing 2007 : 71). These are the clear perception of her existential stance. She laments the present state of human being who has become a slave to the assumptions and dogmas of his time, which he never questions because he becomes so much at home with these conceptions.

Early in the *Black Notebook*, Anna's record about the contemporary novel is also pregnant with existential thought. She says – "One novel in five hundred or a thousand has the quality a novel should have to make it a novel – the quality of philosophy" (Lessing 2007:75).

Most novels, if they are successful at all, are original in the sense that they report the existence of an area of society, a type of person, not yet admitted to the general literate consciousness. The Novel has become a function of the fragmented society, the fragmented consciousness. Human beings are so divided, are becoming more and more divided and more subdivided in themselves, reflecting the world, that they reach out desperately, not knowing that they do it, for information about other groups inside their own country, let alone about groups in other countries (Lessing 2007 : 75).

Thus, she laments at the function of novels, for it has acquired the quality of journalism or reportage. The human being has divided and sub-divided themselves and the parts have drifted away so far that communication between parts is not possible. Therefore, people belonging to the higher class are not aware about the life of lower class and vice-versa. It is through the information from these novels that human being blindly seeks to grasp the 'wholeness' of humanity.

Every line of the novel when we read through, gives us the sensation of existentialism. Her cry for authenticity is revealed in the line – "Why a story at all not that it was a bad story, or untrue, or that it debased anything. Why not, simply, the truth" (Lessing 2007 : 77). We find her extremely honest and undaunted in revelation. Her concern about human being binding themselves in patterns and disciplines and their fragmentation as well as compartmentalization can be felt all throughout the novel.

The real reason why so many, artists now take to politics, 'Commitment' and so on is that they are rushing into a discipline, any discipline at all, which will save them from the poison of the word 'artist' used by the enemy (Lessing 2007 : 77).

She once says that she is interested only in stretching, in living as fully as she can. Thus, living confined within some restricted discipline was against her nature. When she describes the character of Paul Blackenhurst, whom she used in *Frontiers of War* as a character full of enthusiasm and idealism, she actually – “In fact, he was without any sort of enthusiasm, but he gave the impression of it, because of his lively appreciation of any moral or social anomaly” (Lessing 2007 : 87). Through this character Lessing gives us a glimpse of the authenticity that she searches in life. While talking about Wilhelm Rodde too, she projects the opportunistic behavior of human being. She even says, “The three men from the camp were united by nothing but the uniform, although they had been friends at oxford” (Lessing 2007 : 86). In a subtle way, she hints at man’s nature of binding oneself with any pattern and turning a deaf-ear to the subjective resonance. Men have a strong inclination of being accepted in the group. This urge of being collective induces him to bind his subjectivity to the conformation of society. “One personality in the committee room; another for the cafe afterward” (Lessing 2007 : 88). This is the exact picture of modern man. Modern man has divided or fragmented self, which can never project an authentic picture.

The description of Ted Brown is with a difference since he is described as a genuine socialist. Socialism was in his nature. According to his character it is more important to rescue a human being from darkness than to add another pilot to the war effort, fascism or no fascism. In him we find Lessing relaxes with conformism. However, the quest to gain ultimate knowledge about life does not end here, for Ted Brown meets with an ironic end. “Ironically enough the young man for whom he did this was his only failure” (Lessing 2007 : 91). Thus, we find her wondering at the absurdity of human life.

Another important aspect of existentialism is present in the Novel of Ella, who is a fictional projection of Anna representing the contemporary woman. Ella, who works for a

Magazine catering to working class Women, writes a novel about a young man preparing to commit suicide. Generally, 'Suicide' is dealt as social phenomena. For an existentialist, the concern is between individual thoughts and suicide. An act like suicide is cooked up within the silence of the heart, as is a great work of art. The person involved remains ignorant about it and one fine evening he pulls a trigger or Jumps off an apartment – building, killing himself. "Beginning to think is beginning to be undermined. But society has little connection with such beginning. The works are in a man's heart" (MacDonald, 2000 : 153). The theme of the novel *The shadow of the third* is suicide. It is about the death of a young man who had not known that he was going to commit suicide until the moment of death. That was the crucial moment for which he had been preparing silently in detail. This point of despair is the centre of the contrast between the surface of his life which appears to be plain and orderly and the underlying motif which instigated the tendency of suicide. The scarcely noticed substratum of 'Despair' gives rise to unknown intention to commit suicide. This is a world divested with illusions and lights, where a man feels alien and strange. Feeling of absurdity sets in. Thus, the whole concept of suicide is a rich study under existentialism and as this aspect is being dealt with here, it becomes a study under this system of thought. This novel reflects Ella's self-destructive tendencies. Paul for Anna is vehicle for intellectual exploration, While Ella for emotional exploration. It is through him that the boulder-pusher is introduced. "All our lives you and I, we'll put all our energies, all our talents, into pushing a great boulder up a mountain" (Lessing 2007 : 196). He says that in spite of our conviction that human stupidity cannot be overcome, we still try to improve the human condition with patient labor at Mundane task. Here we get the image of Albert Camus's existential hero Sisyphus. Human experience shows that after all the efforts we put in our work, we have to return to our beginning again.

In fact the whole novel is a brilliant example of existentialism. This belief is probably in itself a danger. "Sitting there I had a vision of the world with nations, systems, economic blocks, hardening and consolidating; a world where it would become increasingly ludicrous even to talk about freedom, or the individual conscience" (Lessing 2007 : 496).

This passage explains her disillusionment over Western Democracy, the build-in belief that freedom and liberty will strengthen and survive all kinds of pressure. She could feel the growth of various systems of determinism engulfing the humanity. Under such a suffocating circumstances freedom or individual conscience would be absurd. "But think about it, and it vanishes" (Lessing 2007 : 519). This line beautifully makes us realize the 'existent' level of survival. We enjoy our experience without thinking. On application of our thought we strangle our happiness.

She also reposes on the concept of 'fear' and says – "Meanwhile, human beings are ten thousand years behind them, imprisoned in fear" (Lessing 2007 : 537). She says that human being kept in solitary confinement can make a madman of himself. Fear brings in slavery and breeds violence. Thus, the world is treading the bold path of 'Wetuminisms' which will snap away individual's freedom and instil fear in the mind of people. This will bring the mass disintegration of people. While reading through Doris Lessing's Novel we find her interest shifting from the social reform to a concern for personal redemption. Her interest has always been in spiritual growth, which is evident through her later volumes of *Children of Violence*, Culmination in *The Four Created Cities*. In *The Golden Notebook* we find the theme of integration of the personality through Madness, and ends with a vision of an apocalyptic future. Madness is applied by her as a form of rebellion. It is so because people who are insane, can stand against any rule or discipline. They can stand against conformism.

Dreams are important aspects in her novels; Dreams release the limited character from the confines of limited consciousness. Fragmentation being one of the important themes of the novel reveals Lessing's self at multiple level. "Anna says that the notebooks represent a way of splitting the self to save it from Chaos" (Sprague 1987 : 81). This technique really works in seeing the self in or as others. We have multiple selves. Anna projects various selves like – Ella, Julia Marion, Maryrose, Mrs. Marks, Molly, Saul etc. She can try out various selves to explore the possibilities. She may, for example, see herself as a mother in Anna, Molly, Ella and Marion, and through these acted and enacted selves exercise guilt or explore unacceptable acts and attitudes (Sprague 1987 : 82).

An overall knowledge that we can gather is that Lessing's ultimate quest is to know the self. Through the projection of the various selves she accepts, sorts, connects and questions various discords in life. Thus, his writing itself is a journey to understand life.

The end of *The Golden Notebook*, does not offer an answer or a solution to the character Anna as the reader. We are left with two alternatives – the Anna of *The Golden Notebook* returns to her writing and the Anna of *Free Women*, Opts for more practical and political engagements – teaching at night school, joining the labour party, etc. These alternatives are outlets of Anna's repressed self and confirming self respectively. She has been striving to find her own voice and on the other hand the meaning in existing public discourse. "There is therefore no 'Conclusion' to *The Golden Notebook* because the end of the novel directs us immediately back to its beginning, making us feel that we need to re-read the whole novel differently in order to grasp its meaning" (King 1989:53). The lines between facts and fiction are increasingly obscure. The originator of either the Notebooks or *Free Women* becomes uncertain. Thus, the absurdity is inherent in the novel. The

existential search of the self culminates in the ‘no answer’ zone. Anna writes and re-writes herself for she refuses confinement and definitive, single, unified and comprehensive subject structure.

Thus, existential tenets of analysis like – subjectivity, obscurity, Authenticity, apart from Anxiety regarding, life, death, contingencies and extreme situation, fear, despair and personal relationship adds to the beauty and meaning in the creation of the novel. Individual in it is a mode of becoming. It always has a possibility and therefore incompleteness is inextricably intertwined with its existence. According to Heidegger, in the basic constitution of *Dasein* there is always something still to be settled. Such a lack of wholeness signifies that there is always something still to be in the potentiality for being. For a human being this ‘lack of totality’ gets converted to form of anticipation that is indispensable to existence. “Thus, Anna goes from seeing the perpetual incompleteness of her creative projects and her attempts at self-understanding as a source of frustration and *angst* to affirming her own existence” (Ong. 2009:192). Camus advocates in *The Myth of Sisyphus* that, neither experience nor the book describing it can be closed.

The first volume of Doris Lessing’s autobiography begins with her childhood in Africa and ends on her arrival in London in 1949 with the typescript of her first novel, *The Grass is Singing*. These volumes were written against the backdrop of the twentieth century philosophical questions about the self. Doris Lessing is generally recognized as one of the most important writers of the twentieth century and Lessing is very much alive even as she releases volume one *Under my Skin* (1995) and volume two *Walking in this shade* (1995) of her proposed autobiographical trilogy. Doris Lessing’s *Under My Skin* shows a woman uncompromising from the beginning, in every aspect, she breaks all rules, she battles at every step against her upbringing and environment and she looks straight at the world with

extreme honesty. The second volume of her autobiography, *Walking in the Shade* depicts the unconventional life of a young writer and single mother in 1950 London. This book covers the period from 1949 when Lessing arrived in London, devastated by war with a two and a half years old son and the manuscript of her first novel *The Grass is Singing*. In her autobiography Doris Lessing sets the individual against history, the personal against general and with the example of her own life, she presents authentically, how biography and fiction can be fused. It is not just the description of one childhood, but about all childhoods, not just the description of a white marginality belt about all forms of internal bondage, rebellion, submersion and secret self-making. Her voice is a voice of wise and fearless honesty.

Doris Lessing has engaged in a lifelong process of self-education, becoming involved with all the important intellectual and political movements of the twentieth century: Freudian and Jungian psychology, Marxism, existentialism, mysticism, socio-biology, and speculative scientific theory. All these interests appear in her fiction, which consequently serves as a record of the changing climate of the time (Pickering 1990:6).

From the beginning she is critical about her upbringing. The harsh disciplines of one Doctor Truby King were followed in the nurseries, both in Kermanshah and in Tehran. It was his book which was a law for innumerable parents. “You must have discipline-that’s the important thing” (Lessing 1995:23). The bindings in the form of disciplines were constricting her and she wishes to escape from her mother physically. She says “I am untidy, tolerate disorder, but am obsessive in small useful ways, like keeping a diary” (Lessing 1995:24). It is evident that she likes freedom and from the very beginning could not conform to any forced ways. About her own nature, she says. “Neither parents liked displays of emotion. If my mother’s daughter had been like her, of the same substance, everything would have gone well. But it was her misfortune to have an over sensitive, always observant and judging, battling, impressionable, hungry – for – love child” (Lessing 1995:26). Her strong ego was moving

her away from her mother. Her individuality is focused through these lines. Her sense of freedom is reflected in these lines too – “Meaning, never let yourself be trapped. In other words, I was rejecting the human condition, which is to be trapped by circumstances” (Lessing 1995:120). She was adamant and repeated “I will not, I will not” (Lessing 1995:121).

Therefore, as depicted in the first volume of her autobiography, *Under My Skin*, we find her an extremely observant, sensitive, egoist and a non-conformist. Nothing passed unobserved under her eyes and we feel the development of herself within her. She is socially alert and could feel the racial discrimination at that tender age when she says, “They were there, taken for granted. No white child learned shone - considered to be a Kaffir language” (Lessing 1995:113). She would not allow herself to be constrained or constricted under any circumstances. “Don’t be like them. Meaning, never let yourself be trapped. In other words, I was rejecting the human condition, which is to be trapped by circumstances” (Lessing 1995:120). We find her being constantly in search of something which is even not known to her. It revolts against all disciplines and conventions and says “I will not, I will not” (Lessing 1995:121) and reaches out to every next moment in search of the truth which appears to be a mirage. Thus the existential absurdity is reflected.

Her sudden conversion to Roman Catholicism also projects existential interpretation. She was strongly influenced by the Catholic ways of ghostly nuns, holy water, bells, virgin Mary, the visits of the priests from St. George’s and unctuous male hands covered with rings which were held out to be kissed. It appeared as if she wanted to take in everything on the faith within her. The kindness of sister Antoma was transferred to the virgin and she began spending every spare minute in the Roman Catholic Church. But when she went home for the holidays and her mother saw the holy water and the rosary under her

pillow she exploded into reproaches'. She narrated the crimes of Roman Catholicism. Lessing was filled with disgust for illogical masquerading as virtue. Thus, the hollow, man-made doctrine and dogmas became visible in her mental eyes. She emerged from her slumber to take a longer flight of atheism. She proves her authenticity by abstaining from the 'bad faith.' As we read the autobiography we find her as if she is taking a dip into the objectivities and recoiling again into her individuality. She emerges out in a new form after every experience of her life. Her disillusionment with communists is evident in when she reveal that she had known now a good many people who have gone through the process of first being devout communist, then adjustments to various degrees of doubt, which is described by Arthur Koestler as 'Coins Dropping one by one out of your pocket' (interesting, that, coins equated with ideas), then sadness or depression, then loss of faith. We find her authenticity when she admits- "I was never committed with all of myself to communism." She compares herself with another, boys and girls for whom communism was everything and when they lost their faith they were being deprived of the best things of their life. Some died and some had a serious breakdown. At this critical juncture, one is bound to accept the absurdity of the world. According to Jaspers, "we can achieve nothing that will transcend the fatal game of appearance" (MacDonald 2000:162). He says that this is the world in which the impossibility of knowledge is established, everlasting nothingness seems to be the only reality and despair seems to be the only attitude in life. Her sense of absurdity is revealed also when she reflects on wars, and says that people are being stirred and swirled around in war, and they collide against each other, who never otherwise would have met.

She says – "But memory is a great maker of comedy. Decades after an event which were painful or even frightening, it may seem merely absurd" (Lessing 1995 : 328). Soon after the war, her adolescent dream of going round the world ended. The damage

caused by the war was scary. There was widespread destruction, misery, death, concentration camps, refugees and lost children. Everyone matched and believed that it would be the last time, but five years later, the Korean War, was a shock to humanity. Thus, Lessing says ‘that humanity is not in control of what happens that we are helpless.’ Through this line, we find her sense of insecurity and the absurdity of humanity. We find her flight of transcendental thoughts in the quest of reaching and understanding man and his being.

The most striking part of her being is the inner revolt that she experiences being trapped in the stereotyped role of a mother of the two children. Racial discrimination and the evils of war revealed a variety of paths that she felt was meant for her. She was drunk with sincerity and conflict and elated with ideals and with poetry. She was going to protect herself by committing the unforgivable act, by leaving the two small children. She thought she did not feel guilty, but long afterwards; she was informed by a psychotherapist that she carried a load of guilt. To exist is to project oneself into the future.

In the last paragraph of the first chapter, she gives us a feeling that apart from the dread of war; she was also suffering from a feeling of dread, the reason of which was not clear to her. Perhaps it was this unknown fear which developed an aversion within her towards the place where she lived. Contingency of human life is brilliantly projected when she compares life with climbing a mountain. She says that telling truth is not a problem if the perspectives of life would remain static. We see things differently at different stages of life. The truths of life change their definition with time. Thus, life is a continuous process of experiences and learning.

I try to see my past selves as someone else might, and then put myself back in one of them, and am at once submerged. In a hot struggle of emotion, justified by thoughts and ideas I now judge wrong (Lessing 1995 : 12).

It is after all only what we did when we were born, without memories, or so it seems to the adult then we have to create our life create memories (Lessing 1995 : 13). These lines echo Sartre's *Existentialism*- "it means that, first of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and only afterwards, defines himself" (Marino 2004 : 345). Lessing analyses human being existentially and says that man is indefinable because he is what he makes of himself, with a conscious 'will.' Existentialism teaches every man to be aware of what he is and to take the responsibility of his existence for him. As we read through the autobiography, we also find that Lessing was always against any kind of authoritative pressure over her. With a struggle, she had to develop her own realism to defy anybody else dictating her. Since the childhood subjective study of the world interested her since she says – "That England they talked about, all that green grass and spring flowers and cows as friendly as cats – what had all that to do with me" (Lessing 1995 : 82).

She had an observant eye and nothing really missed out from her view. But we find her dispassionately describing everything that went round her and a sense of query attached to them. She has seen the bitter poverty in her family and she says that the need of money never disturbed her. She believes that factual approach towards our sense and sensibility can never satisfy our urge to know.

At the age of fourteen her uncompromising nature becomes prominent. She revolted against the 'do this and don't' of her mother. Her father too was lost somewhere in she says "He was hypochondriac, querulous, self-pitying, Splenetic, Where was my father" (Lessing 1995:156).

She cannot accept the language of authority and firmly says 'I will not.' She develops aversion towards war as her father always occupies himself with the thoughts

related to war. She would see him in anxiety and pain thinking about the political development of Britain. As an adolescent her only relief was day dreaming. She could break the barriers of time and space through her dreams and gain freedom. Her authentic and uncompromising self is revealed through this line – “Over and over again in my life I’ve been sort when I softened or changed truth for some reason, to satisfy outside pressure, or make things easier” (Lessing 1995-161).

As a social critic we find her unmaking many social conventions and practices. To talk about the incident of the faith healer, we find, Lessing projecting here sarcastically. Regarding the ‘Native question’ too, we find her thinking right while the others paid no attention to their condition. She says – “For one thing, why were all these people working for so little money on our farm” (Lessing 1995 : 179).

At certain places in the autobiography she reveals the innermost part of the human self. She is extremely authentic when she says – “There he lay beside me, brotherly, allowing himself tentative and inept kisses. I could not see why this was moral, while actually having sex was not” (Lessing 1995 : 184).

She questions the fundamental urge of human being, over which he has built a magnificent structure of falsity and coldness. Her observant eyes and fertile brain recorded all that which went around her life. Her independent spirit could not accept any pressure from outside that would hinder the spontaneous flow of knowledge for eternity. Therefore, naturally she says – “But the interesting thing is, why does the one generation’s imperative – so taken for granted there is no need even to spell it out – change into its opposite for their children” (Lessing 1995 : 203).

A voracious reader by nature, she read various books of the time and had a peculiar capacity of piercing her intellect deep inside life to unearth the meaning underneath the events in life. Thus, she says – “Every novel is a story, but a life isn’t one, more of a sprawl of incident” (Lessing 1995 : 202).

Thus, she talks about the moments of experience, as is realised by an existent before seeking which binds the various incidents to produce meaning. Another line which shows her firm belief in personal experience as the first-hand knowledge is-

Similarly, one may sit, with a dying person day and night, but no matter how hard you try, the actual consciousness, the knowledge of death, as this dying man or woman is experiencing it – this friend not a yard out of reach, you cannot enter it (Lessing 1995 : 207).

Her extreme concern for subjective experience is what enticed me to her novels and in that process I felt a constant urge to know her as an Individual through her autobiographies. About her religious views too, we find her still in search of the ultimate knowledge. She says – “We were both rational and un-religious, perhaps I should say anti-religious” (Lessing 1995 : 207). Perhaps, by the word ‘religion,’ she means the rituals, practices and does and don’ts of religion, which according to her free nature she cannot comply with. She even says that she and Frank projected their atheism, agnosticism as religious medals. Such a superficial adoption would facilitate their mutual adjustment in a married life. Thus, as the existentialist would have it, that there is always something more to be added to the self. Similarly, this pretension to be rationale is just a camouflage of Lessing to take a longer flight. We do not find her a firm – believer in religion, after her disillusionment from the Roman Catholicism, at a tender age. She decided to be an atheist then. But we always find an urge of search present in her nature. About her married life with Frank, she says that she

lived in totality, with full devotion, still she dreamt of escape. It was not because she disliked Frank, but more so because it was a life which she was every day scrutinizing more critically.

So strong was her feeling of anguish for the loss of freedom, of human being that she says that a newborn baby wanting food, before the right time which is a four-hourly feedings, was left to cry. “He’s got to learn who’s boss.’ ‘He has to learn he can’t have his own way” (Lessing 1995 : 219). Civilization actually curtails our freedom. Everything is taught to us, leaving no space for our own ways to keep ourselves. She also says “That anarch, the new baby, full of explosive and wonderful possibilities, is being taught its place in the world, taught what’s what” (Lessing 1995 : 219). Thus, it is her silent revolt against civilization that starts dictating since the birth of a child.

The irrational nature of life is exposed with subtlety, while narrating about her brother sinking with the ship the ‘Repulse.’ At first she thought him dead and the feeling of dread can be clearly felt. Such ‘terrible dread’ gives rise to dreams. We find her deeply involved in the crisis. However, the absurdity of life is proved when Harry was saved by chance. “Life depends on as chancy a thing as someone saying, ‘Aren’t you going up, Tayler’ – so he could reach the deck as the ship turned over, walk down into the sea and swim away” (Lessing 1995 : 247).

The presence of guilt is also felt in the autobiography. Her act of abandoning her two children threw a great effect on her. Initially, she rationalized the situation and was not aware about the presence of ‘guilt’ in her. After a long period of ten years, she was informed by the Psychotherapist that she carried a load of guilt in her.

Communism revealed its hollowness to her. She was disillusioned after seeing the murders committed by the communist comrades in the name of their hollow idealism.

There was the false dream of a 'paradise' which was nothing but fulfilling the sadistic dream of few people. She was awestruck discovering the emptiness of these great systems of thought. She could not understand the reason for her joining the movement. A few years ago this new flow of thoughts formed the epicenter of her life. With time everything appear absurd to her. She talks about her disillusionment with communism in these following lines-

If anyone dared to murmur about 'human nature' we would reason patiently with them, explaining they had not understood the regenerative and transforming power of Communism (Lessing 1995 : 282).

She could experience that all faiths-religious or political, actually separate us from our Individuality. Religion is rooted in the self-congratulation of religion. Communist, left-wing or other Revolutionary groups generally legitimize envy, and it is best done through the medium of art and literature. Thus, rationality is not an answer for the absurdity of human life. Experiences of every moment were adding to her intellectual growth.

Her second volume of the *Autobiography* is also strewn with existential thinking. She passes through every aspects of life authentically, and emerges out as an untainted being in the future. She is never caught in the labyrinth of the world. Her conviction on her own choice, is supported by this line of the autobiography – "But my attitude always was: decide to do something and then find out the way to pay for it" (Lessing 1998. 9). She was a liberated being traversed throughout the world and its established knowledge, as if to reach the ultimate truth, which ends in absurdity. In the process of being a writer we find her questioning the authenticity of her being. She says that she did not know how to define herself as a social being. Her self-query is established through these lines – "this business of 'finding out who I am' (and it really was then American) has always left me wondering... what can it be like, to live without that feeling of me, is here, of what I am" (Lessing 1998: 15). Her authentic self is also expressed through this line in the volume – "She said on no

account should I ever write one word I did not believe in, never write a word that wasn't the best I could do" (Lessing 1998:25). She was a detached person in politics. She was into communism, but communism could not take her 'self' away from her. This is evident when she says – "I hated having a Party card. I hated joining anything" (Lessing 1998: 55). She wanted a life which was free and without a care. Her subjectivity was her concern throughout. For her, these meetings were a 'tangle of contradictory, lunatic emotions and behaviour.' She is watchful and self-critical of every thought that visited her mind. She passed through every moment of her life without lingering anywhere and then stands out as a fresh and rejuvenated being with its original vitality and strength.

On the first page of this second volume of her Autobiography, she reveals her sense of freedom. "I was free I could at last be wholly myself" (Lessing 1998 : 3). She believed that arrival at London would usher her new life. Here she meant she was free from the narrow provincialism of Southern Rhodesia. It was a place where even serious talks were either about 'The Colour Bar' or the inadequacies of the Black. In other word she was averse to any kind of narrowness towards life. She thought she would be free from any outside pressure or discipline and would be with her 'self.'

Though *Walking in the Shade*, has a more objective description and less of subjective analysis and it is in the subjective analysis that I can turn my direction of study, still we can get glimpses of her Individuality evolving out. "What I did not know was how to define myself, see myself in a social context" (Lessing 1998 : 15).

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of a busy and expanded London Life, her mind raises the question regarding her 'self'. She says – "What can it be like, to live without that feeling of me, in here; of what I am" (Lessing 1998 : 15).

She is often left wondering, while trying to find out who she was. Since life is like an ocean, she is able to define it partially with the help of two world wars and her behavior with her mother, etc. However, she cannot define her entirely and finally. She was a personality who always relied on her own choice. No external pressure could tie her down and compel her to do the things she disliked. She says “My two Marriages I did not think of as having been chosen by me the first was because of the approach of war, always as good as a Marriage broker, the second was a political marriage” (Lessing 1998 : 141).

She regrets her two unsuccessful Marriages, which she believed were decisions taken on the basis of her necessity. She wished she would choose a man for compatibility, similarity of taste and Ideas or without any reasoning. Thus, she wished to be more authentic in her choice. In her suggestions to Edward Thompson too, we get the feeling of existentialism—

You have been a pure and high-minded communist, and until recently wouldn't accept the evil in it, and your idealism is hurt and your picture of yourself is damaged.....

.....
But, what have your feeling got to do with philosophies? We are living in a time; I am convinced, when there aren't likely to be any philosophies one can pay allegiance to. Marxism is no longer a philosophy, but a system of Government, differing from country to country (Lessing 1998: 195).

Through this passage, we find that she had no more faith in Marxism or any other philosophy. In other words, any determined structure to convey one's thought was not necessary, because thoughts spring from our self and self is boundless. Therefore, a constricted structure for thoughts, take away the authenticity.

Then she asks – “Which is good thing. Any philosophy which tests longer than fifty years must be a bad one, because everything changes so fast” (Lessing 1998 : 195).

This line makes the readers feel about contingency of life. Every moment gives birth to the next and every moment is unique. Therefore, every moment experienced by us involves individual choice, which in its turn creates us. She believed that, “No matter how much we think ourselves changing, we can never rival the immutable, nonintelligence of things that endure above and beyond us. Our life is - or should be - less a matter of yielding to the implacability of necessity than understanding its matter of factness” (Riley 1976:291).

She was so frustrated by communism that she says “I don’t want to make any more concepts” (Lessing 1998 :195). She wanted to ‘simmer’ into some kind of knowledge, unknown to her. We find her capturing every moment of her experience throughout life and critically examining them to squeeze out the meaning out of them. However, we find her frustrated at the narrowness of life and the absurdity of human action and thought and longs to simmer in an unknown kind of knowledge which would give her a final acquaintance with her. Our self is enigmatic. If ‘self’ can be known, the mysteries related to life and the world can be solved. Her lack of faith at any human concepts can be seen in this line – “I had learned that atmosphere and climates of opinion which seem at the time eternal may disappear overnight” (Lessing 1998 : 306). She narrates her experiences about the period just after the World War II, at the onset of the Cold War, when friendships were destroyed overnight and allies became enemies. There is no stability in human nature. Therefore, permanency is a myth in this world. This fleeting tendency of the worldly ways gave rise to her search for a path or discipline which would lead her to the unknown world of knowledge that would be more in compliance with her inner urge. Marxism contributed in the belief that human society is destined to become better in every way and particularly, materially. This gave rise to ‘*God-is-dead*,’ ‘*Science-is-King*’. People who believed in the existence of God is patronized as feeble-minded and a coward. Filtering through all these waves of materialism,

we find her moving toward the beliefs of the East. She gets attracted towards Buddhism and then Hinduism. Hinduism was appealing to her because of its polytheism and heteromorphism. She read all the great Eastern classics – *The Vedas*, *Bhagavad Gita*, the various Zen scriptures. However, it was difficult to assimilate the knowledge without a guide. All the various ‘paths’ that she was investigating, involved asceticism and as she lead a life which was more of an independent western life, it was difficult to shed some of her old practices. Yet, when she knew that there was this other world, the spiritual world, she experienced a secret exultation and a powerful grasping need. This urge becomes her real life. The book called *The Sufis* by Idries Shah ushered her into the new world of Sufism. She cites a small story from the book to prove her involvement with the cult –

A certain man is a prisoner on an Island, but he doesn’t know he was a prisoner and that there is more to life than prison life. A rawer offers him an escape, on a ship, but he say, ‘oh thank you, thank you, I’ll’ come, but I must bring my ton of cabbage with me (Lessing 1998 : 323).

She says she is not a fool to carry her ton of cabbage, when freedom is offered to her. However, she admits that it is hard to leave back the bindings that she was bound to, previously. She was enticed to Sufism as a Mystic and a religious cult. Sufism is an English word coined in the nineteenth century. The word used for system in Islamic texts is *Tasawwuf*. It has been interpreted by the Historians in several ways. According to some scholar, it is derived from *Suf*, meaning wool, referring to the coarse woolen clothes worn by Sufis. Others derive it from *Sufa* meaning purity. It may also have been derived from *suffa*, the platform outside the Project’s Mosque, where a group of close followers assembled to learn about the faith. In the early century of Islam a group of followers assembled to learn about the faith. This group of followers of the religion protected against the growing materialism of the Caliphate as a religious and political institution. They were ascetic and mystics and were against the dogmatic and scholastic methods of interpreting the Quran

and *Sunna* adopted by the theologians. Instead, they lay emphasis on seeking salutation through intense devotion and love for God by following God's commands. They followed the example of Prophet Muhammad, whom they regarded as a perfect human being. They are the ascetics who sought an interpretation of the Quran on the basis of their personal experience. Thus, the point of intersection of Lessing's urge of real knowledge and the Sufi philosophy is the personal experience of God. In order to understand the factor that entices Lessing towards Sufism is the subjective experience of God. Thus, quality of subjectivity of the cult also takes us to the subjective experience of Existentialism. Lessing sees that it is only in the fullest development and balancing of all available faculties that human beings can free themselves from mere predetermined repetition and so evade catastrophe. Lessing engages us in an uncompromising process of change simply by the fact that we are reading her novel and attempting to solve its mysteries and resolve its paradoxes. For Lessing, the Sufism provide the means that could help people transcend their limited cognitive capacity as a key to a fuller understanding of reality.

We generally live a hypocritical life, a life of continuous fraud; covering all sores in the best way we can. It is like putting a patch after patch, until everything is lost and we are a body of patchwork. This is the state of our practical life. A point of saturation comes when we grow dissatisfied with our present state of things, with our lives, and develop an intense hatred for this patching up of life. Religion begins at this point. Before she ends the volume of her autobiography she says that - 'when I look back I seem to remember singing'.

A continuous self-transcendence towards greater freedom and an open future is perceived in the novels of Doris Lessing. Thus, her works reveals a deep sense of existentialism.

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CHAPTER – V

COMPARATIVE STUDY

Both the writers, William Golding and Doris Lessing on whom I venture to spy with the eyes of existentialism, are the products of the two world wars. Wars have the capacity to generate extreme conditions and human beings caught in its huge and hard grip, experience crisis in life. The crisis is known to give birth to Art. William Golding is known for his obsession with Man in extremities, caught in the labyrinth of good and evil situations. Despite human vulnerabilities his characters strive for perfection. William Golding is optimistic and he sees hope in men. On the other hand, in Doris Lessing, we find a liberated being, who passes through all situations of life, taking a dip into all experiences, but emerges as a free being. She is a person concerned with her subjectivity, freedom and making her own choice without any external bondage. She appears to have an unquenching thirst to know life in all its dimensions. The two authors, William Golding and Doris Lessing, though apparently distinct and different from each other, produce an undercurrent of similarity. This vague and fine strain of connection becomes conspicuous on application of existentialism.

Existentialism is undoubtedly the most challenging philosophical movement of the twentieth century. It strips away all illusions and leaves Man confronted with the bare truth of his individual situation. One of the father figures of the theory of existentialism, Jean Paul Sartre, believed that Man is 'unjustifiable' and his existence is 'contingent.' There is no providence or inner law to determine the course of human events and there is no pre-determined human nature to predict how man will behave in a particular situation. There is no measuring tool to say how he ought to behave. Each individual man decides what mankind will be in the future by his own choices of action in his life. Man alone is responsible for his

action and destiny. Therefore, no given society can guarantee its ultimate 'rightness' which may be transcended towards another kind of society. The values of any existing society are always those which both reflect the social structure and tend to preserve it. Therefore, "man may always seek to go beyond an existing set of values since the new values are anticipated, even invented by men's very effort to pass beyond the present social order" (Barnes 1967: 303). Thus, Sartre believed that existentialist philosophy must allow for continuous self-transcendence in the direction of greater freedom and an open future. Some kind of open future may be given as a legitimate goal for the individual. In each case the possibility of progress towards a more satisfying level of existence is kept open. Genuine Self-transcendence means a new goal and new values. There is no final level of attainment, unless it is that which is artificially formed due to death or by the destruction of the human race.

Soren Kierkegaard is the originator and the most original mind of this whole movement. It was he who introduced the term 'existence' with a new meaning into European thought. "He was an existential theologian-philosopher, an existential religious philosopher or rather an existential Christian" (Heinemann 1953: 32). According to existentialism, it is only man and his consciousness which matter and all philosophy must be in terms of man's existence. Thus, within this view the burden upon man is immense. He must seek within, in unfamiliar, unexplored territory. Such a man accepts absolute responsibility and prevents the levelling process which Kierkegaard abhorred and which is the demand of industrialization. An English Philosopher, F.H. Heinemann, puts it. "Kierkegaard introduced existence as a specifically religious category, meaning by it the single finite, responsible, simple, suffering and guilty creature who has to make a decision in the face of God and who consequently is more interested in ethical questions and in salvation than in abstract

speculations” (Karl 1973: 13). According to Kierkegaard, Religion and Christianity are not something to be talked about, but something to be lived. Religion is subjective, an inner transformation. He defended the particular against the universal. He protested against the levelling brought about by the demon of collectivism, public opinion and the concept of mass-man or socialism. He believed that levelling destroyed the singularity and qualitative difference of the self and therefore the order of value and of status. It gives rise to a sort of external alienation where an individual is lost in the mass. Man’s intellectual culture also gave rise to a realm of self estrangement. Man has lost his self and ceased to be a man. Having become objective, he failed to be a subject. He remains no longer a Christian, though externally he may be a member of a church. “Do not pretend is Kierkegaard’s message to our age, which is filled with pretence” (Heinemann 1953.38). He urges people to examine the authentic being as a Christian, human, religious and philosophical being. According to him his contemporaries were Christians, but only nominally. The mere fact that we are born as men does not imply that we are human; on the contrary, it lulls us into pretence. He cites two broad reasons responsible for becoming inhuman, one being our position between beasts and angels is somewhat uncertain and the other, the impact of technological development which invests human with almost unlimited power. To be human is not a fact, but a task. This existentialism is the philosophy of the age in which disorientation is the keynote. It is concerned with concrete human problems and the condition of individuals. It serves to awaken man from apathy and brings him face-to-face with his true self, which may be very unpleasant. It forces decisions which are necessary, discourages face-saving hypocrisy and vague sentimentality.

Conspicuous traits of existentialism permeate through the works of William Golding. considering Golding as a deeply religious writer in the conventional sense would

be far from the truth. Golding is a realist and a complex writer. He is deeply concerned about the moral malaise of modern man. Through his writings it is exposed that he yearns to solve the riddle of man faced with the problems of pain, death, social and moral responsibility. From his Cornish mother, he inherited a sense of the supernatural and from his Wellsian rationalist father; he imbibed a wholesome respect for science and a rational approach to the knowledge of man and the cosmos. Therefore, Golding is considered as a venerable sage-philosopher, novelist who expressed through his writings, his cry of hope for the evolution of a moral man in the future. A close study of the novels reveal that the protagonists are perpetually tortured by the dilemma of moral choices. William Golding is neither a fanatic nor an agnostic, but asserts his faith in a religion of humanity, non-violence and peace. He believes in original sin and the burden of man's guilt. Man's disobedience to attain the knowledge of good and evil has resulted in his fall from grace and the inevitability of mortality. Golding projects this inglorious state of man through his novels. But later, he also allows a grace in death through redemption.

Doris Tayler Lessing's father, Alfred Taylor had to amputate his leg and then he married his nurse, Emily Maude McVeagh and they emigrated from a postwar Britain, which they found too confining. Lured by the future prospect Alfred Tayler immigrated to Rhodesia, which was recently established as a self-governing British Colony. He moved with his family to a new farm situated on the edge of the Veldt. Though prosperity was far away from the family, Doris Lessing would often wander alone on the Veldt, with a rifle to shoot a game. "This early freedom from the confinements of the female role gave her lifelong independence of mind" (Pickering 1990:2). The visionary elements in her writing, which are distinct even in her most realistic novels, were due to the influence of her father and her own solitary childhood on the Veldt. The Veldt is one of her most enduring images throughout her work.

Living on the frontier made her aware of her marginality, the marginality of the observer. Chapter-IV has been dedicated to the analysis of her creative writing. In this section, I would like to focus on some special aspects of her writings. “Doris Lessing has more than once used the Sufi saying ‘in the world, but not of it’” (Sprague 1990:1). This phrase appears ironical to the readers who believe in Lessing’s view of herself, at once a realist and then a fabulist, and is likely to mean that she has left this world for another. But this can be interpreted to define Lessing’s much earlier paradoxical behavior as both participant and observer and both activist and bystander. Her earlier political engagements were always carefully chosen. She wrote stories, letters, commentaries, made demonstrations, marched but she did not participate in the day-to-day activities of any political party. She insists on the double face of the Sufi philosophy, which is a combination of activity and detachment. But this paradox of ‘being in and out’ of the world is not confined to only Sufi philosophy. Other poets of acclaim like, William Wordsworth and Robert Frost have talked about this double face of artistic genesis. This enlargement or global concern, is what we find in Lessing’s works. For example her essay *The Small Personal Voice* (1957) has her small personal voice which is used to relate the public facts and public voices. Today’s newspaper calls the atmosphere as ‘our global commons’ and worries about MAD, or mutually assured destruction, which Lessing through her essay indicated as ‘the kinship of possible destruction’. Long before the Press could speak about ‘our global commons’ she thought of the world as such. Thus, she gains the status of universality. Though she gives a universal approach, she is very much in the world. Her practical eye makes her gritty and helps her to keep the mystical eye under control. We find Lessing greatly influenced by a Sufi concept that if we remain attached to the few, familiar things only, it would make us miserable. Narrow horizons always troubled Lessing. Therefore, she gives her novels a broadness of scope which is

one of the most striking and enriching feature. With this striking trait, she contradicts the conventional idea that women's artistic creations come from her habitual acquaintance of the domestic: small private corner and minor nuances of existence. "Like George Eliot, the exception, before her who is most often praised with the assertion that she writes like a man', Lessing writes novels with irreducibly intellectual content, strong moral commitment, thorough social description, and large temporal and geographical range" (Sukenick 1973:534). She is blessed with an enlightened consciousness which is always rich with new perceptions and non-conformity towards any idea that is often pressed on women as a gift. Her novel can be read in terms of certain key themes-order versus chaos, form versus formlessness, fragmentation versus wholeness, fiction versus reality, individual versus society, etc. She cites the example of her novel *The Golden Notebook* and say that Anna kept four notebooks because she had to separate things off from each other, out of a fear of chaos and formlessness due to inner and outer pressures of breakdown. She also says-

Throughout the Notebooks people have discussed, theorized, dogmatised, labeled, compartmented... But they have also reflected each other, been aspects of each other, and given birth to each other's thoughts and behavior-are each other, form wholes. In the inner *Golden Notebook*, things have come together, the divisions have broken down, and there is formlessness with the end of fragmentation the triumph of the second theme, which is that of unity (Schmeickart 1985.264).

While analysing, we can infer that William Golding takes isolated individuals or small groups in their extreme situations or crisis, stripped of any ornamentation. A broad analysis reveals that in his first five novels, Golding reveals his concern for the fundamental questions related to the nature of man, while in his later novels he tries to explore the world of social relationship, his quest to reveal the nature of good and evil in the social context. We find him concerned about the lack of love in modern society and its resultant effect. Golding's

endeavour is to depict man's loss of humanity under the present-day circumstances of a technological civilization. Lack of love has alienated man from each other, as in the case of Barclay and Tucker. Both the novels *The Paper Men* and *Free Fall* are existential, for their protagonist brood on the question of existence. The protagonists of these novels are in their state of freedom or 'Free Fall' and Barclay understanding this warns people against it. In the novel *Pincher Martin*, we find Golding developing an interesting concept of 'center'. He meant that this center is *within* every person. It is a spiritual center which man must awaken to unleash his moral powers. It is the essence of man's godliness and turning away from it which leads to bestiality. Thus, we find Golding trying to reveal the core of human nature in order to understand the cosmic creation.

Golding's earlier works project his experience of World War II, which are predominantly on the darker side of humanity. But his later novels like the *Darkness Visible* ends with a ray of hope. He believes that man may have lost his innocence and may be living in a world infested with evil, but hope still exists for man. By realizing one's self and conscious will and faith in God, man can obtain God's Grace. "An aspiration for goodness, tenderness, compassion and love can make him turn from selfishness to the grace of God. Golding's fiction advocates a humanism that is not based on theology or 'fringe theology' as he terms it" (Bhattacharjee 2011:115). Golding also believed that man should not accept himself as an individual existing for his own sake. He should not be wholly concerned by the necessities of his physical existence. Aspiration for mystical wisdom should be his prime concern. "Golding's message is that man should relate himself with the natural spiritual order which is the only lasting one" (Bhattacharjee 2011:115). Along with his concern for man's moral nature, Golding also focuses on the evils of the class - system. He tries to say that a class-based society is the result of the lack of love between people. He points out through his

work *Rites of Passage*, that if a man can get rid of his self-centeredness he will be able to love his fellow beings, with the help of this fellow feeling we can save ourselves from the devastating wars. He projects to the human society that the solution to the problem of modern man does not lie in the scientific inventions and technocratic development, but in re-capturing love and innocence of the natural self. After analysis of the technocratic world, we find that scientific discoveries have endowed man greater power and skill to destroy his fellowmen ruthlessly. "Golding suggests that the need of the hour is to control selfishness, pride, malignancy, and the urge to control and subjugate others" (Bhattacharjee 2011:117). Golding wanted to tell this world that only scientific development or technological growth cannot eradicate the maladies of the modern world. He insists that a solution can be found in a harmonious coexistence of humanism and scientific and technological progress. Along with selflessness and humanity, Golding emphasizes on the necessity of free thinking and points out the limitations of rationalism which tends to limit our views. He wanted to project that without any vision a civilization is bound to perish. This world can be saved only by a saintly man of vision and imagination. Through the study of his novels we can perceive that Golding disliked mankind's primal passions, but he tried to understand man's intrinsic nature. He understands that man is a complex creation of good and evil, reason and unreason and of darkness and light. Some are able to extricate themselves from this tangle while some like *Pincher Martin*, *Sammy Mountjoy* are simply not interested to release themselves from this tangle. They are complex creations, enigmatic egoist, who seems to derive a masochistic and perverse pleasure out of their sufferings.

Golding's concept of instinct is of dual significance. He believed that an instinctive apprehension of the truth is useful, but the kind of instinct that Jack of *Lord of the Flies* displays is self-destructive. Similarly, irrationality is harmful, but again Piggy's half baked

rationale are useless because it stopped him from perceiving the finer shades of life. Golding also questions the idea of intelligence. He believed that mere intelligence is not enough as Ralph realizes when he tries to build huts and a civilization. “It is the people with little intellectual pretensions but innately ‘good’, with a sense of moral striving and purpose who are the happier ones” (Guha 2005:168). He wanted the intelligence to follow sensitiveness.

While understanding Doris Lessing, we realize that there are two ways to deal with society, one by reforming the structure of society and the other, by revolutionizing the consciousness of man. Though the two concepts cannot be completely dissociated, yet we find writers like George Orwell projecting Dickens commitment to social change as superficial, in his famous essay on Dickens, in 1939. Marxist solution seemed to be the basic approach to the problem to injustice of the society. Towards the first half of the century radicals seemed to follow this stand, but towards the latter half of the century, we find the swing towards revolutionizing the consciousness of man. While studying Doris Lessing’s novels, we find that she takes a gradual turn towards the possibility of affecting the inner man. As a communist writer, in her initial phase of Career, we find her sympathizing with the Orwellian concept. Her novels like *The Grass is Singing*, *Retreat to Innocence* and to a great extent the first four volumes of the *Children of Violence* series gives us evidence of the historical determinism. But on careful analysis, we find that Lessing is more concerned with understanding the gap between the public and the private conscience. “She believes that the hope of man lies in the resting point between his private and social selves” (Vlastos 1976 :245). With her novel *The Golden Notebook*, Lessing continues her search for the resting point, the point of hope for man. Through her character Anna Wulf’s personal experiences with the party and her views of the western world, Lessing carefully analyses the Marxist solution for injustices and rejects it as impracticable. Lessing, through Anna

was disillusioned with established communism, suffered the effective repression of the Leftist activism and perceived the phobias of the cold war. Thus, with the collapse of hope to relieve human from their misery with the lofty political solution, the existence of human being became the responsibility of the individual self and its capacities for creativity and moral development. At this critical juncture, we find the streams of thought processes of William Golding and Doris Lessing merge with their distinctive hues.

In her novel *The Golden Notebook* we find her dealing in elaboration with the ‘self’ of Anna Wulf. Anna Wulf’s ‘self’ suffers from political disillusionment, failures in human relationships and her inability to overcome her recent ‘writer’s block’, to conform herself to the new, realistic and doomed world. This leads to despair and she finally collapses into madness. However, this state of madness offers a new hope for her. She discovers new truths about her own nature and her relation to the world, and thus, she emerges from insanity to a fresh state of balance, self-respect and independence. “Lessing’s idea of madness as revelation and cure, initiated in *The Notebook*, is later fully explored in *the Four Gated City*, the last volume of *The Children of Violence* series, and finally carried into a supernatural realm-which literally transcends the troubles of the earth – in *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*” (Vlastos 1976 : 245-246). Lessing’s preoccupation with the idea of madness as a panacea to elements of the contemporary world is linked to the views of R. D. Laing, unorthodox psychiatrist and cultural theologian R. D. Laing.

Lessing and Laing believes not in the hearts but in Psyches: not in Christian ethics, but in the rhythms of nature and the order of the universe; and above all, not in a saving discrepancy between the evils of society and the possibility for perfection in the individual but, precisely, in the connection between what human beings are in their innermost selves and how they behave collectively. (Vlastos 1976:246).

According to Laing, madness reveals two aspects of the society. On one hand a mad person incorporates within himself a form of society's self-division which is exaggerated and bizarre, and on the other hand, mentally ill person, deep within himself participates on those realms of existence which a conventional man, either denies or remain unknown to. For example, a schizophrenic or split person is often split in more than two ways. But basically they maintain two categories of 'self' which can be classified as a 'true' or 'inner' self and a 'false self' which he maintains to deal with the world which he disowns. Like Laing, Lessing is drawn towards projecting fragmentation, compartmentalization and splitting which they consider as essential problem of the make-up of our individual life and our society. Therefore, Lessing's character, Anna is perpetually tormented by the conflict that arises due to the different roles that she plays as a woman. She is torn apart as a mistress, mother, and friend by the inconsistencies that develop between her aspirations and her achievements as an artist and a political activist. In a nut shell, Lessing and Laing want to say to the world that individuals become sick because the world is sick. Evidently, we find that Lessing tries to understand the 'being' of human being touching the various tenets that emerge in the existential approach of analysis. Lessing tries to reveal her protagonists by piercing deep into their psychology and understanding the source of madness, alienation, fragmentation, death, despair, annihilation and the absurdity of human being who in turn is responsible for the society. Lessing is thought to be not only a social analyst, but also a social visionary and a prophet of contemporary culture.

William Golding believes that salvation in human life comes when he realizes the macrocosm in which he is the microcosm. In the two novels *Pincher Martin* and *The Paper Men*, we find the revelation dawning upon the protagonists but they fail to realize the implications. In the case of *Free Fall*, revelation brings about a change in outlook of the

protagonist Sammy Mountjoy. Before reaching the point of revelation the protagonist experiences an ordeal which becomes instrumental in bringing about a change in the outlook. We find an important aspect of human nature 'madness' used by both the writers William Golding and Doris Lessing in their works taken under consideration. In the works of William Golding, madness acts as a connecting link which mediates between two worlds. Under crisis this madness breaks down the barrier which otherwise would appear impermeable. The subtleness that Doris Lessing projects through 'Madness' in her novel is that she works through it to reveal a deeper version of self. She explores madness because it is part of the mainstream at the centre of contemporary life. She wants the society to recognize the revolutionary nature of madness.

Golding had a definite value system concerning the ills of human nature. His quest is to find what is permanent in human nature and is to study him in relation to his cosmic situation. He believed that evil is inherent in human nature and it emanates in the form of darkness from him. This evil inhabiting the core of man's being, takes the form of egoism which leads on to hatred, pride, immorality and atheism, which ultimately brings ruin to the individual. This curtain of darkness hides man from his being. In all the novels taken for analysis, we find the protagonist, who due to his ignorance of the self, becomes isolated and under extreme struggle for survival, confronts with his self which gives him the realization of the Divinity. According to Golding, such extreme, agonising experience is essential to realize the spirituality. There are some people who go through this turmoil within them. By embracing the darkness they discover the essence and purge this world of evil. Such persons become the saints of the world. The idea and the plot are very important in his novels. The basis of his 'Idea' or 'Plot', is his belief in the concept of original sin. According to him, the man suffers from original sin. His evil gets unleashed whenever the control of civilization is

withdrawn. The novel *Lord of the Flies* vividly depicts this concept. Being the product of wartime disillusionment, Golding could see the devastating effect that the war produced in human society. He also could not accept rationalism with a scientific and inquiring approach, as an absolute remedy for evil in human society. Therefore, he adopted an ambivalent attitude towards the problem of evil degenerating human society. According to him, evil is necessary for the regeneration of the human spirit. Such a kind of structure of believing is already present in the works of Golding. Golding's novels are a search for the root causes of evil. He tries to find out the point where a person loses his choice of freedom. He delves deep into the psyche of his protagonists to locate the point, which witnesses the confrontation of human ego or parasitic self, with the being.

In the case of Doris Lessing, initially we do not find any base or platform for her thoughts. She is more personal and cares less for her style and technique of her writings. As we read through her autobiography, we find her getting involved in various political determinism of the period like Marxism and Communism, but soon she feels suffocated and like a blithe and free soul moves away for her long flights. Rather than coming up with any proper solution for social evil, we find her in quest of understanding the gap between private and public conscience. Through her autobiography, it is revealed that she is uncompromising from the beginning, breaking all rules and battling at every turn against her upbringing and environment. We find her evolving through the changing feelings, moods or affects that appear in her mind. According to existentialists, this is the way we involve ourselves in the world and can learn things about life that are inaccessible to a merely objective beholder. As we look towards the novels of Doris Lessing, we find her initially suffering from political disillusionment, but gradually she moves towards her study of the inner man. Lessing and Laing believes not in the hearts but in Psyches: not Christian ethics, but in the rhythms of

nature and the order of the universe and above all, not in a saving discrepancy between the evils of society and the possibility for perfection in the individual but precisely, in the connection between what human beings are in their innermost selves and how they behave collectively (Vlastor 1976:246). Therefore, we find her gradually moving towards the inner self of a human being to satisfy her thirst for knowing human nature. She is trying to see deep into things and then establish a connecting string through various being. Inspired by R.D. Laing, an unorthodox Psychiatrist and cultural theoretician, she becomes a social visionary. Like Laing, Lessing too believed that compartmentalization, fragmentation and splitting is a major malaise felt by an individual and the society. Thus, Psychoanalysis becomes her aid to dive deep into the human mind. Doris was trying to reveal that individuals become sick because the world is sick.

“The hallmark of a Golding’s novel is its mythic nature; that is to say, it is an enterprise that remorselessly searches for the shape of a life beneath its surfaces, paring everything away to reveal the significant continuity” (Gregory 1986:99). Golding was intensely aware of the physical as well as Metaphysical world. He would contemplate on the natural world and then speculate on its purpose. Then try to establish the connection. He is often termed as a religious writer. To elaborate this we have to first ask ourselves-what is religion? “Religions means expansion, and expansion means realization and perception in the highest sense-no mumbling words or genuflections. Man is to become divine, realising the divine more and more from day to day in an endless progress” (Vivekananda 1989:332). After a penetrating study of the novels of Golding, we find that he did not believe in ‘fringe religion’ but a religion of humanity. Therefore, it is a study of our “being” which is ever free, ever loving and ever seeking eternal knowledge. We find all his protagonists in a dark, constricted world of their own. They suffer excruciating pain and ultimately gain liberation through self-

awareness. Though, Golding does not speak anything about salvation, but since human-beings are made in the image of God, they can certainly experience 'Divinity' within them with realization, repentance and redemption. According to C.B. Cox. "He is neither puritan, nor transcendentalist, and his religious faith is based upon his interpretation of experience, rather than upon an unquestioning acceptance of revelation" (Kulkarni 2003:155).

To talk about the religious aspect of the novels of Doris Lessing, we find that the strain is elusive. She appears to be practical at times and again mystical. She remains detached to the world on one hand and be a part of the world, on the other. Her life has been a long journey of self-education, participating in the various intellectual and political movements of the twentieth century. Her works abound in Freudian and Jungian psychology, Marxism, existentialism, mysticism and speculative scientific theory which makes her novel gritty. Underneath the scum of these intellectual developments, we always find her in a quest of something larger. Her pursuit was towards the problems of 'wholeness' in this world of fragmentation and compartmentalization. Though her intention is to produce a realistic depiction of the world, yet she lands up writing with a latent moral force, often lapsing into lengthy, detailed ideas and discourse. Her sentences are such as to explain, teach and direct the readers towards the subtle moralistic approach, that a delicate relation exists between what we know and feel and what we understand and function. "Her aesthetic and structural enclosures remain symbol of the limitations of consciousness and identity" (Budhas 1987:112).

An element of newness is definitely seen in her diversified novels. Her experimental novelistic forms and themes reveal her major preoccupation with themes which is to escape from categories and restrictions. Her narrative design corresponds to her

protagonists' experience of constriction and the resultant attempt to escape from marriage. In her novels marriage is never depicted as a supportive, non-restrictive and expanding relationship. Her protagonists are women who are married, divorced, widowed or single but each function independently. Still, we find them reverting to their original or forced social role of a married woman because ultimately they are dependent on men. But this subordinate status of women is due to society, and not biology, as the feminists believe, which determines women's actions and suppresses their inner quests and talents. We find in all the works of Lessing that marriage is necessary, but a damaging institution in the lives of her protagonist. Thus, she takes the help of the institution of marriage to reveal her views on the restrictions of society. She means to say that men's work and status, in the economic and social hierarchy, define them, while marriage confines women within domestic boundaries and repetitive patterns of behavior.

In order to be more accurate in narration and to import a better grip to her thoughts, she makes a recurrent use of certain images of 'space' and 'enclosure'. Her primary symbol is the African 'veld' which marks the limitlessness of space, inner or outer. It also illustrates society's rules and regulations which controls an individual's social behavior. The concept of limitation, boundary or enclosure is also expressed through the image of 'rooms'. In most of her novels, we find a description of many rooms in a house, which symbolizes fragmentation of human personality. In her novel, *The Grass is Singing*, she says-"Being alone in the world had no terrors for her at all, she liked it" (Lessing 1994:35). Through this line, we can feel that she celebrates a life without the bondage of any permanent commitment as in the form of a marriage. "Her fiction is tough, clumsy, rational, concerned with social roles, collective action and conscience, and unconcerned with niceties of style and subtlety of feeling for its own sake" (Sukeniek 1973:516).

Though, it was a period of feminine tradition of sensibility, she makes her choice towards a tough, broad, straight and direct way of communication for, she could discover her freedom with such a realm stripped of any definition. As a writer Doris Lessing appears to be deep and penetrating as in *The Golden Notebook*. But her real persona, as is revealed through her autobiography, appears to be easy and superficial. Even though she examines the commonplace things in her novels, the world does not appear ordinary through her perception. Her contents gets a fable-like treatment and somewhat resembles a Sufi allegory. “One is reminded of Idries Shah comments at the beginning of *Reflection: Fables in the Sufi Tradition*: ‘Do you imagine that fables exist only to amuse or to instruct, and are based upon fiction? The best ones are delineations of what happens in real life, in the community and in the individual’s mental processes’” (Mendelson 1976:297). Similar is Lessing’s works where she takes the contribution of two worlds-of real life on one hand and of mental processes on the other. Thus, Doris Lessing as a Sufi, does not perceive the two worlds as separate. Actually mysticism is the nature of this universe. Though the physical entity appears very clear to us, yet the latent presence of an unknown entity can be felt throughout this universe. Another important aspect of William Golding is that his novels are in the form of fables. The word ‘Fable’ literally means a fictitious story designed to teach a moral lesson. “Fables are those narratives which leave the impression that their purpose was anterior, some initial thesis or contention which they are apparently concerned to embody and express in concrete terms” (Peter 1957:577). This concept of narrative can easily be traced in the novels of William Golding. The novels, *Lord of the Flies* and *Pincher Martin* exploits the concept brilliantly. Through the novel *Lord of the Flies*, Golding wanted to depict an adult world of lust, greed, ego, blood-thirst in the garb of little children. Golding wanted to reveal that - “Evil is inherent in the human mind itself, whatever innocence may cloak it, ready to put forth its strength as soon as the occasion is propitious” (Peter 1957:583).

This is the message which Golding wished to produce before the world perceiving the consequences of the wars on civilization. In order to reveal these frightful forces of being, he deliberately took the young boys in a setting which brings to our memory the setting and the story of *Coral Island* by R.M. Ballantyne. The whole narrative is a powerful ironic commentary on the nature of man. The thesis has been intensified and brilliantly absorbed to make implicit in the story as it is told. Similar is the novel *Pincher Martin*, its thesis is much more difficult to infer due to its stylistic modification. It has the garb of a poem for which its ultimate power lies less in the resources of its part but on the whole. It has the application of powerful symbols like-the black lighting, the Chinese box, which raises the difficulty of exploration. Thus, it is richer, but difficult to exhaust the meaning. Still the story that evolves is that it is a story of a dead man clinging to his life, terrified of the infinity that he creates for himself, that even in death he creates a fanciful existence. Dead Martin clings savagely to the idea of survival, inventing the conditions of that existence, re-creating his naval identity disc and continually applying the intellect which he is so proud and deny the fact of death. But the existence he enjoys is the creation of his own will and in a secret recess of his being he remains aware of this unreality. This generates fear in him. This is exactly the condition of the modern man who create a world of their own selfish ego, being dead spiritually. Thus, it is a penetrating analysis of corruption of conscious. Yet an important aspect is that this form of a narrative curtails the liberty of writing to exploit beyond his ascertained abilities and restrain him within his conscious purpose. Such a well organized structure is not pursued by Doris Lessing in order to explore her being. Her process to unearth the truths about life is more like unfolding the petals of a flower and reaching the kernel.

With the aim of attempting a better analysis of the philosophy of existentialism, I would like to make a hasty comparison between the two contemporary writers-Graham Greene and Samuel Beckett. Graham Greene was born on October 2, 1904. His father was the Headmaster of Berkhamsted School. Greene received his early education at this school until he went up to Balliol College, Oxford. But this period of his life is marked by a sort of depression in his life, so much. So that at a later stage Greene had to be sent to a psychoanalyst.

To talk about Graham Greene as a novelist, he is one of the greatest novelists of the modern age. He is the leading exponent in English of the existentialist – psychological fiction, which dominated European literature during the post-war period. His novels have the dominant theme of the conflict between the good and the evil. Through his works he tried to restore to the English novel two qualities which it had lost, namely, the religious sense and the sense of the importance of the human act. Therefore, his novels are often didactic in temperament, for which he is also called the “Catholic novelist”.

Graham Greene has been an existential man for he was haunted and anguished in life. He could experience the uniqueness of Individual and the presence of irrational in life. He has been absolutely alone and had the freedom to choose his way of life out of the chaos and uncertain future. He believed that complete loneliness of each individual gives his life an uniqueness and a slight deviation towards pre-established patterns prove disastrous. Therefore, mostly all the novels of Graham Greene reveals aspects of existential treatment of contemporary man. In spite of all the development of modern civilization, modern man suffers from a sense of rootlessness, purposelessness, alienation and insignificance. Greene’s protagonists are men under such circumstances and therefore, the path that they choose

becomes existential. Thus, in his very first novels, *The Man Within*, Greene presents the situation and the character from an existential perspective. Andrews, the protagonist of this novel is an existential character. He is depicted as an anti-hero. He is an isolated man with a sense of desolation. He is projected with double personality. His tragedy is due to the disparity between what he wants to be and what he is. His choice in life is always dictated by the imposition of his lower self. His higher self was persistently trying to raise him from the dirt but he was repeatedly frustrated. He was aware of his lack of identity and his existence in a meaningless way. However, at the end he is able to identify himself with 'the man within.' Thus, the author tries to reveal that a man may authenticate his existence by choosing to be what he really is. A man must response to his inner call and answer it in order to achieve authentic existence. Surrendering to determinism means one loses his conscience. Depicting Andrews, Graham Greene seems to point out the absurdity of human existence. Only an authentic existence can bring meaning to our life.

Through the novel *It's a Battlefield*, Greene deals with the issues of loneliness, anxiety and the absurdity of human life. Greene considers this world as a battlefield in which a number of people are involved and engaged in their own existential pursuits. In the novel *England Made Me*, Greene pointed a world that is chaotic and irrational. It is a world of absurdity where nothing turns out to be as expected. The characters are alienated not only from themselves but also from others. Through this novel Greene tried to expose that industrial development brought comfort in man's life, while it alienated man from his own inner self. Graham Greene comes close to Marcel who is a critic of the present-day's thirst of materialistic progress. "Marcel looks upon 'having' as a source of alienation" (Misra 2005 : 84). In the novel *Brighton Rock*, Greene seems to be concerned about man's freedom of faith and his intolerance of the church and its rituals. He seems to believe that man stands

alone in the universe responsible for his condition. He rejects conventional morality and emphasizes on significance of man's obedience to his conscience. All the characters of this novel reveals strains of existentialism. To substantiate the point, we find that Pinkie, a seventeen-year-old boy is the leader of a gang of criminals, who are loyal to the gang but unaware of having their independent self. They work only to earn their livelihood. Ida Arnold is a slave to the traditional patterns of justice and is ignorant about the anguish of not having a self. Mr. Colleoni, a rich businessman is also lost in the artificial glamour of life with the realization of past, we find Pinkie experiences a feeling of anxiety. Finding himself between the past and the present, fills him with anxiety about human situation and thus, life appears ugly, painful and like 'hell.' The novel *The Power and the Glory*, brings out a contrast between the materialistic and the spiritual approach of life. The two opposing system of thought are represented by two characters in the novel. The lieutenant represents the materialistic and rational view of life. He fanatically opposes the church and does not believe in a loving and merciful God. His lofty ideals of life and world are all for the benefits of the society, yet they lack the spiritual aspects of life. On the other hand, the whisky-Priest represents the irrational aspect of life. We find whisky-Priest always in a state of anxiety. His anxiety is due to his awareness that he is isolated and he considers himself a sinner. His remorseful conscience reveal that he had a seedy past. Pride, selfishness and lack of love kept him away from understanding of both God and man. It is in the prison cell that he feels a sense of communion with the other fellow prisoner. Thus, he became aware that the world is like a prison, where the prisoners are trapped in the snares of lust, crime and unhappy love. It is perhaps through an illicit relationship that he finds in himself the capacity for love. Through his character Greene presents a striking example of existential pursuit. Greene's another novel *The End of the Affair*, is concerned with the irrational inclination of man, his

despair effecting his faith and his impatience with church and its rituals. "Like Kierkegaard, Greene points out that an existential experience of love and suffering leads the individuals to abandon the lower level of existence and rise to the higher one through a leap" (Mishra 2005 : 92). The queer and unconventional life that Sarah and Bendrix choose for themselves, demonstrate their existential pursuits. Through the novel *A Burnt Out Case*, Greene seems to project that various external pressures of society, of which press is one, continually mould people's opinion and thus, produces a society of conformists. In such a society people grow lethargic to make their own choice or decision and take its responsibility. The decisions have already been taken for them and therefore, modern man are reluctant to think, respond and act by his own will. In this novel man's search for meaning is presented as a poignant search of the protagonist. Through his protagonist we can feel his search of a way in which man can, with dignity, confront the universe, which is contingent, disjointed, purposeless and absurd.

In his later novels we find that there is a slight change in his approach, for he appears more inclined towards Sartrean brand of existentialism. He concerns himself more towards faith in man's own inner self, than his faith in God. He is deeply agitated upon the thought that modern bureaucracy has dehumanized individuals to that extent, that they shamelessly justify even the murder of an innocent man who is in conformity with society, living in painless obedience. The sense of responsibility that one feels for another and human relationships are based on materialistic prospects. According to him, "Man is gripped by an anxious sense of being left alone in the midst of nothingness" (Mishra 2005 : 109) Greene's characters exemplify human traits and qualities of human existence. They are depicted as living under stress, are prey to an obsession and are often tortured by the universe, which they cannot understand. All the characters confront a difficult situation, which enforces

upon them the necessity to make a definite choice in which they are given ample freedom. Once the choice is made as an individual solution to their individual problems, they are seen to pursue it relentlessly even if the result is disillusionment, defeat or death. The striking point is that even under such condition the protagonists strive hard for existence and in the process discover some values of life like love, nobility, dignity and authenticity. This is the depiction of existential pursuit. “In his depiction of existential pursuit by his major characters, Greene is in the company of existential writers like Kierkegaard, Marcel, Jasper, Buber, Tillich, Sartre and Camus” (Mishra 2005 : 112).

Thus, we find a clear similarity of Graham Greene and William Golding whose concern was to diagnose the ills of human nature and to look at what is permanent in man. “Golding and Greene bear a similarity in the sense that they both look at the fundamental human situation in a contemporary setting” (Bhattacharjee 2011:2).

The novels of Graham Greene explicitly express the religious views of the novelist. His preoccupation with such questions as those of salvation, damnation, God’s mercy, etc. sufficiently show the religious nature of the novels. Graham Greene was a Roman Catholic; therefore, this novel deals with the fundamental tenets of Christianity. “It was *The Man Within* (1929) which put Greene on the map as a literary figure, but it was *Brighton Rock* (1937), written after converting to Catholicism in 1925, which established Greene as a Catholic writer” (Porter 1999:2). In the aftermath of a fall of the Doctrine of Progress, which resulted in a flood of scientific discoveries, made the traditional belief in religion impossible. Greene, like many of his contemporaries, abandoned ‘reason’ of the period and opted for a more irrational and passionate approach to religion which was prevalent in the nineteenth century. “In fact, Greene’s religious belief was strongly parallel to that of the

nineteenth century Danish Philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard” (Porter 1999:2) Soren Kierkegaard was a devout protestant who focused his philosophy primarily on the rejection of passive acceptance and adherence to the codes and practices of Christianity. On the other hand, he advocated a passionate religion in which a subjective method of belief, in which man chooses his own free will to place blind faith in the spiritual and the existence of the Absolute.

Within his Christian existentialism, Kierkegaard outlines different lifestyles or stages, of life in the attainment of the subjective Christianity. The first stage, which he calls as aesthetic stage focuses on an individual’s obsession with the temporal through the sensual immediacy and attainment of pleasure. The second stage is ethical stage, which improves upon the aesthete’s rejection of commitment and acknowledges the need for companionship. However, this ethical stage cannot satisfy man’s need of individuality and the ethical personality soon suffers from the isolation of having an external set of morals and values imposed on him or her. The third stage is the religious stage, when men recognize the nothingness that exists in the finite, temporal world and strives for the infinite through a personal relationship with God. Through the philosophy of Christian existentialism and a comparison of these stages, Soren Kierkegaard attempted to illustrate the necessity of internalizing religion in order to personalize the relationship with God. Graham Greene was fascinated with Kierkegaard’s theory of religion and its emphasis on individuality. Many of the novels written by Graham Greene reveal the touch of existentialism on them: *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter*, *Brighton Rock*, *A Burnt-out Case* and *The End of the Affair* are the prominent ones. Graham Greene’s interest in Christian existentialism of Soren Kierkegaard urged him to explore his philosophy in two of his novels, namely – *The End of the Affair* and *A Burnt-out Case*.

According to Kierkegaard, “despair is a sin because it stubbornly adheres to the finite, even in the face of the infinite’s glory.” (Porter 1999:58). The world is troubled by ‘nothingness’ and Man’s greatest struggle is to find ‘hope’ in this ‘nothingness’. To linger in despair at the face of hope is a rejection of God’s love and it is only with love of God that man can achieve happiness. It is only the infinite that can shower the peace which is craved by every being in this world. Thus, we find the presence of this concept on all the major works of Graham Greene. In *the Power and Glory* we find the whisky priest feeling guilty for his despair and also an ardent craving for God’s grace. It is a fact that Graham Green’s novels are marked with a religious tone, but his religious concern involves the importance of human acts. His art celebrates nominal human virtues. According to Greene, besides religious comforting, it nourishes our imagination by insisting that the religious sense certainly exists in this world.

Another writer of repute who absorbs my attention is Samuel Barclay Beckett. He was born in Foxrock, near Dublin, Ireland in a respectable protestant family on a Good Friday, April 13, 1906. He was the second and last son of Mary and William Beckett. He attended kindergarten named Miss Ida Elsner’s Academy. It is said that his parents did everything that could make him happy, probably, he had less talent of happiness and he would often feel lonely. At the age of six he attended Earls Forth House School in Dublin. He studied French there and attained a remarkable proficiency in that language. He also learnt Piano there, “While at fourteen he attended Portora Royal School in Northern Enniskillen, where his brother Frank had preceded him. The school emphasized sports, and Samuel Beckett was on the cricket and rugby teams. He excelled also at tennis, swimming and boxing.” (Vaidyanathan 1995:1). At the age of seventeen, Samuel Beckett joined Trinity College, Dublin. His school sports were limited to cricket and golf and he directed his time

and energy to his academic pursuits. He was fascinated by Dante and attained mastery in Italian and French. At twenty one he took his B.A. Degree in the year of 1927. Due to his excellent performance in French, he was appointed as the French tutor in Campbell College, Belfast. In 1928, he joined L'Ecole Normale Superior in Paris as a Lecturer in French on a two-year fellowship. There he met James Joyce and both of them became lifelong friends. Samuel Beckett did research on his life and works of Descartes the eminent French Mathematician, Physicist and Philosopher. Besides, he also wrote fiction and criticism.

Samuel Beckett is commonly known as an 'absurd' dramatist. The label 'Theatre of the Absurd' is often applied to the plays of Engene Ionesco, Jean Genet, Arthur Adamov, Samuel Beckett and the early plays of Edward Albee. Their players go to the limits, take all risks, in the theatrical tactics of stimulus and response. They are of their time, not only in their pursuit of ghastly symbols across a macabre stage, but also in their search for a new language which will speak the uncertain and contradictory emotions of the post-war years. Paris has been the hot house of their experiments and the term 'theatre of the absurd' was used by Martin Esslin in his book, *The Theatre of the Absurd (1961)*. Though they are identified by the blanket name, yet they are not always appropriate to the forms of theatrical hysteria associated with it. The plays of Samuel Beckett, Ionesco, Arthur Adamov and Jean Genet are its centre-pieces. But it is only by accident that they all work in the French language and by convenience that they all present their plays in 'Parisian Innovative' theatres. Of the four, only Genet is French by birth and he has no particular love for his countrymen. Each is different in particular technique and aim, and in no sense are they a school or a movement. They do not collaborate, and it is now apparent that their different purposes have taken them in different directions. They share, however, a common starting point. All

seem to agree that the world that they see and are concerned to depict shows little sense of direction. The *reason* in life is obscured and events occur and are accepted without apparent meaning. Structurally, in contrast to a well made play with a beginning, middle and neatly tied up ending, the plays by the absurdist playwrights often start at an arbitrary point and end just as arbitrarily. The arbitrary structure of the plays reflects the arbitrary and irrational nature of life. In other words, the playwright of the absurd views life existentially, he expresses the senselessness of the human condition by abandoning rational devices. Most of the players, therefore, express a sense of wonder and incomprehension, and at times despair at the meaninglessness of human existence. Since they do not believe in a rational and meaningful universe, they do not find any possibility of an outcome of the problems that they present. Thus, their plays do not present a definite ending.

As we peep through the works of Samuel Beckett, we find that *Waiting for Godot* (1952) was his greatest dramatic triumph *that* does not tell a story. It explores a static situation. "Nothing happens nobody comes, nobody goes, its awful" (Beckett 1995:41). On a country road, by a tree, two old tramps, Vladimir and Estragon, are waiting. Act-1 begins with this situation and at the end of Act I they are informed that Mr. Godot with whom they believe they have an appointment, cannot come, but that he would surely come the next day. Act-II repeats precisely the same pattern. In each act, Vladimir and Estragon attempt suicide and fail, for different reasons. But these variations merely serve to emphasize the essential sameness of the situation. The main concern of the play is not Godot but waiting. The act of waiting is an essential and characteristic aspect of the human condition. Throughout our life we always wait for something, and Godot simply represents the objective of our waiting-an event, a thing, a person, death. Moreover, it is in the act of waiting that

we experience the flow of *time* in its purest and most evident form. If we are active we tend to forget the passage of time, but if we are passively waiting, we are confronted with the action of time itself. *Waiting for Godot* presents the anguish of waiting without time.

Endgame (1957) is the second play by Samuel Beckett which was originally written in two acts, but was later reduced to one only. *Endgame* deals with an 'endgame', i.e. the final game in the hour of death. It is basically about experiencing morbid fear of being in closed places. It shows the running down of a mechanism until it comes to a stop. In an empty room with two small windows, Hamm, a blind old man sits in a wheelchair. Hamm is paralysed, and can no longer stand. His servant clove is unable to sit down. In two ash-cans that stand by the wall are Hamm's legless parents, Nogg and Nell. The world outside is dead and the four characters in the play are or believe themselves to be the sole survivors of some great catastrophe which has killed all living beings. Clou hates Hamm and wants to leave him, but he must obey his orders and this is the dramatic tension of the play. We find the presence of a sense of guilt, fear and also a tendency of suicide.

Krapp's Last Tape (1958) is another successfully staged play of Beckett. In this play Beckett makes use of the tape-recorder to demonstrate the elusiveness of human personality. As the fact goes, Krapp is a very old man. Throughout his adult life, he has annually recorded an account of the past year's impressions and events on to a magnetic tape. We see him, old decrepit and a failure as a writer, listening to his own voice of a stranger to him. The tapes unfold Krapp's unhappy love affair, his intellectual pursuits and his relationship with his parents. Listening to tapes, Krapp responds and reacts to his past. This is powerful device through which Beckett could express the problem of the ever-changing identity of the self. The self at one moment in time is confronted with its earlier

incarnation only to find it utterly strange. In the play *Happy Days* (1961) Beckett portrays the human condition in the image, of a cheerful, plump woman, Winnie, who is slowly sinking into a mound of earth. Winnie's preoccupation with her few possessions, her cheerfulness and optimism create the poignant irony of the play. Her joy in the face of death and nothingness is an expression of man's courage and nobility. This life does consist of happy days, because she refuses to be dismayed. In another play *Not I* (1972) Beckett deals with whether the words which passes through our minds or which occasionally break out of us are our real self.

Beckett was gradually developing towards an interiorized and monologist's form of writing and his post war fictions marks the culmination of his endeavour. The grim and dark realities that he faced in his life, was to be his inspiration and materials of work. This also implied that his writings would be subjective and a well-defined character is not needed to tell the stories. As a result external reality from his fiction is eliminated. A third person, omniscient narrator is abandoned in favour of the first person narrator.

His last novel in the trilogy has been described as a 'Zero-book' that is, a book about Nothing. It ends in an impasse. 'I can't go on, I'll go on'. In the last book, *I Innomable*, there's complete disintegration arriving at this dead-end, he found it very difficult to write fiction and instead turned his attention to writing plays. From the beginning, his writings were not concerned with the general experiences of men and women in the society, but rather he was more occupied with the inner experiences of the in assimilated and inassimilable, individual. He always maintained a rigid posture of indifference towards the growing political turmoil. In his later plays, like-*Not I*, *That Time* and *Play* Beckett was more engrossed in perfecting the monologue form. These plays project the nameless, shadowy figure of the solitary and inward individual frequenting the twilight realm of consciousness and oblivion.

These figures confront their own consciousness, mind and memory, which are externalized as ‘voices’ from the past, within or beyond. Therefore, there is no character, no real dialogue, no setting and no development in them. They are just an abstract and undefined subject confronting their own subjectivity.

Samuel Beckett depicted purposelessness, waiting, solitudes, silence, suicide, mortality and despair in a comical vein, through his drama. The actions in the plays are unpredictable, angular, startling, unmotivated and irreverent. A general view of his character shows that they belong to a no-man’s land, where dejection and despair are the principle features. “In presenting the desperate plight of humanity in a world where ‘God is dead’ Beckett has gone several steps ahead of dramatists like Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Anouilh, Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller.” (Vaidyanathan 1995:16).

To bring into a comparison of these two contemporary English writers with William Golding and Doris Lessing, we find that – Golding’s work advocates a humanism that is not based on theology. He believed in innocence, selflessness, love and faith in God’s saving grace as the only recourse of man. His first five novels reveal his preoccupation with the fundamental questions regarding the nature of man and his later novels reveal his concern for the lack of love in modern society and its resultant effect. Golding through his novel *Free Fall* examines the human predicament and lays great stress in the lack of stability and permanence in the human personality. Irrespective of any methods preached, or practiced by any religion, the ultimate aim of all of them is to wield all its followers to a life of spiritual contemplation. Through sincere prayer and meditation one can overcome one’s self created evils. Simon and Nathaniel are such blessed souls who remained untainted and free from all evils. Through Simon, Golding wants to convey the message that fear is unreasonable, because evil lay within ourselves and is not to be searched outside.

Worldly pleasures are temporary. They cannot give any permanent satisfaction. Spiritual pursuit is the only path which can give us the peace of our soul. It is only through renunciation that one can hope to attain the infinite, eternal and ultimate. Earth and its ways are glorious only to those people who can live with the qualities like love, kindness, justice, unselfishness and sharing the joys of life equally with others. Simon, Matty and Nathaniel were happy because they could live for others. Absolute faith in a supreme power is essential for tranquillity of mind and purges our soul of evil and sin. Such a faith would create an atmosphere where fear and suspicion would no longer exist. Thus, it would help a society to be peaceful and prosperous. We can cite the example of Neanderthals who lead a carefree life and their wants and desires were limited. They lived with the strong belief that 'Oa', their mother-goddess would sustain them and completely submitted them to the will and care of the Mother Goddess. This attitude gave them the fearlessness and unity. Thus, William Golding through the characters in his novels tried to impress upon the Modern man the folly of their life due to faulty thoughts and wanted to reveal that the only way of salvation in life is the religious way. Similarly, Graham Greene also tries to convey that an Individual experiences despair over the nothingness that exists in his finite world. Thus, he has no choice but to abandon the finite and go for something that is beyond it. He seeks this realm which is beyond the temporal which he thinks can offer him inner tranquility and contentment. Behind the man is a chasm of the finite, which can only offer detachment and anguish. On the other hand, this move of man towards infinite is plagued by uncertainty as it is beyond his understanding. The infinite is the absolute and is not within the knowledge of any mortal. It is the realm of God's knowledge. Consequently, man has to face the realm of uncertainty before reaching the gate of the Absolute of the infinite. It is this realm of uncertainty and insecurity that Graham Greene likens to the darkness of a jungle in one of his novels

A Burnt Out Case. Greene's Roman Catholicism has encouraged him to see action as a series of Moral dilemmas, he does not depict right or wrong but fundamental good and fundamental evil.

When compared with Samuel Beckett, we find that all his works are highly, religiously Symbolic. His works are usually packed with direct biblical quotations and theological terms. It is precisely in its skilfully woven pattern of implicit religious imagery, that so much of the textural richness of Beckett's works depends. The Metaphysical and theological issues at the heart of all Beckett's work are suffering, death, guilt, judgement and salvation. Beckett implies, through his plays, that like the Biblical characters, with whom his characters are so harmoniously identified, suffer as a consequence of divine punishment. The Biblical character with whom his characters are most frequently identified is Christ. The death of Christ on the cross is for him an example of divine rejection. As Beckett's characters suffer so intensely, they invariably hope for some kind of transcendence, some metaphysical assurance that can reveal the path of redemption. Though the plays of Samuel Beckett abound in Christian myth and thought, but the possibility of salvation is continually frustrated. His plays do not offer hope of religious consolation; rather they are expressions of the agonized cry of suffering and despair. Broadly speaking, Beckett wants to project, through his plays, man's life as a protracted and painful crucifixion without hope of salvation. The very purpose of his plays is to depict 'nothing happens'-nothing really happens in human life. Therefore, the various themes identified in his plays are waiting, ignorance, impotence, boredom, suffering regression and disintegration. Absurdity is the key feature in his plays. Like Jean Paul Sartre, existentialist, he also believed that human life is a 'futile passion'. Samuel Beckett is an innovator and explorer who nevertheless form part of the tradition of Kafka, Proust, Swift and the Surrealists. Although Beckett himself was not

aware of any such influences, his writings are often described as a literary exposition of Sartre's existentialism. Existentialists consider the *existence* before *essence* and therefore the quality of the individual's experience becomes decisive. Each individual has his own sense of *being*. Beckett's works seek to explore such a sense of being, for example, one of the major themes of the play *Waiting for Godot* is, being without meaning. Beckett's works are concerned with expressing the meaninglessness of this world which is subjected to incessant change. His whole work is a strife to name the unnameable. He challenges the concept that the world can be regulated by classifications and formulations. He tried to reveal that reason in life is obscured and events occur and are accepted without meaning.

An important aspect of life that we confront in Beckett's work is inactivity. He tries to convey that when we are active we tend to forget the passage of time, which we actually experience clearly in the act of waiting passively. The flow of time confronts our being which is subjected to constant change in time. Thus, it is in constant flux and ever outside our grasp. Being subjected to this process of time flowing through us and the resultant change in ourselves with time, we at no point of time find identical with ourselves. Thus, it explains the lack of contentment and contingency in life. Our desires and attainments never are in harmony with each other. In this confusion we fall the victim to despair. Through his plays he could confront various situations of crisis to reveal the reactions of human being. For example, in the play *Breath* (1966). Beckett wants to convey that life is only a breath between birth and death. His miniature play *let Come and Go* (1962) deals with the theme of our reluctance to face our own predicament while we are too eager to gossip about that of our fellow men. A short film *Film* (1964) presents the picture of a man's eye looking at life with the eye of a camera. Thus, in all his works we find Beckett trying to spy on an individual, who is rather an anti-hero and who is placed in a peculiar situation. The possibility

of Salvation is an issue of crucial importance in Beckett's plays. However, the reality of such a state is continually frustrated. The plays of Beckett abound in biblical thoughts and imageries, but far from offering a religious consolation, Beckett's plays present an agonising cry of suffering and despair. Beckett's religious reference suggests that man is a victim of a heartless metaphysical ruse, ensnared in the midst of an alien and hostile world. Probably, he wanted to project that man's life is a long drawn out and painful crucifixion without hope of Salvation.

The obvious difference that we find between Samuel Beckett and Graham Greene is that, on confronting absurdity Beckett's protagonists recoil or withdraw themselves from the world. On the other hand, Greene's protagonists, accepting the paradoxes and absurdities of existence, choose to take steps to satisfy their needs.

William Golding's novels advocate the concept that a novelist creates something 'new' out of the necessary conventions. He believed that the art of creating a novel is a kind of sorcery. In other words, it is a kind of raising of spirits in the mind of the readers. The novelists unconsciously lead his readers to mysterious realms. Apart from telling a story, a novelist must excel in virtuosity, in skill of technique and style. He believed that only telling a story is not enough. It should be adorned or embellished. The greatest challenge before a novelist is his craft. We find him consciously adding new techniques and new methods to his art of story-telling. William Golding relies on his memory and history from which he draws his own artistic and mythic resources. Thus, he creates a character like Simon thinking on Jesus Christ.

While discussing Doris Lessing, it is revealed that her two autobiographies record the evolution of her consciousness, her sexuality and finally her political awareness. Through her autobiographies she reveals how biography and fiction can be fused together to produce a great

art. She shows how a particular experience illuminates the universe. She tells the readers that she has depicted her life to create her greatest work of art. The intricate design of the work of art of William Golding is missing in that of Doris Lessing. Her novel *The Golden Notebook* gives us a psychological exploration of Anna's mind in search of her personal and political identity. In the novel *The Grass is Singing* her portrayal of colonialism is so vivid and realistic that more critical analysis is not required. There is a strong narrative line and the characters, though few, are clearly depicted. We find her predominantly occupied with the underlying critical thought processes like self-defeating posture of white postcolonial guilt as in *The Grass is Singing*, working-class struggles, oppressiveness of family structure, experience of being poor, fragmentation and compartmentalisation of life.

Unique crafting of the novels around a dominant idea is found in both the writers, William Golding and Doris Lessing. All the four novels of William Golding, taken under consideration and the two novels of Doris Lessing: *The Grass is Singing* and *The Golden Notebook*, shows difficult crafting or design to present the dominant thought. William Golding, through his novels makes a passionate plea to the world to nurture culture and refine sensibilities of people. He was strongly rooted in moral tradition. He firmly believed that the key to understand life is to understand its spiritual and moral dimensions. Man is a mysterious mixture of spiritual, moral and divine forces which he should continually take recourse to, in order to understand himself and his fellow being. His plots or story-line is basically simple but he modifies them to suit his own aesthetic taste and preferences. He uses the simple story line to explore his own inner truth.

On the other hand, Lessing's prose has a kind of relaxed power and delicacy which imparts her an easy and casual manner. Her style of writing is often surpassed by substance of what she says. Her writings are more direct, unadorned and intelligently observant material. While going through her autobiographies, we find that her outpourings are not garbed with stylistic shaping. We

find her merely recounting the anecdotes, characters and situations. May be she thought that she was the part of an extraordinary period of time: the end of the British Empire in Africa. She was also involved in the engulfing revolutionary thoughts of the time, though being into it and out of it again, rather than taking a moralistic standpoint of the situation as William Golding chose to be. William Golding presents necessity of a moral order of this universe while Lessing does not appear to be optimistic about the possibility of radically changing the society. Her hope for securing our future lies in the individual's journey into its self. She believed that if an individual is to rise from its experiences, to communicate its knowledge, its unique self must not be submerged. Existentialism as a system of thought is presented in a different hue in Doris Lessing. We find her in search of an authentic and liberated being within herself, never caught in the labyrinth of the world. Racial discrimination and the evils of war have driven her to delve deep into the inner psyche of man, to understand the *being*. She experiences various phases of her life, lingering in some places, may be for a short period, but then moving forward to meet the future. Her works reveal her search, focusing on the establishment of identity and its proper relation to the collective and the whole. She goes through the terrors of destruction and stress of reconstruction. Through her major characters she delineates the process of compartmentalization and fragmentary status of modern human being. But her thirst of searching the truth concealed in nature does not end here. Towards 1960, she moves towards the mysticism of Sufism. Thus, began her final journey towards spiritualism! Her pilgrimage began from communism to Sufism covering three continents and a world war.

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Chapter- VI

CONCLUSION

Before I proceed towards the culmination of the analysis, a short discourse on the relationship of existentialism with the Hindu Philosophy-Vedanta would widen our view on the topic of analysis. “Vedanta is the culmination of knowledge, the sacred wisdom of the Hindu sages, the transcendental experience of the seers of truth. It is the essence or conclusion, of the Vedas”. (Chetanananda 1987:16) Vedanta says that the concept of God is a fundamental element in the human condition. *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Existence, Knowledge-Bliss) is the highest concept of God possible in the mind. There is an unconscious struggle of the human with the spiritual, of the lower with the higher mind, and the struggle attempts to preserve one’s separate life is what we call our ‘individuality’. A child rebels against the law as soon as it is born. It’s first utterance in the form of cry is the protest against the bondage in which it finds itself. This longing for freedom reveals the idea of a *Being* who is absolutely free. As long as we obey the laws we are like machines, and the universe goes on keeping us in bondage. Then, the laws become man’s nature. “The first inkling of life on its higher level is in seeing this struggle within us to break the bonds of nature and to be free.” (Chetananand, 1987: 48). The freedom that distinguishes us from mere machines is what we are all striving for. To be free is the goal of all our efforts because only in perfect freedom there can be perfection.

Swami Vivekananda on some occasions gave the definition of God and man. “Man is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose center is located in one spot; and God is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is

everywhere.” (Chetanananda 1987:52). Therefore, God works through all hands, sees through all eyes, walks on all feet, breathes through all bodies, lives in all lives, speaks through all mouths and thinks through all brains. Even a man can attain the divine status, if he can multiply infinitely his centre of self-consciousness. The question that arises is why man chooses an evil action. It is because all the ethical systems have failed to teach the means by which man could refrain from doing evil. Why does a man steal? It is because robbing, stealing and other evil actions, as a rule, have become automatic. The systematic robber, liar, unjust man and woman, are all these in spite of themselves. It is because we are mere machines until we are free. A person is good because he cannot help it and another is bad because he cannot help it. A woman in the street or a thief in the jail may be a good person. This concept is echoed in Graham Green’s *The Power and the Glory*. Therefore, whom shall we praise and whom shall we blame. All are our teachers. We may curse one and yet benefit by his failings. The Upanishads tell us to be strong. Strength is the call of the universe for weakness can be cleansed only with *strength*.

While diverting my thoughts toward Vedanta, for a better understanding of my concerned topic, I feel that existentialism is a process of thought, to search the identity of our *being*. The essence of human being is to know the beyond. Animals content with the present. If mankind rests content with the present and gives up all searches into beyond, mankind will have to go back to the animal plane again. Life will be a desert and human life in vain, if we cannot know the beyond, and it is religion, the inquiry into the beyond, that makes the difference between a man and an animal. Existentialist like Camus was attracted to Hindu philosophy due to its spirit of freedom, tolerance and liberty. “Desire, indeed, is the root or motivating power of all activity in Indian philosophy, just as the control of it is the path to realization” (Chandra 1989 : 6).

Thus, according to Hindu thoughts, a man becomes what he thinks. It is well known that in Indian philosophy religion is a way of life and not a remote discipline to be mastered theoretically. *Bhagavat Gita* is the very kernel of the Indian thoughts. It contains the essence of the *Vedas and Upanishads*.

Bhagavat Gita, which expounds the harmony between man's diverse approaches to Reality, which is one, through knowledge, through love, through righteous and detached living, and develops the thesis that all means which help the individual to rise above the demands of the ego to his identity with the Supreme Self which is manifest in all being, are the truly legitimate means of that individual's spiritual fulfillment (Chandra 1989 : 5).

The basic characteristics of Indian philosophy are mysticism, spirituality, dissatisfaction with the existing suffering and ultimate aim of attainment of 'Moksha'. "Moksha can be defined as a state of unalloyed and infinite bliss, the higher state of consciousness where the false ego dies and one enters the path of illumination" (Chandra 1989 : 5). Such a state of being does not imply loss of individual self, rather it is the attainment of a larger and greater individuality, which disowning one's own self, embraces the whole world.

It becomes difficult to grasp the idea about 'being'. Various existentialists have defined it separately. However, according to Advaitist philosophers there is one existence and that can be called as 'Atman' or 'Self' when this is perceived by the senses or through sense – imageries, it is called the body. When it is perceived through thought, it becomes the mind, when it is perceived in its own nature; it is the Atman or self, the one and only Existence. According to different views this 'Atman', or 'Being' is sometimes called the body, sometimes the mind and sometimes the self. Thus, the concept of 'Atman' and 'Self' is one and the same. The ignorant call that one Being as the world. Those who aspire to a higher knowledge call the same Being the world of knowledge and when knowledge itself comes to the 'Being' all illusions, or in Indian term 'Maya', vanishes and a man finds nothing but

Atman. “There are neither three nor two in the universe; it is all one. That one, under the illusion of Maya, is seen as many, just as a rope is seen as a snake” (Vivekananda 1989 :21). Since the concepts of ‘Atman’ or ‘Being’ are identical in Vedanta, little superficial knowledge about Atman would help us to understand the concept of ‘Self’ or ‘Being’. “According to the Advaita philosophy, there is only one thing real in the Universe, which is called Brahman; everything else is unreal, manifested and manufactured out of Brahman by the power of Maya” (Vivekananda 1989 : 256). It is the greatest endeavour of soul or Atman to reach back to Brahman.

Therefore, we are each one composed of the ‘Brahman’ which is the reality and ‘Maya’ the illusion. If we can get rid of this Maya, the ignorance or illusion, we can stand as the real one. In other words, we can say that we have three different parts in making us what we are. The first is the external body, then comes the internal part which is the mind and behind mind we have the Atman or the self which is also called the Being. “The body is the external coating and the mind is the internal coating of the Atman who is the real perceiver, the real enjoyer, the being in the body who is working the body of means of the internal organ or the mind” (Vivekananda 1989 : 254). Thus, we come to know that the existential ‘being’ and the ‘Atman’ of Hindu philosophy is one and the same. In order to understand ‘being’ we can study the concept of ‘Atman’ of Hindu philosophy. Since Atman or the self always has a quest to reunite with ‘Brahman’, we find a quest towards something eternal in William Golding and Doris Lessing. Both the authors experience life at the level of ‘Maya’ or ‘illusion’ of sensory perception, yet we find a quest towards something which would be the permanent.

‘Atman’ is the only existence in the human body which is immaterial. As it is immaterial, it cannot be a compound and since it cannot be a compound it cannot come under the law of cause and effect. Thus, it is immortal. Since it has no matter it is formless and anything which is formless has neither a beginning nor an end. What dies is our material body. The ‘being’ or the self never perishes. Therefore, the ‘self’ has existed from infinite time. Just as time is eternal, similar is the being. As the ‘being’ is formless, it is omnipresent. According to Advaita Vedanta, “... the Self, the Atman, in you, in me, in every one, is omnipresent. You are as much in the Sun now as in the earth as much in England as in America. But the self acts through the mind and the body, and where they are, its action is visible” (Vivekananda 1989 : 255).

An important aspect of ‘Self’ is that all the works that we do or the thoughts that we think create an impression in our self. The sum total of all these impressions give the ‘Character’ to the being. Thus, character is the result of all the mental and physical actions done by the being in his life. When a person dies, these impressions remain with the being which never perishes. Human soul of the being travels from lower to higher form according to one’s impression or ‘Samskara’. However, it is only in the highest form as a man that it attains to freedom. “Man is the highest being in creation because he attains freedom” (Vivekananda 1989 : 258). Therefore, the only path towards freedom is to know our ‘self’. When we realize that we are the ‘Self’ or ‘Being’, we are free. The self is self-caused. It can never change, for it cannot be acted upon by a cause, as it is itself the cause. Freedom is inseparably connected with immortality. “To be free one must be above the laws of nature” (Vivekananda 1989 : 84) Law exists as long as one is ignorant. An enigmatic situation develops when I find that the ‘free will’ is contradictory. The will can never be free, because it is within the laws of cause and effect. But the ‘I’ behind the will is free; and this is the ‘self.’

Probably, this is the reason why William Golding and Doris Lessing, though advocating freedom as the destination of human life, could not give freedom to themselves. Through their 'Will' they were still under the shackles of cause and effect. Everything in time, space and the law of causation is bound. There cannot be any will without external objects. Vivekananda says that we are indestructible because we are the 'self', the God of the universe. "I am Existence Absolute, Bliss Absolute, knowledge Absolute, I am He" (Vivekananda 1989:236).

The great Existential writer Albert Camus was also influenced by Indian philosophy in understanding his life. Camus was born at the crucial period of the First World War, and grew up at a time when humanity was facing its worst crisis of faith. It was an age of bleak despair, of extreme human suffering, racialism, mental torture and installing forced opinions and scientifically controlled destruction. It was the age of moral and intellectual confusion. Even in this period of extreme incoherence Camus produced works which were masterpieces depicting the problems of the human conscience of the time. "He was a profound thinker, a sensitive artist, a mystic, spiritually too conscious to remain a silent spectator to the sight of unmerited misery" (Chandra 1989 : 2). He was perplexed perceiving the meaninglessness of the world. He experienced a feeling of unreality and strangeness everywhere. He felt as if human beings were thrown into an absurd world with no god or no moral principles. He found that life was ultimately ended by death and all the striving, hoping and loving were engulfed by the silence of earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. He could not accept such a bitter destiny of human being. Therefore, the theme of absurdity, futility and utter incomprehensibility of life and death are depicted in his works. He also devoted his life to the great fundamental questions of life.

His early religious responses and persevering concern with those aspects of life which were contemplated by ancient Indian sages, reveal an unmistakable Metaphysical proximity with the thoughts contained in the *Upanishads*. Thus, his approaches to life and his entire outlook have a distinct Indianness about them. “He was a ‘Yogi’ often discovered lost in the raptures ecstasy of total union with the infinite” (Chandra 1989 : 3). That Camus had read *Bhagavat-Gita* has been confirmed by many sources. Herbert Lottman has the following passage in his most detailed biography of Camus,

student with Max-Pol Fouchet and Camus taking the lead, there would be interminable discussions, often in the heart of the Kasbah, at a crossroads cafe called the Fromentin..... Here they would sip mint tea while a Muezzine summoned the faithful to prayer from atop the minaret of the small Mosque just opposite. Fouchet noted that Camus was particularly moved by the prayer call, for he was then reading the Mystics, John Ruysbroeck (the Dutch Augustinian), St. Theresa of Avila, and under Gremier’s influence, the *Bhagavat-Gita* (Chandra 1989 :4).

There are other sources also which confirm that Camus read *Bhagavat-Gita*. The *Upanishads* are considered the highest level philosophical speculations of Indian people. However, the reason why Camus was drawn towards *Bhagavat-Gita* more is because *Upanishads* remain vaguely incomplete in the solution to the complex striving of human ‘being’. Their emphasis is more towards intellectual striving to reveal the reality rather than with love and devotion. This demerit has been improved by *Bhagavat-Gita* by celebrating all the paths-knowledge, love, righteousness, detached living to reach the reality which is but one. *Bhagavat-Gita* develops the thesis that all paths, which raise and individual to rise above his ‘ego’ of identity and merge with the supreme self which manifest, through all being, are the truly correct means of reaching the goal of spiritual fulfilment. Camus was inspired by this concept of *Bhagavat-Gita*. “When the ego dies, all troubles cease,” preached Thakur Ramakrishna.

Camus was an artist, a missionary. He was concerned with life and death as it happens in the practical life of man and not in any abstract thought or philosophy. He considers himself an artist rather than a philosopher. The concept of absurdity as treated by Camus is more from experience rather than a doctrine. He could perceive certain permanent contradictions like physical life and certainty of death, on one hand rational and on the other irrational world in the life of man. There is a quest for permanency whereas everything in the world is of transitory nature. The world is inhabited by so many people, yet we feel isolated and alienated from ourselves. The realization brings intense despair and loss of meaning and value in one's life. This metaphysical anguish becomes the themes of his life. But the distinguishing feature in him is that at this point of anxiety, Camus does not despair. Instead, he is seen more conforming to humanism. He believed that the solution of the tension between life and death or rational and irrational world is not to accept death or the irrational world. "The essential problem is to live in full recognition of the contradictions, and within the tensions they produce with an even mind" (Chandra 1989 : 9). Therefore, we find the influence of *Gita* which says – "Steadfast in inner composure do thy work..... with an even mind in success and failure, for evenness of mind is called yoga" (Chandra 1989 : 9). He adores life with a passion. His works are sincere genuine, humble and a celebration of life at the face of extreme contradictions. They are like hymn to life with a inherent nature of fleetingness. I took Camus as a subject of my study as he is the confluence of Existential system of thoughts and Indian philosophical thought. It is my wish to direct my study towards an inference which can be derived from Indian philosophy. I made a brief study of Vedanta, Buddhism and Sufism to establish a common relationship as it gives me an innate feeling that the ultimate truth of life is one.

To understand Buddhism briefly we have to emphasize on the main thoughts of its philosophy. Buddhism is based on the spiritual experience of Gautam Buddha. (583 – 463 BC). His personality and philosophy greatly influenced the intellectuals all over the world. The emphasis of Buddhism is on wisdom and compassion. Thus, it is a philosophy which comes closer to humanity. His analytical approach and humanism enticed the people of different parts of the world. The distinctive aspect of his philosophy is that it was oral. Buddha has not delivered any written sermons. It was written down many years later by his disciples. As different disciples interpreted his teaching in their own ways, difference of opinion developed. Therefore, three councils were held to codify Buddha's sermons by the Buddhist of the entire country. The first of these were held one hundred years after his death, and subsequently two each after an interval of a hundred years in between. These collected teachings were contained in three baskets called 'tri-pitakas'. The names of the three baskets are 'Vinaya-pitakas'; (basket of rules of conduct). The second 'Sutta-pitaka', (basket of Sermons). The third 'abhidhmma-pitaka', (basket of philosophical disquisitions). It is commonly known that the sight of human misery in the form of sickness, old age and death greatly moved Buddha and he sacrificed his whole life to unearth the cause behind human misery and the path to come out of the misery. He came up thus with four noble truths, which are – (i) there is suffering (ii) there is cause (iii) it can be overcome (iv) there is a path to reach our goal.

Thus, the first noble truth is the acceptance that life is full of sufferings. Birth, diseases, decay, death, unfulfilled craving are all with what the life is made up of and they inflict pain. "In the entire history of human thought no one has painted the misery of human existence in darker hues with more feeling than Lord Buddha" (Chandra 1989 : 27). Thus,

it is existential. All existentialists project life in a similar darker hue. Death is the universal law of life. Because of death, life appears absurd. Therefore, how to overcome or transcend this world of death became the quest of all thinkers including Buddha. An echo of Buddhist view of life is sounded through the famous existential writer Nietzsche when he says – “they meet an invalid or an old man, or a corpse and immediately they say, life is refuted” (Chandra 1989 : 28). Due to its strong emphasis on human sufferings, Buddhism is sometimes wrongly thought to be pessimistic. Apart from revealing the unending suffering of human life Buddhism illuminated the path of release or liberation, to the ultimate ‘Moksha’ or ‘Nirvana’.

The second truth talks about the causal relationship. As every event has a cause, therefore misery too must have a cause. Broadly, ignorance and desires are the root cause of all sufferings. The third noble truth speaks about cessation of suffering. Since all events have a cause, the events happenings are the effects. Effects can be destroyed, if their causes are prevented from occurring. Thus, ignorance should be illuminated with the help of knowledge of truth and there shall be no misery of human life. The fourth noble truth is to find the way to relieve humanity from suffering. According to Buddhism, the breaking up of the causation of misery is an ethical process which involves the practice of eight fold paths. They are Right knowledge, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right conduct, Right selection of livelihood, Right effort to overcome evil tendencies, Right mindfulness and Right concentration. Right concentration is possible only if we purify the mind through the first seven practices. “The aim of concentration is attaining of Nirvana, the absolute placidity of being” (Chandra 1989 : 29).

Buddhism is an ocean of knowledge. A detailed study of this knowledge, which aims at reaching towards the universal truth about the existence of human life, is an impossible

task at present. However, the aspects that really strike me is its appeal to humanity and its concept of momentariness. Apart from other doctrines, it also emphasis on ceaseless mutation and transformation of things. Buddha preached the concept that life is a series of manifestations of becoming and extinction. Though we live a life which appears same throughout but every moment is the death of the previous moment and a beginning of a new moment. Thus, it is a series of moments which shows our being and its becoming. It is at this moment that I find the existential aspect of ‘becoming’ and ‘contingency’ of life. Doris Lessing like many other great intellectuals was greatly influenced by this concept of life and she was also a being who lived her every moment and again all moments were a new beginning with her. Her being can be seen always in the state of becoming, and ever ready for a new experience of life.

Delving deep into Indian philosophy we find that it is broad enough to house knowledge of heterogeneous nature which runs parallel with the main orthodox system of thought. Probably it was felt that to comprehend nature with a single system of thought was an impossibility. Therefore, acceptance of different description regarding different aspect of life would take us closer to the truth related to the creation of life in this universe. Since Sufism was a path chosen by Doris Lessing for her further journey of life, it is essential to know the truth inherent in this system of thought. Sufism essentially is a philosophy which teaches us how to free ourselves from the ego and rise higher in our spiritual destination. Sufism is interpreted as the heart of Islam. Sufi masters are called ‘ahle dil’ meaning ‘people of the heart’. They believed that religion becomes absurd, if the warm emotion of love is not attached with it. “Sufism is the timeless art of awakening the higher consciousness through submission to the Divine Will” (Dehlvi 2009 : XVI).

A close affinity is often felt between Sufism and Hinduism. In fact, Sufism and Hinduism are thought to be an innovation in Islam. The Monastic organization of Sufis, their penance, fasting and breath exercise lead them to ancient Hindu and Buddhist practices. The reason behind this affinity is that Buddhism flourished in Central Asia even before the advent of Islam. On the other hand, Yogis from India continued to visit West Asia even after the advent of Islam. Therefore, the Yogic book *Amrit-Kund* has been translated into Persian language from Sanskrit. Thus, the practices of Hindus and Buddhists seem to have been absorbed and assimilated by the Sufis even before they came to India. The origin of ideas of Sufism is difficult to be traced. However, the Sufi Saints and many other intellectuals trace the origin of the ideas of the different system of thoughts, but a striking similarity is noticed amongst them regarding the nature of God and His relationship with the soul and with the material world. This provided the mutual understanding of tolerance. So far, I could present only the outer garb of Sufism. To go deep into its heart my words would not be sufficient. An autobiographical passage of Imam Ghazali would enlighten us with its essence.

I turned my way to the Sufis, I knew it could not be travelled without doctrine and practice, that their doctrine lies in overcoming the appetites of the flesh and getting rid of its evil dispositions, so that the heart may be cleared of all but God. The means of cleansing the heart is *dhikr*, the concentration of every thought upon him. So I began by learning their doctrine from their books and saying of their Shaykhs, until I acquired much of their way as it is possible to acquire by learning and hearing, and saw plainly that what is most peculiar to them cannot be learned but can only be reached by immediate experience, ecstasy and inward transformation. How great is the difference between knowing the definition, causes and conditions of drunkenness and actually being drunk. (Dehlvi 2009 : 101)

After reading this passage we can feel that Sufis are men of feelings. God cannot be realized with the help of doctrine or knowledge. God is known by immediate, personal experience.

It is a feeling of ecstasy. The Sufis believed that rational knowledge can never reveal the secrets of divinity because reason comes in between the knower and known. The Sufi masters teach inner purification of soul. Removal of ego unites them with God. Their highest stage of spiritual excellence is called *fana* where the self ceases to exist. “Prophet Muhammad said, ‘Die before you die,’ stressing upon the importance of self-realization” (Dehlvi 2009 : 60).

A study of certain principles of thoughts such as Vedanta, Buddhism and Sufism is made to find a basic relationship of these systems of thoughts with Existentialism. It can be felt that all the systems of thoughts travel from a lower to higher, imperfection to perfection, physical to spiritual and from imbalance to equilibrium state. Our ‘self’ or ‘being’ incessantly strive to acquire its spiritual entity. This strife or quest of being is at the core of all the novels by William Golding and Doris Lessing. Vedanta summarizes the concept of god in the concept of ‘Sat-Chit-Ananda.’ The state of ‘Sat’ signifies the real existence of being or self or soul, while the concept of ‘chit’ is the true knowledge of ‘being’ acquired which gives unearthly peace and enables us to attain the state of ‘Nirvana,’ or Salvation. In other words, Salvation means liberation from personal encumbrances. This is the state when a being attains the state of equilibrium and remains in the state of eternal bliss. Following this concept, we can realize that the two writers, William Golding and Doris Lessing, are in the state of realizing the existence of ‘Sat’ which is their ‘being.’ Their process of entering into the innermost part of their selves can be compared to the peeling off the outer covering of a fruit and reaching the innermost kernel. We find Golding revealing human ego, lust, greed, avarice, pride which entices him and prevents him from reaching the ‘nouminous.’ Golding’s novels are concerned with the depth, yet no less concerned about the need of survival. “Yet Golding has always been committed to exploring beyond the line, into the depths, where the world

of social behavior and character gives way to hidden dimensions of good and evil, joy and horror” (Stine 1984 : 166).

Through various novels he examines human nature, as it is seen that life becomes a misery to the children in the *Lord of the Flies* because of the clash of wills of Ralph and Jack. Pincher in *Pincher Martin* is a self-centered character who spends his entire life acquiring things that really belong to other people. Samuel Mountjoy, in *Free Fall* is another character who is commonly found in society. His sole concern is his personal happiness and enjoyment. The novel, *The Paper Men* depicts selfishness at the professional level. Halliday has employed Professor Tucker to get hold of Wilfred Barclays’ papers so that he could make professional gains. In turn, Tucker hopes to become famous by being Barclays’ official biographer. Selfishness gives rise to wrath and intolerance. A person under its effect tries to seek his goal by any means. William Golding tries to leave the message to the world that unless we are able to conquer ourselves, there cannot be any outward peace or mental satisfaction. He has emphasized that inward look or introspection would be more revealing than the outward search. Unless he is able to see what he himself is, he would be threatened by various forces, real or imagined, and which are beyond his control in the world. Being authentic with ourselves, we would be able to find authenticity in others.

While studying the novels of Doris Lessing we can experience the presence of subtle connotation towards injustice, racism and sexual hypocrisy. “Mary’s belligerence is a clear projection of her anger against an unsatisfactory marriage and the oppressive, gendered social norms that led to its existence” (Wang 2009 : 40).

Thus, her characters, specially women, uphold the concept of freedom, subjective experience and an unquenching thirst to reach the unknown. Through the character of Mary,

Lessing tries to protect the multiple modes of oppression faced by a white woman. According to Lessing, “To be white by societal standards is not to have resisted fragmentation but to have been reduced to a single fragment” (Hite 1988 : 485). The infinity of a single whole was felt by Doris Lessing and therefore, the novel *The Golden Notebook*, disperses both the character and plot, challenging the notion of a single vision accommodating the ultimate truth. She tries to expose the conventional notions of unity as a most dangerous compartment of all for it does not allow any future possibilities. Style of writing is a secondary concern for her since the substance of what she was, is so important. She advocated a sense of freedom from any sort of constraints in all walks of life. Therefore, in writing too, she soon feels dissatisfied with her conventional narrative and takes to deconstruct, interrogate and independently play around with the novel form. Thus, in her we find a restless spirit struggling to free itself to reach the beyond. She has seen the last days of British Empire. Therefore, those were the days of enthusiasm about Utopian vision of the world. Doris Lessing, being a blithe and independent spirit, could not remain insulated from the flux of new thoughts being poured out “I became a Communist because of the spirit of the times, because of the *Zeitgeist* – so Lessing explains her being recruited into the dissident “Progressive” band of believers she discovered in Rhodesia” (Pritchard 1995 : 321).

The reality is that any conclusion about ‘the truths’ of human nature could not be arrived yet. Therefore, any philosophy is merely an invitation to further enquiry in that direction. However, each philosophical theory emphasizes different aspects of the total truth about man. Each has permanently brought a difference in our view about human nature and no doubt in future it will continue to influence it. Amongst many unsolved questions about human nature, one such question that emerges in our mind is how much in human nature is innate, and how much is learnt from the social environment. The question of

determinism against free will has been discussed by various thinkers at various levels. Thinkers and epoch makers like, Marx, Freud and Skinner are of the opinion that we are not as free as we like to think, but are influenced in ways we do not usually recognize. “Marx points to the influence in ways we do not usually recognize” (Stevenson 1974 : 122).

These thinkers through their own respective theory suggest that human choices exist, but are determined by factors that are outside our control. Christian thinkers and Sartre agree that our choices are not determined by us. The freedom to choose our attitudes, values and whole way of life is what makes us truly human. Thus, a strain of thought that comes to our mind is that Doris Lessing was first influenced by Marx and his philosophy as her utopian ideals of the new world could be accommodated by this theory. However, she was soon disillusioned by the atrocities and vileness practiced by the Comrades. As she was a staunch advocate of freedom, we find her drifting away towards the system of thought which rejected any kind of determinism. Then basic thoughts central to the theory of existentialism are that it is primarily concerned about individual human being and his uniqueness. Secondly, there is a concern with the meaning or purpose of human life which is achieved through inner or subjective experience rather than objective truths. It is least concerned about the scientific or metaphysical truths about the universe. Thirdly, its concern is with the freedom of individuals as their most important and distinctively human property. In a nut shell, all existentialists believe in the ability of every person to choose for himself his ideas and attitudes, values, purposes and way of life. They not only accepted the system of thought in their own life but also wanted to create awareness about it amongst others. According to them, the only ‘authentic’ and genuine way of life is that which is chosen by each individual for himself.

No doubt, Doris Lessing was attracted towards this system of thought. She is a person who is closer to Sufism because of the liberated and ecstatic self. By studying this system of thoughts we find that the quest of self is one and the same for everyone. Beyond our sensual perception there is a horizon of equilibrium. This status of equilibrium is the quest of all being. Whether it is the teachings of *Upanishad* or Sufism, ritualistic prayers, if not accompanied by love and sincerity, are of worth little.

William Golding and Doris Lessing reveal this search of their *being* through their works. William Golding accomplishes his task of finding his *self* and rest in religion. Doris Lessing, too, has taken a similar course to reach her soul's ultimate goal for wisdom and not sensual happiness is the goal of humanity. It is found that man enjoys his intellect more than an animal enjoys its senses. And also, man enjoys his spiritual nature even more than his rational nature. So, the highest wisdom must be this spiritual knowledge. Only then knowledge will become bliss.

Existentialism as a philosophical movement is well established. However, its influences in literature have to pass through a degree of judgement. Not all literature is questioning the identity of man that can be termed as existential. Because of its emphasis, more on the concrete base, it can be best expressed through plays and novels and this aspect is studied by the great propounder of the theory like Camus, Sartre and Marcel. Therefore, such literary productions as *La Peste*, *La Nausee* and *Huis Clos* might have instructed thousands of people who would never read a formal philosophical treatise. To term a piece of literature as existential, we have to point at some definite judgemental concepts, rather than some vague and accidental resemblances between the understanding of man found in literary writers and that found in the existential philosophers. Some 'recurring

themes' serve the deciding factors of existential stances in literary works. "I mean such theme as freedom, decision and responsibility; and even more, finitude, alienation, guilt, death; and perhaps not least, that peculiar and indefinable intensity of feeling that is apparent in most of the existentialists from Kierkegaard" (Macquarrie 1972 : 262).

Thus, considering under these distinctive qualities of existentialism, I could clearly feel the presence of existential traits in the works of William Golding and Doris Lessing, selected for the study. The existentialists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries seem to be aware of a crisis, a threat, a fragmentation or compartmentalisation and alienation that are added distinction in their chilling intensity. The presence of these features in the works of the author taken for the analysis truly terms them as existential.

Existentialists do not reject the technological society as such, but the growing narrowness of human life which is due to the exclusive preoccupations with the external conditions. They are the critique of society and are not, therefore, to be dismissed as mere romantic imaginations. They may be considered as rather a prophetic voice, trying to conjure up the sense of humanity in man and to present it against further erosion. With regards to its political aspects, this philosophy is faced with certain questions like - whether this philosophy tie itself with other political ideologies or it has generated an ideology of its own. Questions are raised because many of its propounders were influenced by various political ideologies initially. For example, Heidegger was a Nazi and Sartre a Marxist. After accepting existentialism as their ideology, they could not adhere to any other ideology from outside, for existential concept of an authentic existence does not imply adherence to any particular ethical ideology. Neither can it generate an ideology of its own, for that would mean a form of heteronomy or bad faith. If existentialism had to follow a particular political creed, it

would be anarchy. This non-adherence to any ideology, we find in the two authors of our concern. Because they were authentic, therefore they could not be swallowed by any gush of external ideology. William Golding, however, tries to find out a stable base for humanity to function, which is again an authentic existence. The existentialists remain free to criticize every political movement that ironically restricts human freedom and diminishes human dignity.

Regarding the concept of 'Conscience' also, the existentialists have a somewhat ambiguous status of acceptance.

'Conscience' may mean a person's awareness of the moral code accepted in his society, together with the feelings of discomfort or satisfactions that he may have as he either breaks or keeps the rules expressed in the code. But it is also the term we use for the kind of moral conviction that will sometimes lead a person to reject the accepted standards of his society in response to what he believes to be a more deeply founded imperative. Existentialists tends to be critical of conscience in the first of the two senses and to hold that only the second is important (Macquarrie 1972 : 210).

It is necessary to cite this quotation in order to reveal the concept of 'Conscience' adopted by the two authors, William Golding and Doris Lessing, as revealed through their works. We find them inclined towards their own individual moral conviction, rather than any moral code accepted in the society. Thus, they express a deep sense of humanity through their own moral conviction rather than complying to the outside pressure. Before we proceed towards the end, it is imperative to consider the danger of being in a complete relativism and individualism, because "Existence is authentic to the extent that the existent has taken possession of himself and shall we say, has moulded himself in his own image" (Macquarrie 1972 : 206). However, it is important to note that the existentialist criterion of an authentic existence is a formal rather than material consideration. It is the form and the shape of an existence that is the measure of authenticity. However, no major existentialist philosopher

has instructed that everything is permitted as Dostoyevsky once said that if there is no God, everything is permitted. Even though the criterion of authentic selfhood, true humanity and authentic existence is a formal one, some material principles are always introduced. According to Sartre, the control is exercised by his notion of responsibility. What Sartre meant was that the anguish of a choice arises because in making the choice one is committing not only himself but in a certain manner all mankind. This sense of responsibility would certainly exclude some choices, such as the choice to be sheer ruthless egoist or a fanatic etc. Here comes the question of conscience. According to Macquarrie ".... that already with existence there is given an image or goal of existence - not indeed, a detailed model or pattern, but a basic awareness of the direction of human fulfilment" (1972 : 209).

Addressing William Golding and Doris Lessing as existential writers, my purpose was to study the very core of human being. As religion deals with such core questions of human existence, I endeavour to venture into the peripheral layer of various religions, to spy into the thought processes of the two authors. Meanwhile, Golding was a religious human being and Doris Lessing was deeply influenced by Sufism, though Sufism is not a religion, but it claims to be the truth that lives in the soul of all religions. It was the truth that she always believes in. A force of evolution is always at work. A person constantly learns while he is not aware that he is doing so. These thoughts gave Doris Lessing the anchorage.

Doris Lessing churns the impersonal through her personal experiences as a woman. Her works take up what Virginia Woolf leaves off around mid-twentieth century. She continues to depict that the subjectivities of women are not confined within narrow domestic life or immediate personal relations. Her subjectivities may encompass not only large social collectives of this materialistic world but also extend to visions of the cosmos. Through his novels, William Golding ruthlessly explores the depraved aspects of human nature: lust, greed, violence,

fanaticism and repressed sexuality. These constitutes the darkness of man's heart. Our modern civilization is well depicted in T.S. Eliot's *The wasteland* . It is a generation nurtured by war, violence, rigid belief, social taboos and multiple 'isms'. Like other orthodox moralists. Golding considered 'Man' as a fallen creature but he is full of hope for the redemption of mankind. Golding is not dogmatic. He believed that there is no distinct spheres of black and white. There is only grey- a fusion of good and evil and man has to reconcile himself to it.

Like other schools of thought, Existentialism is also an endeavour to understand human existence and its purpose. But at the infinity and magnanimity of life, I am humbled to realise my position in the Universe. It was my sincere and humble effort to understand human existence with the application of this system of thought in the works of William Golding and Doris Lessing who are the powerful representatives of this revolutionary system to realise human life.

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List of Libraries Consulted

1. Osmania University Centre for International Programmes, Osmania University Campus. Hyderabad.
2. University of Hyderabad. Hyderabad.
3. National Library Kolkata.
4. Nagaland University Central Library. Kohima Campus.
5. Nagaland University Library, Lumami Campus.
6. English and Foreign Language University. Hyderabad.
7. Salecian College, Dimapur.



Golding receives the Noble Prize from His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf,



Golding on his boat 'Wild Rose'



British novelist Doris Lessing receives the Nobel Prize for Literature
at the Wallace Collection in London January 30, 2008.



Golding with his wife Ann in wiltshire garden in 1983.



‘Lord of the flies’.



Doris Lessing with her daughter and son.



Doris Lessing and John Osborne. Lessing (front right) with John Osborne in 1961. Behind them are Sheila Delaney and Vanessa Redgrave



Her father Alfred Cook Tayler and mother Emily Maude McVeagh.

P. J.

EXISTENTIALISM IN THE WORKS OF WILLIAM GOLDING AND DORIS LESSING

Dalia Bhattacharjee

2014