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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
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Theme

**Appraising Contemporary Existentialism in John Bunyan's
The Pilgrim's Progress and Danny Boyle's *The Beach***

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for The Master Degree in English Language, Literature, and Civilization

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Academic Year: 2017/2018

Abstract

This research work carries out a fundamental appraisal of the Existentialist philosophy in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Danny Boyle's *The Beach*. In this process, this dissertation treats John Bunyan as Existentialism's theist precursor, who experimented with Existentialist philosophy long before it was fully developed in the twentieth century. This explicit contextualization of Bunyan within Existentialism will be achieved through a comparative study with the film-philosophy of Danny Boyle's *The Beach*, as the latter examines and explores also the inner depths of human existence. A thorough study of the corpora is made to achieve a philosophical Existentialist nexus. It shows that their view is quite similar to the Existentialist view held by eminent modern philosophers.

Key Words: Existentialism, Contemporary Existentialism, John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Danny Boyle, *The Beach*.

DEDICATION

TO EACH SINGLE PERSON I KNOW ESPECIALLY, MY DEAR PARENTS AND
BROTHERS.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I WISH TO EXPRESS MY DEEPEST THANKFULNESS, GRATITUDE, AND INDEBTEDNESS TO ALL THOSE NOBLE TEACHERS WHO ACCOMPANIED MY LEARNING PROCESS FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL UNTIL THE LAST DAY OF MY GRADUATION. THIS MODEST RESEARCH WORK IS A TRIBUTE FOR THEIR EFFORTS. TO DOCTOR MEHDI, I THANK YOU FOR READING AND CORRECTING MY DISSERTATION.

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General Introduction

Through the works of Jean Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger, Albert Camus, and Simone de Beauvoir, one comes across the most popular intellectual and philosophical movement of the twentieth century which encompasses a philosophy of absolute individuality. What Existentialism is proves to be a very complex dilemma, as it is neither a philosophical school of thought nor even should be viewed as a set of doctrines. It is widely recognized today as a cultural movement. Philosophy is about dialectic, someone puts forth an idea and someone else responds to it. Existentialism is highly nourished by its bitter loathing of reason. In truth, this philosophical movement came as a reaction to the age of Enlightenment. Existentialist thinkers craved and needed to revolt against the old masters of philosophy. There is a noticeable incitement to break through with their biggest rivals. The existentialist thinkers declared the bankruptcy and poverty of the rationalists, as they failed to exhibit human beings as absolute. They wanted to recast the rational definition of man. As a result, Descartes's dictum "Cogito Ergo Sum" (I think, therefore, I exist) was scandalously attacked.

Briefly setting aside Existentialism, the classical philosophical school of Rationalism dominated widely the realm of philosophy and human thinking till the nineteenth century. The quest of any single philosophy is to deduce the truth of the principal question of life that requires unfolding the mystery of human existence, a unified understanding for who are we? How are we going to live? And where are we going?

Naturally enough, the mind is given an ultimate authority to deduce the truth. Through the use of reason and logical thinking, a single human being may reach the objective truth. Indeed, Rationalism centered on the power of mind and reason as the only path toward knowledge. Thinking is a basic proof of being. In the view of Rationalism, certain truths exist outside knowledge, and in order to reach that knowledge, reason is the key. The supporters of

this theory, including the fierce Rationalist René Descartes, could believe nothing rather than the logicity of the mind.

These two privileged components of reason and mind are set aside in a museum by the Existentialist thinkers. Existentialism as a cultural and intellectual movement sanctified and embraced faith and passion as a pre-requisite condition to know reality and find truth. It is noteworthy that reason is a philosophical suicide for Existentialists. An attempt by a single person to establish order or attribute conscious understanding is doomed to failure; the world is irrational and meaningless. Consequently any attempt to perceive human existence should be based on passion, and passion alone.

As a movement, Existentialism arose in the nineteenth-century Europe through the philosophical and literary works of Soren Kierkegaard, Frederick Nietzsche, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. The whole movement is so definitely a European legacy. After the Second War, the euphoria of the French Existentialism reached the United States and the rest of the world. It is estimated that this philosophy was a blasphemy to the Anglo-American philosophy. Existentialism is usually depicted as intellectual cliché for the reason of its trembling and frailty.

The sheer philosophical power of Existentialism reached its culmination in the twentieth century. Relevantly, there are some landmark historical events that collaborated in the sponsorship of the movement. Firstly, the horrors of the Holocaust and the Nazi Regime in the Great War led several people to abandon any belief in an ordered universe. Most importantly, before the War, God and the Church used to be the reference point to human beings. Notwithstanding, people started to question the existence of God and the credibility of the religious institutions. Next and foremost, Europe experienced the critical economic depression. People were left in poverty that grew out savagely like a plague. At this period

philosophy began to question life and religion despite their different positions in the condition of human beings.

From the left bank in Paris, the French Existentialist Sartre, mostly conceived as the prophet of Existentialism, started to achieve a radical attention when he brought this philosophy from darkness to light. Sartre has stamped himself so strongly, thus he became the mind of Existentialism. He consciously opens the door to introduce Existentialism to the world. Hence, it is so difficult today to convince the American audience that the heart of Existentialism is not Jean Paul Sartre.

Sartre's "Existence Precedes Essence" became the formula in Existentialism. The standard philosophical view, before the appearance of Existentialism, used to be 'Essence precedes Existence'. In the Greek philosophy, to be a great human being is to adhere to one's predetermined essence. The overwhelming reality is that one's essence gives a purpose. This point must be insisted upon, contrary to the essentialists; the Existentialist thinkers started to challenge the view that we are imbued with any essence or purpose. The uncanny awareness of Sartre gives birth to the mantra "Existence Precedes Essence". This awareness is a wild cry as Sartre reexamined the question of existence and essence through which he fully denied existence with any hard-wired purpose. This "conspiracy" against the Greek philosophy was transparently a new breath in philosophy. Consequently, Existentialism preaches as doctrine existence first then purpose. Truly, this became the framework of Existentialism. In the socio-historical context of that period this idea was radical. For centuries before, human beings were not supposed to follow any path or decide about any essence, because God has already predetermined them. This is not to suggest that Existentialism is synonymous with atheism.

What theist existentialists reject is any teleology. In this sense, existentialist philosophers refute the notion that God made the universe or our world or even human beings

with any specific purpose. A brief glance at their views may serve to see that this is the fundamental component in Existentialism, what its advocates refer to as “the absurd”. Indeed, the very success of Existentialism is mostly linked to this concept of absurdity which is a technical word. Human beings are creatures that search for meaning and answers in a meaningless world, they are abandoned as miserable pariahs. They search for meaning, they do not find it but, they keep searching.

Sartre turned his energies confidently toward another terrifying aspect of Existentialism not the irrationality of the human existence, but the cornucopia of freedom. In this chief respect, human beings are painfully shockingly condemned to be free. In the light of this illegal condemnation, the best thing a human being could do is to live authentically. So a human being, according to the Existentialist philosophy, has to accept this abundance of freedom that co-habits with the absurdity of the universe. Any meaning and truth of life is given by people themselves, the world remains unanswerable until we decide to assign it meaning.

Moreover, Existentialism is also a literary movement. The key concern of this philosophy was traded through the literary works of some important philosophers, who, as writers, devoted themselves to the cause of their concern. Sartre’s *Nausea* (1938), for example, was the mouthpiece of Existentialism. It is an accessible means that enables us to enter into the mind of Sartre to search for his Existentialist views. *No Exist* (1944), the source of the expression “Hell is Other People”, also helped to promote the understanding of the doctrines of these philosophers. The French Algerian Philosopher Albert Camus wrote an essay entitled *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942). In this essay, he introduced his philosophy of the absurd, thus it became one of the most important works that describe the core interest of Existentialism.

To take a step back historically, the ghost of Existentialism existed too many years ago before its culmination in the twentieth century. The fertile seeds of this life-philosophy could be traced back to several philosophers, dramatists, and theologians. Modern critics suggested that the early teachings of Existentialism are palpable in Socrates dictum “know thyself” which is an appeal to take responsibility for his own behavior. The writings of Saint Augustine also reveal an anxious concern concerning his existence; he was deeply fascinated by the question: who am I? The British dramatist William Shakespeare is also widely studied within the philosophical areas of Existentialism. Indeed, his drama has influenced most of the contemporary Existentialist. He is viewed as an Existentialist prolific precursor. All this proves that the twentieth-century Existentialist philosophers did not play a monopoly control over the movement.

In the chief respect of this view, this present dissertation will seek to add a new name to the list of Existentialism’s prolific forerunners. This study aims at shedding a new light on *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, an allegory written by John Bunyan in the seventeenth century and on Danny Boyle’s *The Beach*, by inspecting thoroughly the philosophy of Existentialism prevalent in both works. .

The two mentioned corpora within this thesis are never studied before in the same breadth. The originality of our work consists in reading and assessing the book and the movie through an Existentialist perspective. A comparative study between the two works would seem to many as inadequate choice; not only to temporal distance that separates them, but the different genre. However, a close reader could see how these two works could be joined together. Our interest is to harmonize and reflect the long history of Existentialism and thus to implement it in the two selected works. This dissertation is primarily motivated by the metaphorical meaning of the themes discussed in both corpora as they depict single characters who attended a new understanding of human existence.

Thus, the central topic of this research is entitled “Appraising Contemporary Existentialism in John Bunyan’s *The pilgrim’s Progress* and Danny Boyle’s *The Beach*”.

For the sake of this dissertation, we will rely on the Existentialist philosophy in general with a particular interest for contemporary Existentialism to answer the fundamental questions of this study: Is John Bunyan a proto-Existentialist? Is John Bunyan’s view of existence and truth similar to Existentialists’? Is Bunyan’s hero, Christian, a typical portrayal of the Existentialist view? Does Existentialism exist in Danny Boyle’s movie, *The Beach*? Does Boyle’s hero, Richard, find the truth at end of his journey? Is Existentialism a new mask of totalitarianism?

This present dissertation will be divided into four chapters. At the outset, before embarking on the analysis, we find it necessary and hopeful to provide the reader with the two different backgrounds that shaped *The Pilgrim’s Progress* and *The Beach*. Indeed, this first chapter will be purely devoted to the socio-historical context of the two periods of English history. We will provide an outline of the religious, political and literary sketches of the seventeenth century, then, we shall draw a picture on the modern and post modern period. In the second chapter, this thesis will put all the weight of its concern to introduce the movement of Existentialism in its broad context and definition. This chapter will be an outlook on the Existentialist philosophy. We will investigate the roots of Existentialism as philosophical and literary movement. In the third chapter, we will attempt to read Bunyan’s novel in relation to Existentialism that implicitly exists at the heart of the book. For sure, Existentialism is an anachronism in the seventeenth century; however, literary critics agree that the seeds of Existentialism existed long before the twentieth century. In the fourth and last chapter, we will try to establish the influence of Existentialism on contemporary cinema. Then afterwards, we will highlight the similarities existing between Existentialism and the sample chosen *The*

Beach. Thus we will review some important films that depict implicitly philosophical doctrines of Existentialism.

In the conclusion, we will sum up the vital findings of this study. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is to be compared to *The Beach*: the protagonist character in Bunyan's book, Christian, will be paralleled with the main character in *The Beach*, Richard. At the end of this dissertation, we will explain on which basis this comparative study was carried out.

Chapter One

Text in Context

Introduction

To better apprehend contemporary Existentialism in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Danny Boyle's *The Beach*, it is crucial to understand this first chapter; therefore, our aim is to provide an overview of the seventeenth century and the post modern period, in order to understand our two selected corpora, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Beach* in their genuine context. This first chapter is devoted to show a historical review of Puritanism to contribute to a greater comprehension of the Puritan society. We will also draw a socio-historical outline of the two periods, in relation to literature. The full focus will be set on each corpus as independent subject of study.

1. Henry VIII and the Rise of Protestantism

The paradigmatic shift of religion in the seventeenth century was of great problem. King Henry VIII's break from the Roman Catholic Church created a very quivering religious situation. Theologically, Henry had no doctrinal problems with Catholicism; he separated only in order to give himself an opportunity to divorce from Catherine of Aragon. King Henry VIII was basically Catholic he was called by the Pope "the Defender of Faith". However, the changes he brought to the English Church, now called The Established Church or The Anglican Church, are notably extravagant. The king of England became the supreme head of the Church.

King Henry VIII passed the Act of Supremacy in 1534. His break leads to the creation of the Protestant reformation. This reformation resulted in drastic change to the religious, economic, political, and cultural influence of Europe. People, who refused to bow to King Henry's authority, were imprisoned, persecuted or executed; Sir Thomas More refused to accept Henry's supremacy over the Church and the Pope; therefore, he was beheaded at Tower Hill 1535. King Henry also printed the Bible; he was against the idea that the Bible

was accessed only to the erudite people who can read Latin. His advisor, Thomas Cromwell, introduced the Act of the Ten Articles in 1536 which changed Catholic sacraments to Protestant ones.

King Henry VIII's religious conventions and beliefs are not originally Protestant. The first real motives of his break are not spiritual but rather political. He can be considered today as the first protestant. His break with the Catholic Church of Rome was the catalyst through which England turned from a Catholic church to a Protestant one. This shift was achieved through dissolving Catholic religious places and teachings. (Smitha 3)

After King Henry's death, under the reign of Edward the Confessor, England was pushed toward Protestantism. When Edward died, Henry's daughter, The Queen Mary, who was depicted as The Bloody Mary, shifted the focus and restored once again Catholicism. In this period Protestantism was contained but not fully extinguished in the country. Henry's break from the Roman Catholic Church is considered by modern historians as the departing point of religious upheavals in England, causing the Civil War in the 1640's.

2. Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

Queen Elizabeth I is King Henry's daughter with his second wife Anne Boleyn. Her half-sister, Queen Mary, died and Elizabeth I succeeds to the throne. After her coronation, the Queen was believed to restore Protestantism. She convincingly believed that Catholics and Protestants were of the same offspring as both were Christians. Her primary aims, beyond her political policy, were peace and stability in the country.

During her reign, the English government adopted a harsh attitude toward the Catholic extremists. Purposely, Queen Elizabeth I wanted the Established Church to appeal to both religions, Catholicism and Protestantism. She thought that a pure Protestant Church may lead

to critical safety problems in England. The Queen's policy involves a religious compromise as means to attain a final goal.

Before the seventeenth century, the problem of religion was not so bad, because England had an abler ruler, Queen Elizabeth I. This proves that while all other European countries went through a series of religious tensions, England has witnessed a period of economic, political and social welfare. This period of the English history comes to be known as The Golden Age. The era was the heyday of the English arts, mainly drama. Great literary figures appeared, such as the dramatists, William Shakespeare and Shakespeare.

The nub of the succession dispute is whether Queen Elizabeth has a decent heir. She was expected to produce an heir. Without giving any heir to the crown, Elizabeth's advisors' solved the problem of succession, by transferring the crown to a distant cousin, King James VI of Scotland, who became the First of Stuart monarchy in England in 1603. Elizabeth I's reign became known as the Elizabethan Era. This period of forty five year reign is considered by modern historians as the most glorious period in English history. (Smitha 4)

3. James I (1603-1625)

King James I was a king of Scotland in 1567; a young child who did not exercise power until the 1580s. King James VI of Scotland was proclaimed king of England. English people were tired with female reign (Queen Elizabeth I and Queen Mary). At the beginning, the King faced several problems. First, the country was threatened by debt, and the economy of England vacillated. Second, religion was growing out of control. The religious split between Puritans, Catholics, and Anglicans.

Before moving to England, Puritans and Catholics were happy to receive James, King of Scotland. For Puritans, King James I was baptized by John Knox, who was a great leader

of Calvinism in Scotland. The country also was somehow Presbyterian and somehow Puritan; therefore, Puritans were optimist. They expected the King to side with them. The Catholics, also, were satisfied with the new King, for the reason that King James I was the son of Mary, the queen of Scots. The latter was a devoted Catholic.

At the beginning of his rule of the English monarchy, King James I seemed typical to continue Elizabeth's program. He invested in the New World, to create colonies. These colonies were important social and religious asylum for the English administration. Unwanted citizens could start their life and become leaders in The New World instead of causing problems in the country.

King James used also the Anglican policy in religion. *King James Bible* or *The Authorized Version* (1611) has contributed immensely to the Christian unity, despite all the differences that the Christians may have for the next three centuries, at least they shared a common Bible. *The King James Bible* or *The Authorized Version* (1611) was sponsored by the King himself. This translation of the Bible from Latin to English was highly based on Tyndale's earlier translations. Also the English-Scottish conflict seems to be solved, as James was the king of Scotland and England at once.

After the collapse of all his efforts to pacify the religious tensions; the religious situation began to be no longer under management. The Gunpowder Plot of 1605 was the catalyst for the anti-catholic sentiment in England, which led to flamelike condition between state and church. The government issued so many acts against Catholics, for he considered them a threat to the security of England. (Russell 123-37)

4. King Charles I (1625-1647)

King Charles I, like his father, believed in the Divine Right of King: all rulers are representatives of God on earth. King Charles wanted to dissolve parliament, as he wanted to be the sole authority in England. He wanted to have a match with a strong Catholic country, Spain and France. Indeed, he managed to link England with France through Marriage with Louis XIII's sister Henrietta Maria. As a result, he ruled the country without parliament from 1629 to 1640.

After marriage, The King turned his focus toward Scotland. Urged by his advisor, William Laud, King Charles I made what is thought of a big mistake, he unwisely tried to unite England and Scotland, by imposing *The Anglican Prayer Book* on the Scots; the Scots were wrathful and began rebellion. Charles was lacking the necessary power to deal with the problem so he called back parliament.

Charles made preparation to reclaim London and bring about permanently his authority. Parliament needed an army to defeat Charles; Oliver Cromwell was the key figure. The latter gathered his fellow Puritans. They were convinced they were fighting for the kingdom of God against the intensity of darkness. King Charles was captured and executed publically in Westminster Hall in 1649, parliament turned to Oliver Cromwell giving him the title Lord Protector. (*English Civil War-Charles I- The Slide to War*)

5. Eighteen Years of Puritan Austerity

After the execution of King Charles I, the chief commander of The New Model Army, Oliver Cromwell was the chief ruling the country with a parliament made of Puritan members. They passed many laws somehow strict for Catholics. At this time, there was no king; England was a protectorate. Cromwell shut many inns and theatres were all closed down.

Most sports were banned; particularly on Sunday: boys who were caught playing sport should be whipped as punishment. Using profane oath or language would be punished by fine as well. Sunday became very distinguished under Puritans.

He divided up England into eleven areas, each single one was governed by a major-general, and most of these areas were under the Model Army: an army formed in 1645 that won Civil War for Parliament. Cromwell believed women should dress in proper manner, conforming to established standards of behavior or manners: make-up was banned as well as decorous dresses. A Puritan lady wore a long black dress that almost covers her.

Despite this entire unyielding regime, Cromwell himself was not rigid, he enjoyed music, hunting and playing bowls, he even allowed entertainments at his daughter's wedding. Even though, he was a very highly religious man, Cromwell hated the Irish Catholics. He believed that they were potential danger of safety; resolved to help any Catholic nation that wanted to attack England.

During his rule, saint at home devil abroad, he made it clear to tone down the Irish. Despite his promise to treat well these who were surrendered to his forces, he used terror to "tame" the Irish. He ordered all Irish children to be sent to the West Indies to work as slaves in the sugar plantations, he consciously and delibrighly risked these children's life. He knew most of them would die in the plantation, but for Cromwell dead children would not grow into adults and bring children. Cromwell left a dark hallmark in Irish history.

By the end of his life, both Cromwell and his major-generals had become hated people. The population was tired of having strict laws. He died in 1658. Richard succeeds his father, and then left the leadership in 1660. Charles the Second was asked to return to England to restore the monarchy. During the reign of the newly acclaimed king, Oliver Cromwell was

considered traitor and regicide; his body was symbolically put on trial and found guilty; his tomb remains a mystery as no one knows exactly where he was buried

5.1. Puritanism, Bunyan's religion

Puritan orthodoxy celebrated mainly two sacraments in juxtaposition to their Catholic neighbors: The Eucharist or Lord's Supper and the Bible. For Puritans, only the Bible had its full authority for they considered Catholic traditions as human writings and anti-God literature. Puritans adopted a strict, well disciplined regimen. They fully subjected themselves to daily discipline. According to their doctrine, they should rise early in the morning to pray and to read the Bible ; so that they could feel the presence of God at the end of the day. A Puritan had to ask himself whether he had done well; it is a strict daily self-reflection. These liturgical characteristics are revealed by John Bunyan in the first corpus, "thus seems indeed a narrow gate" (Bunyan 48). A narrow gate refers to this harsh attitude of life, as Bunyan believes that to be Puritan is the right path toward Providence. He characterizes Puritanism among other Christian sects as the true religion while all others are aside the trusty gate.

Many people in the seventeenth century committed suicide, because of this long Puritan process of becoming Christian. For Puritans, human beings were fallen and depraved, because of Adam's Original Sin. Its consequence was on the whole humanity. Man could be saved only through faith and God's grace. Jesus Christ had sacrificed himself and "died on the cross" in order to pay the debt of humanity. He died only for a few; therefore, only a few could be saved. A Puritan could spend his whole lifetime worshipping God without knowing whether he was elected or condemned. This salvation obsession led several people to commit suicide, there was no freedom of choice, Puritans could be said to be "puppets of destiny". From the perspective of Calvinist Puritanism, a human being was born into this world

predestined to go to hell or heaven, “I say you must come into him as the basest in the world” (Wakefield 50). It is a decree of God by which certain souls are foreordained salvation.

John Bunyan, a Puritan writer, summed up all the Puritan assumptions concerning this belief in his allegory *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. John Bunyan wrote his book in a form of an allegory that never ceases to trigger endless interpretations, because an allegory is conceptual in its evocation of interpretation and creativity, it is basically a quest for intellectual enlightenment as well as spiritual growth. Most of the allegorical writings take their readers on different levels of perception and comprehension; it is a constant search of meaning.

The text of Bunyan remains an open text, because, an allegory gives chance to secondary figurative interpretation. The author gives himself a chance to provide his readers with numerous layers of spiritual meaning, “an allegory is thus a complex linguistic and epistemological adventure, a matter at once of self- consciousness and heightened consciousness proceeding from exterior signs to interior illumination” (Swaim 19) also, “allegories characteristically referred to texts outside themselves; they offer a twice-told tale” (Honig 12)

Perry Miller summarizes the Puritan cultural outlook in these following words:

Puritans lived in a fixed, limited, and unalterable universe, appointed by God and every part of it known, they were intellectual conservatives, who constantly denounced novelty as a sin... they were quite content with their universe, even though it had been the scene of man’s fall, they believed that God had created it by perfect wisdom, and that it was just such a universe as man should live in. They had no conscious intention of disturbing its outlines of widening its horizons. (365- 66)

5.2. *The Pilgrim's Progress* in Context

Bunyan's masterpiece was published in 1678, the most famous and critically acclaimed work of Bunyan. Bunyan lived through a period of incredible tension in the English social sphere. He began to be involved in the Baptist church after marrying his first wife. He started to read Bible and attend church on regular basis. Bunyan's personal standards were harsh and uncompromising; his incredible and personal experience was the trigger for his novel.

The Pilgrim's Progress is a Puritan masterpiece which is free from anything of different theology. In the same vein, Bunyan's critics see that *the Pilgrim's Progress* is produced as much by a Puritan culture generally as by its intellectual author. The story translates into an allegory of Bunyan's own life and era. It draws what Bunyan saw as essential to the Puritan way of life: the supremacy of Christ over any other social institution, death of religion pluralism, worshipping as individual experience, perseverance, and human decisive helplessness to the grace of God. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an expression of a Puritan culture (Swaim 16).

Puritanism forges Bunyan's belief that the only path toward salvation is through Christ, although it does not guarantee Christian's destination after death. To understand Bunyan is to penetrate the spiritual pillars of Puritanism. Richard Greaves states that, "what (Bunyan) said also was essentially representative of that which any Puritan secretary in the seventeenth century would have heard from his own strict Calvinist minister on the subject of salvation" (9).

According to Bunyan, there is no other religion besides Christianity; it is the religion and word of God. All other religions are man-made and profane, such as Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism. Similarly, Puritans maintained that all these religions are in the wrong path, still

live in the darkness of ignorance and idolatry. For instance, the fact that Christian, the hero in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, is heavily burdened by his sins before seeing the Cross proves that he finds the true religion. It is plausible to interpret The Wicket Gate as the only path to heaven as Christian realizes later. It symbolizes the Puritan Protestantism. The Puritans were expected to be full of self loathing believing in and fearing vengeful God. This means that they have to cope with this lived reality for a lifetime.

It was estimated that, although one cannot know his fate after death, if he does good deeds, watch his behavior and be successful in his occupation; then he was most widely favored by God, he could be elected and chosen to heaven. To link it to the text, this notion of anti-idleness and a military-like life is the only way by which a Puritan could continue to serve his God, and even gain a grain of knowledge whether or not he is elected.

At the closing of the journey, Christian and Ignorance get into the heart of faith highlighting one of Bunyan's and Protestantism's most significant ideologies: that human beings are completely powerless in their fate, and that only the predestined grace of God will save them. Christian makes it clear (which is relevant to Bunyan in particular and Puritanism in general) that Christ is only the Savior. Bunyan in his crafty allegory maintains that a Christian should either recognize Puritan doctrines about faith and human depravity or he will be destined to damnation.

A human being, according to the Puritan way of life and religious conventions, Man is born without freedom; he lives in a "random" way of life and dies without knowing the next destination of his life, the hereafter. In an approximate comparison, the body and soul are not involving visible reaction or active participation; they play passive role. It is worth asking if human beings are predestined why for hard working and daily discipline? Puritanism remains a matter of great altercation since its first emergence. We can say that Puritans did not

celebrate the essence of human beings as free. Puritanism dictates them to take their responsibility on their actions and life without free will. Puritanism is the religious wind that dictates the direction of Puritan believers, living in inexplicable doubt, about whether they deserve to be chosen.

Is it acceptable to sacrifice one's life to a divinity that has already predestined our life, to reach closed door and not have access to The Wicket Gate? Is a human being free or predestined? All these questions shall be the engine for our third and fourth chapters; because Bunyan leaves the reader a room to question what message he wanted to get across.

5.3. The World of Puritanism in Literature

In 1610, the English playwright Ben Jonson wrote *The Alchemist*; generally considered as the most outstanding acclaimed work of Johnson. He uses the word Puritan as cliché; he portrayed puritans as full hypocrite, corrupt and self seeking. Indeed, Puritans were the subject of Johnson's satirical genius. The play was set in London. His dislike of Puritanism's harsh judgment was turned into a satire. Johnson depicts Puritans as money-hungry and unworthy.

William Shakespeare, also, in his well known play, *The Twelfth Night* strongly mocks the character Molvilio who is given Puritan characteristics and depicted as Puritan himself. The play is an example of the Elizabethan Puritans. Even the name Molvilio means "unwanted". Shakespeare's classic is a timeless play, which cursed the puritan Molvilio:

Maria: Sir, sometimes he is a kind or puritan

Sir Andrew: oh! If I thought that, I'd beat him like a dog

Maria: the devil Puritan that he is, or nothing constantly but

A time speaker, an affectioned ass that can state without book

And utters it by great swarths (Shakespeare 139-52).

Another important work is Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. He sets his play in the New World among Puritan neighbors who were suspicious of witchcraft, and were the cause of social malaise. The Puritan neighbors were described in the play as unwelcomed citizens. Miller portrays the Puritans as the flaw of society. He convinces the reader that these people are not as pure as they claimed.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author of *The Scarlet Letter*, is best remembered for his harsh criticism toward the Puritan New-England community. He is a Puritan descendent of Massachusetts Bay colonists, the hey-day of the Puritan era in the New World, which served a constant occupation for Hawthorne's inspiration. In the novel, there was reference to Bunyan as being his ancestor: "sometimes, a light glimmered out of the physician's eyes, burning blue and ominous, like reflection of furnace, or, let us say like one of those gleams of ghastly fire that darted from Bunyan's awful doorway in the hill side and quivered on the pilgrim's face" (Hawthorne 55).

Hawthorne's view concerning his ancestors is rigid. According to him, the Puritan descent preaches hypocrisy, corruption, predestination and human utmost depravity. Such claims were recorded by most of the literary critics. Out of this realization, Hawthorne may owe some reverence to his ancestors. For instance, he, in the first section of the novel, describes the puritan character William Hawthorne as he came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 with his Bible, saying, "invested by family tradition and dusky grandeur... all the puritan traits both good and evil" (Hawthorne 9). The narrator refers to the two divergent qualities good and evil. He adds "hard severity towards woman of their sect, which will last longer, it is to be feared, than any record of his better deeds, although these were many" (9).

Hawthorne is convinced that William is basically a good person, but only his ignominious act toward a Quaker woman is described as wrathful. Hawthorne shows his ancestors, like all human beings, as having good and bad qualities at once. He consciously admits that “strong traits of their nature have intertwined themselves with mine” (10).

5.4. The Seventeenth Century Literature

Seventeenth century England was a boiling pot in all areas of life: religion, science, domestic relations and culture. The early century expands from accession of the first Stuart King (James I) in 1603 to the coronation of Charles the II. The artists and writers were believed to be the society’s antenna; therefore all these intense firmaments in all areas of life were artistically turned into great literary works of the period mainly in literature.

A sense of deep disquiet was felt everywhere in the literary tradition of the seventeenth century. The era of Robert Burton deserved to be labeled the Age of Anxiety. Kathleen Swaim describes the period as follows:

“The seventeenth century witnessed radically altered attitudes toward selfhood, society, politics, economics, religion, science, and state that leave behind a medieval world and lay the ground work for a modern one questioning such entrenched institution as the Bible , the state church, the family, the private property and male superiority”(3)

The persecution of Nonconformists gave birth to one of England’s best loved works of literature to be written: *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. In most of the eighteenth century household, besides the Bible there was this book. A great part of this allegory was estimated to have been written, when its author, John Bunyan, was in Bedford jail; arrested under charge of preaching without license. Bunyan is a leading member of a community of Baptists in Bedford.

Committed to the county jail in 1661, he remained there for eleven years, until he was released later in 1672, as result of Charles's Declaration of Indulgence. From 1740, the novel made great advances in England with notable achievements in numerous different genres and styles.

Daniel Defoe has laid the foundation with *Robenson Crusoe*. He also published *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders*. Moll's story is more a conventional novel than that of *Robenson Crusoe*. His first novel, *Robenson Crusoe*, was based on a true story of a shipwrecked sailor called Selkirk. A story told by the narrator himself. Crusoe was a perfect example of the Puritan ideals. *Robenson Crusoe* is generally regarded as the first novel in English literature in 1719.

Samuel Richardson is another novelist of much greater influence in the period, in his own era more than the modern time. *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) tells the story of Pamela Andrews trying to ward off the sexual advances of a young man of the house in which she is a maid. The narrative was written in the form of letters; most of them written by Pamela herself. This story of psychological warfare between the sexes is much more read throughout Europe; though it has an unconventional happy ending, that caused much criticism on darker account of relationship between the upper-class and lower-class. The savage erotic novel of Laclos, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (1782) could be a direct influence of the novel.

6. Twentieth-Century Literature

Before the twentieth century, literature was disposed to be linear and organized in chronological order. Twentieth century writers have utilized other techniques of writings, Virginia Woolf for example wrote several novels, whose main plot disturbed by individual characters memories that resulted in disorienting the reading experience for the readers, this technique comes to be known as stream of consciousness or the interior monologue.

Before the twentieth century, readers were accustomed with an objective narrator in fiction. Modernist and post modernist writers believed that this did not serve the reliability of the stories in general. The twentieth century witnessed the birth of iconic narrator, who narrates the story from the first point of view narrator; which makes the reader tends to distrust the narrated facts.

For example, Nick Caraway, the narrator of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, an American novel, tells the story with subjective accounts of the novel's important characters. Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* uses more than one single narrator that switches roles between chapters. The twentieth century was the hey-day of many books of travel and adventure, and the most famous is *The Seven Pillars 21 of Wisdom* by T.E.Lawrence published in 1926, which is an account of Lawrence's adventures in the Arabian deserts during World War I, written in poetic style.

The most important achievement in the twentieth century literature is the great number of women writers. Their writings usually turn around family subjects such as children, emotion and feelings. Great figures in the period are Virginia Woolf, Iris Murdoch, Ivy Compton Burnett. During the century, many women novelists attempted to write about lives, problems, and social concerns of women in the modern era, which opened a window to a group of novels with female characters, most of the time written by the women themselves.

6.1. The Novel of the City

The novel in the modern period was characterized by its crystal-clear depiction of social changes that took place in the twentieth century, as it was completely a century of urbanism. Most of people flocked to the city in England. Novelists used urban settings as background to their novels. Perhaps the most known in this category is James Joyce's *Dubliners*, a collection of short stories that all take place in various places in Dublin. Other

twentieth century writers are also closely associated with numerous urban centers such as: Theodor Dreiser, Paul Auster, New York Michael Ondaatje and Toronto.

6.2. Modern and Postmodern Period

This century is divided into two phases of literature. Modern literature (1900-1945) and contemporary literature (1945 to the present time) also referred to as post modern. Characters in modern and post modern novels questioned the existence of God, and stressed the supremacy of the human reason and the nature of reality. The novels of this era rejected and repudiated great historical events and questioned anything such as: World War II, the cold war, Hiroshima. Famous modern works include *The Right House* (1972) by English novelist and essayist Virginia Woolf, *Ulysses* by Irish novelist and short story writer James Joyce, and *All Quiet on The Western Front* (1929), the most famous and known anti- war by German novelist, Erich Maria Remarque.

The two literary and philosophical movements, Naturalism and Rationalism, have generously paved the way for post modern surrealistic novels to flourish with reflective characters. The modern novel includes magical realism, meta-fiction, and graphic novel. This category of novels assert that the universe and human beings are ruled and controlled by higher and supreme power that could not be explained by reason alone. Modern novels exhibit a playfulness of language, and a vivid experimentation on how time is conveyed in convergence to traditional values. The post modern era has witnessed prolific writing concerned with artificial intelligence; its roots could be traced back to Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* (1818). It is the concrete relationship between technology and abstract information.

6.3. Literature and Cinema

During the last decades the influence of literature on cinema is clearly seen. Literature has been there far before, several books, plays, poems have been adapted into visual production. Adaptation is a literary work's translation; it is a change or conversion to another form. It is swift translation of thought into action.

Film adaptation is referred to by Belen Vidal Villasum as memory-objects of its source, here is literature. (201.202). The role of adaptation makes critics eager to convulsively assess the degree to which a movie is faithful to its genuine source. In the same context, Beja Moris has questioned the existing of some "guiding lines" for film makers; he asks "what relationship should a movie have to the original source? Should be "faithful" could it be? To what?" (12). Morris wonders the nature of the relationship between the movie and its source.

In literature, the reader strives to imagine the space and the characters (the mental process). Cinema provides its audience with ready-made characters and locations. The screen provides the viewer with Full human beings alive and conscious.

Cinematic critics agree that adaptations may make the understanding of an early read novel easier. The movie tends to be structurally simple compared to a book written in a highly elevated style. Also, Movies are not time-consuming. A book may take a whole week to read it, but for a movie it is a matter of hours. However, out of this understanding, several studies were held concerning this subject. For example, Robert Alessandra proves that adaptations do not push young people to read books (27). This study finds out that a book turned into a movie does not encourage young people to read the novel.

Another view suggests that Young people are interested in watching adaptations of books already read. Watching adaptations of novels or great classics, such as *Romeo and*

Juliet, does not necessary make people read more. Anthony Burgess's cynical view states that "every bestselling novel has to be turned into a film the assumption being that the book itself whets an appetite for the true fulfillment the verbal shadow into light, the word made flesh" (15). The relationship between literature and movies, without any doubt, is intertwined. According to Burges cinema could not stand without literature and literature should be translated into visual material.

Both films and literature tell a story. The problem is that in most of the cases the story of the novel is more genuine. The books give words and let the rest to the reader to imagine. A film gives everything on a silver plate, viewers are spoon fed by the producer, which kills the imagination and does not give chance to overflow interpretations "(I) f a film did not grow out of literature, it grew towards it; and what novels and films most strikingly have in common is the potential and prosperity for narratives "(Mc Farlane 57).

Even though the film utilizes the same language of the novel, yet the words and effect are different. The story is told differently more or less faithful to the original text. Details need to be provided in literary work. Words and language are the only instrument writers have in order to stimulate the mental picturing.

According to Georges Bluestone, the third of universal productions are adaptations of novels, this only to emphasize the magnificent influence of literature on film making (237). It is obvious that filmmakers thirst after literary works. Bluestone is interested in this field of film production, he asserts that the universal cinematic beauty is fueled by authors and writers. Film makers rely heavily on literary works as a row material for filmmaking.

6.4. Novels into Films

Oscar Wilde's *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* was brought to visual production by Albert Lewis in 1945, which won three awards for best supporting actress (Angela Lansbury), as well as best Hugs Awards for best dramatic presentation. *The Invisible Man* is a classic written by H.G Wells and published in 1899. The book was initially adopted by James Whale in 1933. Since then, a series of adaptations have followed. In 1931, same director, H.G.Wells turned the very famous *Frankstein* (1818), a horror novel written by the English author Shelly, into an adaptation. (1818). Baz Lehmann brought Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* to cinema. Two major adapted novels are *Of Mice and Men* directed by Gary Sinse and starring John Mal Kovitch , and *The Grapes of Wrath* a true story taking place in the 1920's depression, was directed by John Ford and starring Henry Fauda.

Most of the American classics are concerned also. Sometimes several adaptations are made of the same novel. Hemingway's *Farewell To Arms* was directed by Charles Vidor in 1957, and his *Old Man and The Sea* was directed by John Strugges in 1958; Melville's *Mobydick* was brought to visual production by John Huston. *The Scarlet Letter* written by Nathaniel Hawthorne and published in 1850 was firstly directed in 1956 by director Victor Seastrom. Another adaptation to *The Scarlet Letter* was turned into TV screen by Roland Joffé in 1995. The movie was considered a negative translation. The script destroys Hawthorne's text as it barely follows the events of the story in the book. Another attempt of adapting Hawthorne's work was made by the director William Gluck in 2010. *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald was also exceedingly adapted. In 1926, Herbert Brenan produced a movie based on stage adaptation. The director Richard Marbaum brought the same American novel to visual production. These examples prove that the relationship between literature and cinema is close.

The novels and movies supply the story differently, which adds the value to the adapted movie. Miguel Delbes states that, “Adapting a novel of normal pagination to cinema forces inevitably to synthesize it, because the image is unable to absorb the wealth of life and tones that the narrator has put in his book” (57).

This thesis is concerned with Alex Garland’s novel, *The Beach*, which was brought to the cinema by the American producer Danny Boyle. When comparing the two versions, the novel and the movie, we find that there are several details not respected by the producer.

In the book the protagonist character is a British citizen while in the movie he is American. In order to attract the viewers, the film maker has used some Hollywood standers; and many scenes were invented that push us to question the faithfulness of the movie as an adaptation. Numerous characters are added to the movie such as the character Jed, which does not appear in the novel.

Richard and Francois, in the novel, have some feelings to each other but never fully relieved; however in the movie, this affection is explicitly shown: they had sexual intercourse. In the novel, the three main characters Richard and the French couple also, after losing faith in the Swedish woman Sal, leave the island leaving behind the group in madness. However, in the movie all the community settlers leave the Beach. This proves that Boyle’s adaptation of the novel is not faithful. The movie is a shallow adaptation. Consequently, this present dissertation centers its emphasis on *The Beach* by Danny Boyle without any consideration or reference to the primary source.

This present chapter has addressed some of the large overviews that background seventieth century Puritan England and twentieth century post modern era. Not surprisingly, the two centuries have settled into two different relationships.

Chapter Two
Review of Literature

Introduction

This present chapter will seek to explore contemporary Existentialism in its broad context. In the first step we will shed a light on some important definitions of Existentialism then, we will tackle the most important traits of this philosophical and literary movement.

1. Existentialism: Definitions

There exists no fixed, complete, and exhaustive definition that can describe what Existentialism is. Most of the times Existentialism is defined as a twentieth-century philosophical movement embracing some fundamental issues, centering on the individual existence in the universe believed to be no better than a dungeon, people of this universe according to Jean Paul Sartre and other fundamental philosophers, must accept their absolute freedom and assume ultimate responsibility to overcome difficulties, while doing so they are bound to make the meaning of their life, although they are convinced that this mission is unachievable, because no one is here to help them as “God is dead”. Before giving any definition of this concept first of all it is necessary to perceive what is “to exist”.

Primo, to exist is to become. In the Existentialist viewpoint, to exist does not automatically mean an inactive state of existing in the world. For instance, we say a fish is but does not exist; it is not a state but rather an act. It is the shift from one state to another. For a human being, to exist is to empower oneself with determinations, possibilities, and ambition that could not be achieved without free and personal will.

To exist, the Existentialist individual ought to accept his freedom, as a free human being. This recognition of his freedom would give him an opportunity to make of himself what he has decided to be. Existence is a joint state with several other creatures. It is the quality that distinguishes living organisms from dead organisms, manifested in features such as metabolism, growth and reproduction, such as plant life, and marine life. A human being is

different, according to Heidegger, the only creature that is bound to make meaning and change his life for better, is the life of the Dasein (life in- itself).

Secundo, existence necessitates choice. It is because he is man of freedom that he exists, it is the shift from one state to another, and it signifies the becoming of the existent. The life of animals and plants (life for itself) do not exist as they do not experience any freedom. According to Sartre, Heidegger, and Jaspers there exists only who can choose. Existence is not simply a matter of simple being in the universe; existence is the option of freedom.

What does the existent choose? The existent chooses his essence mainly, for most of the Existentialists, Christians or atheists “existence precedes essence”, a human being would not be anything until later, and then he would construct his essence, and discovers what his essence is. An existential individual must decide about what he/she wants to be in the future.

Tertio, existence is a commitment. An existent, once he is conscious about his world and his given creativity to change his life as well as the whole world, he should not be contented to meditate without any action. He is committed toward his situation to change it. This commitment would allow him to recognize the irrelevancy of the social institutions, and even rational knowledge to provide him with answers to the questions that could be triggered by the human existence, in his journey toward commitment a human being should not be occupied with such unsolved questions that could lead him to despair.

The existentialist notion of commitment could be passive as it could be negative. The positive commitment is privileged among existentialist thinkers. An existent individual may choose to commit or not to commit himself to construct his essence. This mission is an individualistic decision. The choice not to commit to one’s responsibility remains a personal self-defined choice.

It needs to be accentuated that the Existentialist philosophy remains indefinable. All the definitions turn around the human existence as a philosophical dilemma, so what is Existentialism? Existentialism is that abstruse stream of thought that never ceases to trigger ending perennial controversy in the realm of philosophy. Existentialism is the unsystematic study of the existence of the existent, which stresses the irrelevance of the meta-narrative of science, religion, politics, and psychology to convey the truth about what human being is. The Existentialist thinkers, in their philosophy, reject all other philosophies. For a better understanding, here we may provide some significant definitions provided by existentialists themselves.

According to Thelma Zeno Lavine the writer of the book *From Socrates to Sartre: the Philosophical Quest*, he questions:

What then is Existentialism? There exists now a widely accepted definition of existentialism. It is that existentialism is the philosophic standpoint which gives priority to existence over essence. What is meant by this is that existentialism gives priority in significance to existence, in the sense of my existence as a conscious subject, rather than to any essence which may be assigned to me, any definition of me, any explanation of me by science or philosophy or religion or politics. Existentialism affirms the ultimate significance, the primacy of my existence as this flickering point of consciousness of myself and of objects of which I am aware, my existence as this conscious being against all efforts to define me, to reduce me to a Platonic essence, or to a Cartesian mental substance (328).

Sartre's famous slogan "Existence precedes Essence" constitutes the basic understanding of the existentialist thought system. He claims that "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself is built upon this understanding such is the first principle of Existentialism" (28).

Another important definition, according to Immanuel Mounier; the Existentialist philosophy could be defined as such: “The reaction against the human philosophy, against the excess of the philosophy of ideas and objects; for it (Existentialism) is not the existence in all its extensions which is the first problem but rather the existence of human beings” (8-9).

Jonathan Webber, a lecturer of philosophy, gives a clear explanation about the essence of existentialism; he defines it as:

The term existentialism has mostly been associated with cultural movement that grew out of war time intellectual atmosphere of the left bank in Paris, and spread through fiction and art as much as a philosophy. The theoretical writings of Jean Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir , Albert Camus, and Frantz Fanon in the 1940’S and the 1950’s are usually taken as central to this movement ,as are sculptures of Alberto Giometti ,the paintings of Jean de Bouffet and the plays of Samuel Beckett from this time. (1- 3)

Webber adds that”Existentialism is frequently viewed, therefore, as an aesthetic movement rooted in certain philosophical thoughts and supplanting Surrealism at the center of the European artistic fiction, this the existentialism of black clothes and jazz clubs, coffee and cigarettes” (3).

So all in all, existentialism started in the first half of the twentieth century and culminated after the Second World War. It carried out the ideas of Romanticism and it harshly reacted against the Enlightenment. Existentialism shifted the focus from the external world to the internal life of human beings.

2. Contemporary Existentialist Movement

The roots of the philosophy of Existentialism retain two primary different sources, Christian Existentialism and Atheist Existentialism.

2.1. Christian Existentialism

In the Christian Existentialism, God is the ultimate Existentialists' source of inspiration. The philosophers put their faith as matter of question. It is a religious perspective, not limited to Christianity, as it can be Jewish, Buddhist, or Muslim; but since most of the philosophers are Christians, the latter remains the dominant religious Existentialism. The Existential philosophers emphasize their faith as a reflection of the human existence. The Christian religion orients the attitude adopted by these philosophers in their understanding of the human existence. Most important names attributed to this stream are: Soren Kierkegaard, Gabriel Marcel, Karl jaspers, and Frantz Kafka.

The Christian Existentialism has its *début* within the Bible and the Original Sin. The main focus is subjective; it treats themes such as beliefs, religion, guilt, sin, and place of God in the human existence .This branch of Existentialism sees man as weak, fallen, and lost because of Adam's fall, the result, all humanity is condemned for this sin.

2.2. Atheist Existentialism

This type of Existentialism is strongly different from Kierkegaard's theistic philosophy and works. Atheist Existentialism is a philosophy that exalts, advocates, and sustains secular wisdom. The anti-God Existentialist attacked the belief in predestination or any spiritual revelation; therefore, they empowered the self ownership in creating one's destiny. Atheist Existentialist thinkers encourage the complete liberation from the virtues of Christianity as a means to revitalize the earthy existence. The act of "thrownness" is treated by

several Existentialists, and most notably by the French Existentialist Jean Paul Sartre, he explains:

We are like actors who suddenly find themselves on stage without knowing the name of the play, or what role they are playing, without knowing what to do or say yes, without even knowing whether the play has an author at all whether it is serious or a farce. We must personally make a decision, to be something or other, a villain or a hero, ridiculous or tragic. Or we can simply exist, immediately”But what is also a choosing role and that choice, too, is made without our ever knowing what the performance was about (444).

In the view of Sartre, human existence on this planet and hostile universe is unexplainable. Atheist Existentialism shares with Christian Existentialism their preoccupation in the existing in the world of the Dasein, or the existing of the existent. Atheist Existentialism underlines the absolute freedom of man in his liberation and his condemnation to be free. They repudiate any existence of Providence or divine transcendence. According to this branch of philosophers, if we relate Dasein to the Unseen there would be no more any human project. So, the authenticity of the human existence consists *ipso facto* any transcendence of godly in the universe. Some interesting names attributed within the list of atheist Existentialism are: Frederick Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Merleau Ponty, Albert Camus, Jean Paul Sartre and Simon de Bouvoir.

3. The Existentialist Individual

A human being is given too much consideration in the context of Existentialism; therefore, he/she is the object of study. It is believed that we are self conscious creatures even though it remains ambiguous what this means. It is still abstruse and tenebrous what this individual is like and how he appears in society.

Existentialists agree that man is fundamentally free. Jean Paul Sartre maintains that “I am condemned to be free. This means that no limits for my freedom can be found except freedom itself or, if you prefer that we are not free to cease being free” (qtd in.Herris 5). When man attempts to refuse his freedom, he is still making a free conscious decision: he has chosen not to choose. By doing so he has given another being the chance to take a decision, and he must be responsible for that decision.

In the vocabulary of Existentialism, the human existence and its reality ”may be defined as being such that in its freedom is at stake because human reality perpetually tries to refuse freedom” (ibid 5). We are all free beings, but not all of us accept freedom, we may reject freedom through bad faith, we may also escape the consequences that we make, “it is a choice of myself in the world, and by the same token it is a discovery of the world” (ibid 5). Human beings live under a constant threat of the necessity to choose. The construction of reality rests upon the freedom of choice. Sartre also believes that freedom is not without responsibility, he argues that:

In this sense the responsibility of the for-itself (human being) is overwhelming since he is not the one by whom it happens that there is a world, since he is also the one who makes himself, then whatever maybe the situation with its peculiar coefficient of adversity even though it be insupportable. He must assume the situation with the proud consciousness of being the author of it, after the very worst disadvantages or the worse threats which can endanger person and have meaning only in and through my project; and it is on the ground of engagement which I am that they appear. It is therefore senseless to think of complaining since nothing foreign has decided, what we feel, what we live, or what we are (ibid 6).

Human's responsibility lies in his accepting his freedom and all the consequences that appear as result of his personal decisions. According to Sartre there are no non-human decisions; he explains that even the great tragic events in human history are man-made; situations of war, torture, famine, oppression are human decisions. Events that happen to man through other man can only be human. Meaning that all such events occur through human freedom; therefore, they are human experiences. "Everything that happens to me is mine". (ibid 7)

The existential individual ought to embrace his freedom and live up to all the decisions he is taking, we are answerable for everything in our lives, universe and for other people. Sartre is fully convinced that there are no coincidences in life because, all what happens in our life is a reflection of our "image and (we) deserve it". (ibid 7)

It is plausible that most of the times single individuals consciously flee freedom through anguish and bad faith. In this process of seeking to avoid freedom, existential individuals tend to lie to themselves, about what they are and who they are. Anguish is different from fear, the difference is that "fear is fear of being in the world whereas anguish is anguish before myself" (Ibid 7). One can fear or being afraid of death, but anguish occurs when you are afraid of being afraid "a situation provokes fear if there is a possibility of my life being changed without, my being provokes anguish at the extent that distrust myself and my own reaction in that situation (Ibid 7).

Oklander gives his interpretation of anguish:

In anguish I am conscious the decisions I make in the future are of utmost importance to me now, since I am that future person, and I am powerless to affect my future. Anguish with respect to the future involves the realization that, because of my radical freedom (that's the spontaneity of consciousness), I have no more control over my

future that I have over your future. In anguish I apprehend my freedom being the possible destroyer in the present and in the future of who I am” (ibid 8).

Being conscious of one’s personal freedom and the impact that the future may have on our lives create anguish. An existential being accepts both his freedom and its consequences. An existential individual should not try to avoid anguish by focusing on becoming individuals of habits. Numerous people in modern time are just stuck in their routines having the same program, the same work, same locations, and meeting the same people. They live tomorrow as they have lived their yesterday and today. When they do this, they completely neglect the freedom of choice. Some people tend to argue that it makes their life easier to live every day the same with the schedule. However, Existentialists claim that an individual does not live by habit. Every time human beings must come to situations to choose and be authentic, and not living by dull habit.

When human beings flee freedom, they shelter in bad faith. Sartre states that the bad faith is the attitude “which is such that consciousness, instead of directing its negation outward turns it toward itself (ibid 8). He considers bad faith as a lie:

The essence of lie implies in fact that the liar is actually in complete possession of truth which he is hiding. A man does not lie about what he is ignorant of; he does not lie when he spreads an error of which he himself is the dupe; he does not lie when he is mistaken the ideal description of the liar would be a cynical consciousness, affirming truth within himself denying it in his words (ibid 9).

Sartre, in other words, claims that a person is completely conscious of the truth, but he denies it “the person guilty of bad faith is lying to himself about his own facticity, the one who practice bad faith is hiding a displeasing truth or presenting as truth and pleasing untruth” (ibid 9). For a good grasp of this concept, Sartre provides his readers with an example of a

homosexual. In the same vein, Sartre seeks to show that, “bad faith involves distinguishing what I am for others (my essence, or facticity and what I am for myself) my freedom, my transcendence and at the same time (ibid 9). “A homosexual frequently has an intolerable feeling of guilt and his whole existence is determined in relation to his feelings. One will readily foresee that he is in bad faith. In fact it frequently happens that this man, while recognizing his homosexual alienation, while avowing each and every particular misdeed which he has committed, refuses with all his strength to consider himself a Paederast” (ibid 10). This example of the homosexual depicts that, on the one hand a homosexual recognizes that homosexuality is not an objectifying quality. In his facticity, he recognizes that he is homosexual, and on the other hand, in his transcendence, he denies this reality with all his strength. He is fully aware that he committed these acts, but denies that this could foreshadow and determine his future behavior.

In virtue of freedom he is not (in the future) what he is (in the past) or at least he does not have to be. His future is open, his past does not determine what he will choose to be, and so on. Yet, he falls into bad faith when he affirms his facticity as being his transcendence qua facticity he is (in- itself) a homosexual, qua transcendence he is (for itself) nothing. Bad faith arises when he claims he is (in itself or essentially) not homosexual, or when he claims that he is (for-itself) a homosexual (Oklader 228. Qtd in. Herris 11).

It needs to be noted that this example of a homosexual is useless in the modern Western society, because the gay society has changed, as they got their rights, therefore, they are no longer guilty of this feeling of bad faith, from the time in which Sartre has written this example, it is clearly seen that society plays an important role on how individuals are portrayed. Social constructs or social norms are may be cause of bad faith in many

individuals. Even when someone attempts to assert what he is not, is considered to be bad faith, because it is not only restricted to denying what one is or what qualities they possess.

Bad faith is the” oscillation between the two poles with which a person can identify him or herself” (ibid 11). Human being’s facticity is what he is for others, and this includes how he appears now and in the past. Bad faith is not at all a problem for an existentialist being.

Paul Tillich is an existentialist philosopher who talks about Sartre’s explanation, “this sentence is like a flash of light that illuminated the whole Existentialist scene. One could call it the most despairing and the most courageous sentence in all existentialist literature what it says is that there is no essential nature of man, except in the one point that that he can make of himself what he wants” (ibid 12). Tillich’s philosophy puts too much stress on man’s courage to do the necessary to create of him what he wants to be. He claims that the courage of man to make himself is just the courage of man to make himself what he wants to be (ibid 12). Tillich has also discussed what he calls “courage of despair” in the non existentialist attitude; he says that the non existentialist attitude is that of cynic. According to him a cynic is a person who does not to follow any other person, neither social norms, nor family duties, these cynics “have no belief in reason, no criterion of truth, not set of values, no answer to the question of meaning” (ibid 13). He goes further in his explanation of the non creative existentialist.

Their courage is expressed not creatively in their form of life they courageously reject any solution which would deprive them of their freedom. They are rejecting whatever they want to reject the cynics are lonely although they need company in order to show their loneliness. They are empty both of preliminary meanings and ultimate meaning, and these for easy victims of neurotic anxiety. Much convulsive, self-affirmation and much fanatical self-surrender are expressions of the non creative to be oneself (ibid 13).

As seen in both Sartre and Tillich, the existential being has the freedom to make his self into the being, and be what he desires to be, we are hampered by many factors in our life; however, the non-creative existentialist has the courage to overcome too many obstacles by using his freedom. It is his choice to be cynic, he finds himself lonely in the crowd because there is no other non creative existential being.

When we talk over the existence of man in the universe we should not treat with thoughtless inattention the extremely unreasonable, or inappropriate state in which humans exist. The world is an absurd universe. The existential man is what Albert Camus calls the absurd man; Camus's work is put into the theme of absurdity of life.

Oklander sees that Camus "approaches the existing individual through a consideration of whether life is worth living or not" (ibid 14).

Camus, the French writer and philosopher, initiates his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* by enunciating that "there is but one truly serious philosophical problem that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy" (ibid 14). He advocates that the individual's life is not worth living. He is concerned with the congruence and aftermath of the existence of absurdity. For him, absurdity is acrimony between man and his life and this at once is a cognitive and affective alienation. The spring of the problem is that man's life is the question that he has no pertinent answers for. He further declares that, "in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy, since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or a lost hope or a promised land. This divorce between man and his life in the actor and his setting is properly the feeling of absurdity (ibid 15).

The absurd could be related to the non-existence of order and meaning of life, it could be a fact that man has no explanation for. It is the questions that our state of being suggests,

we cannot find answers for, and it is this event that triggers the debate whether life is worth living or not. According to Oklander, when Camus addresses the question of absurdity he attempts to demonstrate that “when we have a desire to understand the universe, and our place in it, but that such an understanding can never be achieved (340). Camus provides a further explanation:

So long as the mind keeps silent in the motionless world of its hopes, everything is reflected and arranged in the unwilling of its nostalgia. But with its first move this world cracks and tumbles; an infinite number of shimmering fragments is offered to the understanding. We must despair of ever constructing the familiar, calm surface, which would give us peace and heart (ibid 15).

This lack of understanding gives floor to despair or as Sartre calls it nausea. Once we recognize this absence of understanding, it is next to impossible to overcome it. Camus continues to say that “what is absurd is the confrontation of this irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart” (ibid 16).

We need to have a picture on how the absurd man live and how he leads his life, we mean by saying so, whether a human being could overcome this tragic psychological state of being, or should only endure it and be familiar with. The following quotation can be a relevant answer: “A man who has become conscious of the absurd is forever bound to it. A man devoid of hope and conscious of being has ceased to belong to the future” (ibid 16).

Camus believes that once absurdity has taken place in our life, it becomes a passion; therefore, there would be contentment in realizing the absurd. The absurd man would be no more in need to gain knowledge or familiarity with the world. When you meet with the absurd you deliver the illusion that there are answers to the existence, you surrender your search for a particular understanding of the universe.

The absurd man is utterly free without any constraints, he is free and he has found his Existential freedom. The truth of this meaning is the realization that there is no meaning, once he has acknowledged this, he would be no longer impeded by the future, his individual cannot ignore the absurd, and it is wholly unserviceable to refrain from noticing, once you meet with the absurd, you cannot forget its particular portion in the universe.

4. Outstanding Figures of Existentialism

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) is one of the most unfathomable writer and philosopher whose name is so familiar with contemporary Existentialism. Indeed, the Danish philosopher is the best outstanding figure in Christian Existentialism. His philosophy surges up as a harsh reaction against the Hegelian assumption. Being a Protestant theologian, his conversion to Christianity plays an important role on how he philosophizes; his philosophy is fully based on his lived experience. He is largely studied by Sartre and Heidegger. Kierkegaard gives too much importance to the single individual; he is widely considered the father of Existentialism.

Kierkegaard, a philosopher, theologian, poet, and religious author, wrote numerous texts on Christian religion, morality, ethics, and philosophy of religion. Most of Kierkegaard writings depict the way a human being should live as single individual. He prioritizes human reality over abstract reason, and highlighting the personal choice and commitment. He rejected all the literary critics of his time, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

Kierkegaard's theological work deals with Christian ethics and the institution of the Church. He explores the emotions and feelings of individuals when faced with life choices. His ideas include faith as passion, angst, and the three stages on life's way. Kierkegaard is the Existentialist precursor of theistic contemporary philosophy of Existentialism.

When he was a student at university, the young Kierkegaard spent a lot of time drinking alcohol, and allowing himself all desires of the flesh, despite all these pleasures, he

did not find happiness, and his life was a hell on earth, this led him to be obsessed with the feeling of suicide. Kierkegaard put an end to his hellish life, coming to the conclusion that only God could be the Savior, and transcendence is the only answer for human beings.

Frederick Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900) is the next most famous philosopher in Existentialism, though he is always, associated with nihilism. Nietzsche the self-declared anti-God is a German philosopher whose writings are of great influence on the Western writers. It is easy to notice that the philosophy of Nietzsche is one of the most complex philosophies for the modern reader. His book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* constitutes the manifesto of Existentialism. It contains the well-known expression "God is Dead". Nietzsche declares the death of God, and the loss of truth, ethics and values.

Another important figure is Karl Jaspers (1883-1969). Soren Kierkegaard's theological works are of major influence on the philosophy of Karl Jaspers. Jaspers could be considered as a direct legatee. His greatest achievements in the German philosophy in particular and the Western philosophy in general, are probably his works on Existentialism.

Jasper introduced the Existentialist themes of Kierkegaard to readers, especially his philosophical approach of God. Just like Kierkegaard, Jasper was against the Hegelian systematization; he was against any abstract description of the human existence. He noticeably criticized Positivism, Spinozism, and Leibnizianism; he believed that their systems of thought were of false ontology, since they did not take into consideration the link between existence and life. The Existentialist philosophy of Jasper does not support an absolute freedom, but a freedom in situation and decision.

Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) is a French philosopher, playwright, novelist, and literary critic. He is a Christian Existentialist. The death of his mother at early age left an incurable scar on his soul. He became eagerly fascinated by transcendence, all his major works turn around this theme. For Marcel, existence is the only experience of human being; the single

individual finds it as he is committed to his world. The Marceline Existentialism states that to know oneself, you should start by the other. A human being, for Marcel, could not find by himself the meaning of his life in the absence of the other, so for him, heaven is other people. You should start by the other, and then return to the self.

His modern works center on the modern individual's struggle in the dehumanizing and machinelike society. Often regarded as the first French Existentialist, Marcel was highly scared that his philosophy would be compared to that of Jean Paul Sartre, preferring the name "the philosophy of existence or the neo-Socratism", to define his own thought. Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980): is a French novelist, playwright and philosopher. He is the leading French exponent of Existentialism. Sartre was enamored with theatre, as he thought that theatre was well disposed to transmit his ideas. The Existentialist philosophy owes a great debt to his contributions.

Sartre was a professional Existentialist philosopher, who taught the subject and wrote substantial works on it. He also wrote widely known novels, short stories and plays. Sartre's literary works represent his philosophical ideas. He mainly intensified his tendency for Existentialist thought. His two major literary works *Being and Nothingness* as well as his play *No Exit*, which is the source of "Hell is other People", constitute the manifesto of Existentialism.

5. Themes of Existentialism

5.1. Absurdity

A human being once found into this universe, he starts questioning the meaning of his existence and comes to understanding that there is no pre-given significance to his life. Absurdity may be the product of some traumatic events that an individual may experience during his life, such as the death of a dear relative, loss of faith and hope, or through facing social crisis and upheavals like wars, torture, genocides, and oppression.

Life may be understood as absurd at the moment one asks questions of life and meaning of one's own existence, who I am? How have I come to exist? What I am? Existentialists see that humanity must live in a world completely hostile and indifferent. The universe would never react or sympathize with human beings.

According to atheist, people create stories and gods, which to transcend reality and satisfy their need for answers. Absurdity as concept is utterly suited within a branch called Absurdism. It is easy to highlight the absurdity of human search for purpose, because everything must have a reason for existence.

Sometimes even believing and worshipping a Supreme Being could cause absurdity, Kierkegaard declares that faith in God is absurd, and it is impossible to know God or understand His purpose. Also he asserts that a relationship between God and His creature is absurd. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Albert Camus unveils the secret of existence, he provides us with suicide as a remedy for the human absurdity even if it is not a rewarding reaction.

5.2. Authenticity

We call somebody an authentic individual when he possesses meaning of his own existence. The lack of authenticity is viewed in Existentialism as bad faith. For Sartre the Jazz Music is both representation of freedom and authenticity. It is the degree to which somebody embraces his personality. To Kierkegaard, authenticity is based upon somebody's finding authentic self and becoming true to his personality. Kierkegaard believes that news media and bourgeois church- Christianity represent a challenge for an individual in society trying to find his authenticity. He also confirms that religion is unquestionably accepted as tradition by human beings without authentic thought. The purpose of Kierkegaard's existential philosophy is to show that, to achieve authenticity, one must accept reality and form his own version of existence so as not to be despaired by the non-individual significance.

5.3. Anguish and Sense of Meaninglessness

Anguish is the dread of the nothingness of human existence; it is a generalized malaise or uneasiness which is not oriented to any of one's own existence. This philosophical notion can be similar with some religious stream, such as Judaism, and Christianity, that a man is fallen, and human life is lived in sin, guilt, and anxiety. This picture of the human life dressed in black clothes leads Existentialists to reject some ideas as happiness, optimism, hope, because this commonly gives a shallow understanding of life, or a foolish way of denying the despairing tragic aspect of human life.

5.4. The Death of God

Nietzsche's famous expression, "God is dead", is the formula of atheistic Existentialism. He consciously attacked the belief in predestination or any spiritual revelation. Nietzsche sees the incapacitation of co-existence between man and God. This death of God, according to Nietzsche, enables individuals the full liberation. Nietzsche asserts:

God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was he best and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: we will wipe this blood off you? Whatever is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonements, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? (Nietzsche XXV) .

Nietzsche declares in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* that God is dead and will remain dead, so for him the human being in his pursuit of meaning and happiness should not bother himself to seek for a god; he is no more alive. Any person who seeks for invisible power or higher

order would experience absurdity at its full extent. On the one hand, Nietzsche is convinced that the world is godless, and on the other hand, he warned that the decline of religion and moral values, and the rise of Nihilism could be dangerous. The absence of higher moral authority would plunge the world in chaos.

5.5. Death

The human reality is one of mortality and not of immortality. Our lives and existence are valued at full extent because death exists. Life is greatly appreciated and loved. Human beings know that one day they will die; therefore all their efforts are meaningless. Death is the final nothingness. Single individuals are filled to the brim with anxiety at times when they are aware of this reality. An unconscious person would live as if death is not his final destination; he hardly tries to ignore its reality, to relieve him from the anxiety of death. Death should be acknowledged by bringing it to human life, and only then man can be what he really is. Death is another witness to human absurdity.

5.6. Alienation

The theme of alienation is as old as Karl Marx; it initially started with him and brought to Existentialism by Hegel. At the very beginning it meant an economic and social situation of the workers. In the context of Existentialism, alienation is the estrangement of human being from society, from his God and even from himself. Alienation is a theme of crucial significance in Existentialism; it is one of Hegel's legacies in philosophy. Existentialists attributed to this school of thought do not use it explicitly. Nevertheless, it is important how Existentialist view the relationship of man to himself, family, society and God. This concept is used primarily to describe the psychological malaise which is dominant in our world. Existentialists in their philosophy do not refer to social economic state of human being.

Kierkegaard argued the task of the self is to overcome alienation by focusing self becoming.
(56)

6. Existentialism in Literature

Existentialism as philosophical movement has reached all kinds of art paintings, music, sculpture, and mainly literature. Most of the existentialists used literature as a well disposed instrument to transmit their ideology. Themes of alienation, absurdity and meaninglessness are recurring analyzed concepts in literature.

The most acclaimed literary work in Existentialism is undoubtedly *Notes from the Underground* by Fyodor Dostoevsky, which is a purely Russian work. An unknown narrator described as a bitter misanthropic man living alone in Russia in the 1860's, the novel consists in a series of personal notes that the Underground Man wrote. The narrator explains his theories about antagonistic position toward society.

The underground man explains that in modern time society all human beings would be miserable like him. He becomes disillusioned with all philosophies; he develops an appreciation for Romanticism, even though he is aware of its absurdity in his context as non significant existence.

The Underground Man has deep contempt for Utilitarianism; a rational school advocates the use of mathematical formulas to align man's desires. The Man complains that this systematization of human existence could be an emotional handicap, because man's desire is not given an opportunity to manifest itself explicitly. This may cause critical psychological issues. The Underground Man rejects himself as a person. He is so alienated from the members of society. He treats human beings with a mixture of loathing and disgust. His alienation is manifested everywhere, in all kinds of relationships. The Underground Man

concludes that the universe has no single meaning. The book is considered a forerunner of Existentialism.

Another important work is *Crime and Punishment* by the same author. The character Raskolnikov, a poor student, formulates a theory that the extraordinary men of the world have the right to commit any crime they want if they have something in return to provide the community. To prove his theory, he commits a murder, which is broadcasted in all newspapers. Raskolnikov witnesses the death of Marmiladov, a minor government officer. Raskolnikov hears the police interviews about people who are suspected of having an affair with the pawnbroker. When the protagonist confesses his murder, he is sentenced to eight years in the Siberian prison. The story of the novel is a story of murder, redemption, absurdity, alienation and meaninglessness of life.

A short story written by Mikhail Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, paints beautifully the Existential philosophy as embodied within literature. An unnamed narrator travels through the Caucasus Mountains, encounters Maxim Maximych and they travel together. Because of the bad weather, the two characters search for shelter. The narrator tells a story about a young officer who falls in love with a girl called Bila, he bargains with her younger brother, Azarut, he promises to help him steal a local tribesman's horse in return for Bila. Both obtain what they want. The horse owner, Kazbich, starts his revenge for his stolen horse, he kills Bela's father after being unable to punish Azarut, and wounds Bela. She dies suffering from her wounds. The story from the start to the end seems meaningless and absurd.

Frantz Kafka's most writings deal with existential themes and the systematization of human way of living, especially his *Metamorphosis*. This is a story of metamorphosis into an insect. One can imagine and dream of supernatural events only in sleep, however, Gregor

Samsa wakes up one morning to find himself transformed into a great insect, and his metamorphosis makes it impossible for him to work.

Gregor's parents have problem fitting his metamorphosis. His sister Grite is the only remaining hope. She strives to do her best and care for him, as time passes she became tired of the responsibility and Gregor's room gradually becomes uninhabitable. Gregor suffers from deep alienation, nonsense, and persecution. He becomes a burden to his sister and family. He thinks of death as the only solution that would enable his family to move on with their lives.

The most popular name in existential philosophy is Albert Camus, though he himself rejected the label. His novels represent characters caught up in situations and systems well beyond their control. In *The Stranger*, the protagonist Meursault commits a murder on a sunny day on the beach. He considers the act of killing a human being as simple as not worth regretting; he lacks any human feeling and remorse. His reaction in his mother's funeral underlines his indifference: he simply smokes a cigarette not even knowing his mother's age, which is a sign of his estrangement from his mother. The prevailing theme of the novel is isolation and absurdity, and being insignificant within the broader systems of society. The absurd and isolation of human existence seem a typical theme for Camus.

Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughter House* depicts a central theme of Existentialism; his skeptical views pushed his critics to call him a pessimist, fatalist and mal content. The book turns around the horror of Dresden bombing, which took place during the last years of the Second World War. The chaotic events of the war and the despairing conditions, witnessed by millions of people, are traceable in Vonnegut's works. Billy, the protagonist, is dislocated fully in a system where there is no reward, punishment, or even justice. At the end of the story, Billy accepts his trauma and non sense of his life. He realizes that there is neither an

alternative nor a remedy, he gives up his search for a happy life and finds a meaning of the world, and realizes that the best means to lead a successful life is to accept it as it is meaningless and hostile. Vonnegut, through his literature, conveys the message that life is meaningless and not worth living.

Throughout this whole chapter we have attempted to familiarize the reader with Existentialism in general and Contemporary Existentialism in particular. We have provided some important definitions, types of Existentialism, themes and aspects of Existentialism, and then we have traced some seeds of Existentialism in the field of literature.

Chapter Three
Existentialism and *The Pilgrim's*
Progress

Introduction

Religious aspect is extremely important in the *Pilgrim's Progress*; Bunyan's critics in their analysis of the novel tend to decipher the biblical allusions, biographical elements of Bunyan's spiritual conversion and the historical context of seventeenth-century England; however, this third chapter attempts to read Bunyan's novel and Existentialism together, in order to reveal the existentialist terminology that exists at the heart of *The Pilgrim's Progress* which predates its time. In this present chapter, we attempt to establish a philosophical bridge and bring into closer dialogue the full-fledged Existentialism of the second half of the twentieth century together with *The Pilgrim's Progress* of the seventeenth century as we hope to demonstrate Bunyan as an Existentialist *avant la lettre*. This chapter's pivotal object is to search for the embryonic seeds of Existentialism in Bunyan's masterpiece.

1. Biography: John Bunyan

Bunyan is best known today as the author of the grandiose full classic of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. He was born in 1628 Elstow, near Bedford, England. His family belonged to the lower class of society, and despite all the miserable living conditions of his parents, they barely managed to send him to school where he received rudimentary education.

Bunyan has witnessed all the cultural, political, and social upheavals of the seventeenth century in England. At the age of sixteen, exactly in 1644, he was asked to join the army, as a foot soldier in the Parliamentary Army under Oliver Cromwell. During these years Bunyan experienced a radical religious conflict; described minutely in his autobiography *Grace Abounding* (1666). In 1647, Bunyan left the army soon and returned to Elstow to take up his father's craft as a tinker.

Due to his unauthorized religious activities, Bunyan spent twelve years in prison under charge of infringing the Elizabethan Act against Conventiclers. Clarendon Code forbade all the liturgical practices and meetings that were not conducted according to the liturgy of the Established Church. It is estimated that *The Pilgrim's Progress* was written in his first imprisonment and that he put the final retouches in the second imprisonment in 1677.

Bunyan's literary achievements include a list of sixty titles, a list that brilliantly varies between sermons, poetry, prose, and literature of children. In 1680, he wrote *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, which is a realistic work that portrays the problem of marriage and money for the Puritans at end of the Civil War as middleclass citizens. *The Holy War* (1682) is Bunyan's second allegory, in addition to the several extended sermons. August 31, 1688 Bunyan died from a severe fever; where he was buried in Bunhill Fields, Finsbury.

2. Summary: *The Pilgrim's Progress*

The story recounts a dream in the form of an allegory from a jail cell. In this novel, the narrator introduces his readers to a man called Christian who lives in a city known as The City of Destruction. Christian lives with his wife Christiana and their four small children happily, before discovering in his own book that the place he inhabits will be soon demolished and destroyed from heaven, at this stage he enters into a deep psychological torment.

Convinced by the warnings read in the book, Christian attempts to convince, exhort, and explain to his fellow neighbors and family the urgent necessity of evacuating the city before destruction; however, neither his wife nor his children could believe him. They only ignored him and thought of all what he said as a part of a legend or, worse than this, a sign of his feeble mind.

Following the advice of the preacher Evangelist, Christian leaves the city alone letting behind his family. His escape leads him toward several dangers that he will encounter throughout his long journey, in The Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, House of the Interpreter. Finally he reaches his pre-defined destination together with a good companionship, Faithful and Hopeful.

3. from Self-Neglect to Authenticity

The actions and events of *The Pilgrim's Progress* reveal the mystery of a man with a burden. Christian is the only character in the novel that suffers from a heavy burden on his back. This arouses a question about why Bunyan consciously created a character with a burden?

It needs to be noted that Christian was not born with a burden; it is later on that he comes to have a burden. The latter is so hurtful. He can no longer enjoy the companionship of his wife and children. In his pain and angst, he is fully underrated by them; he cannot find a way to relieve him from his torment, "O my dear Wife, said he, and you the children of my bowels, I your dear friend, am in myself undone, by a reason of burden that lieth (sic) hard upon me". (Ibid 1) These agonizing moments trigger an inwardly discontent manifestation, Christian like a bleeding wild lion bursts out: "What Shall I do to be saved?" (Ibid 1)

At this stage, Christian recognizes his existence in an irrational and absurd world, where no truth and meaning could be found. His psychological state triggers inwardly ontological and epistemological questions, i.e. Christian starts to examine what is meant by time, space, identity, becoming, existence, and reality in general. He reads in his book, that the City of Destruction is going to be destroyed by a great fire from the sky, as punishment for its inhabitants. The book actually is a Bible. In the great amount of criticism that is made on the burden refers to the sins that Graceless committed. The burden is his consciousness in an

allegorical style. He was born a sinner according to the Puritan orthodoxy: because of Adam's Fall, all humanity is condemned to be depraved, and thus Christian should find a way to get rid of his sins by embarking on a spiritual pilgrimage and start a search for God's kingdom, that's in the particular way of interpretation of the burden, and the context of Bunyan's spiritual beliefs. However; in our rereading of the burden and the whole novel, the burden should be reinterpreted as the burden of freedom, responsibility, and the quest for personal authenticity. Bunyan deliberately offers his readers an opportunity to understand the text in their own perspective,

... I have told my dream to thee;
See if thou canst interpret it to me;
Or to thy self or neighbors: but take heed
Of mis-interpreting: for that instead
Of doing good, will but thy self abuse:
By mis-interpreting evil insues (sic).
Take heed also, that thou be not extream (sic),
In playing with the outside of my dream. (Ibid 155)

Through the works of Sartre, De Beauvoir, Kierkegaard, and Heidegger each person should embrace warmly his/ her freedom to live authentically and not conform to the norms, practices of any given society; an existential individual should not conform to other's reason or rhyme other people's life. The only credible truth is the one that a person voluntarily by his own will and authority would accept as his chosen version of reality. Man must, without excuse, find his reality in life, and this mission will compel him to confront numerous obstacles and dangers; some of these threats will be highlighted along our analysis of the book.

Graceless suffers from a Nihilistic madness and a metaphysical nausea, i.e. he realizes that all the societal and moral values are baseless and do not point to any significance, also his psychological welfare is acutely damaged. He becomes aware of his alienation from the human condition; he sees around him all the horrific and absurd aspects of existence. He is in a constant confrontation with existential issues. Graceless becomes aware and fully obsessed with the way things appear to him and with the way his conscience attributes meaning to the surrounded world.

Like Sartre, Bunyan is interested in the individual's troublesome interiority, from the book's onset to the end John Bunyan draws attention to the immediate existential nature of the human world. Existentialists invite people to live the immensity of time and space to honor life's difficulties and experiences, our power in life is for a limited time, and how free we can be in this life. It is requested to live with commitment and passion and not a spectator in one's own society to bring about a truly responsible way for dealing with life. Existentialism is the art of being oneself. Christian's unstable interiority is the catalyst for his coming journey towards knowing himself.

Bunyan's hero, Christian, lives in his city among other people- the city corresponds to the whole world- under a single system. These inhabitants completely throw themselves in the They-self (the crowd, herd) and live in Bad Faith. They live but they do not understand life; however Christian wants to bridge the gap between living life and understanding life; the difference that Existentialism deeply strived to highlight. Existentialists reject with their full strength a pre-defined set of values, beliefs, or given way of life, each person has to find his own version of reality in a nihilistic universe.

Existentialists believe that a human being could find meaning to his/ her life by following one's own version of truth, which is not based on universalism but rather

relativism. They come across the claim that it is foolish and silly not to raise one's own voice against society's standards. Speaking the same language and eating the same way with same tasks is an ideal life of bad faith and not being authentic. Existentialists do not agree with Schopenhauer's idealism that a person during his life should not seek for happiness or meaning because these abstract items do not exist within our cosmos. According to this philosophy, a man should only seek for how to endure the calamities, and leave this world as less miserable as one can. A successful person in the perspective of German philosopher is treated as the one who experiences less discontent moments which is typically in juxtaposition to Existentialism.

It bears remembering that not all people realize their freedom, or take responsibility to create their own life. They are easily immersed within society, for the reason that most of human beings seek security rather than freedom. The path toward meaning and truth is not paved with flowers; it is a long, tough, and difficult one. Christian should embark on his own journey as a pilgrim of life, to confront with hazards and all possible grief, and Existentialism came exactly to emphasize those darker areas of life. Christian authentically commits to act and take responsibility, even if that act ordered by someone else. For Christian authenticity is paramount. He privileges and precedes his unique sense of self and regards this feeling or commitment as source of value. It is useful at this stage to examine the idea of authenticity. For thinkers, such as Heidegger and Sartre, authenticity is the extent to which certain persons engage with and take responsibility for their own freedom; consequently it requires truthfulness and transparency, the capacity to become oneself.

Christian should figure out what way to follow and what life he wants to build to win an authentic self. Following the advice of Evangelist, he puts his hands in his ears. In a crossroad he is faltering, either to stay with his family or embark on his journey to find meaning and truth to unclothe the mystery of life. This dilemma reminds us of Abraham's

sacrifice of his son. In the Bible, Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his son Isaac, as a testimony of his belief. Abraham loved his son. God wanted to test Abraham to know whether he will obey him or not. He told him to sacrifice Isaac on a mountain. This was a hard test, as Abraham wanted to obey God at the same time he loved his son. Though he did not want to sacrifice his son, he obeyed his God. Abraham built an altar; he held a knife over Isaac ready to sacrifice his son. An angel told him not to sacrifice Isaac. A ram was sacrificed at the place of Isaac; God was happy Abraham obeyed Him. Abraham was willing to let his son die. (Genesis. 22:16, 19) To believe in God and to commit to his order, Abraham chooses to sacrifice his son, this is what Kierkegaard called The Knight of Faith.

Kierkegaard's Knight of Faith maintains that a person should put all his faith and responsibility in God and himself, while searching for truth. Being in the same supreme test; Christian should choose either to stay with his family or just be part of the whole. Each person is like Abraham burdened by the freedom to choose. Christian chooses to leave his family and search for meaning and truth. The pure fact is that to make a decision whether it is a good decision depends on which is better for him. Christian chooses to leave his family; he puts his fingers over his ears and ignored their threats

So I saw in my dream, that the Man began to run, and as he ran; now he had not run far from his own door, but his wife and children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return:* but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on crying, Life, Life, Eternal Life: so he looked not behind, *but fled towards the middle of the plain. (Bunyan 13)

To be authentic one has to experience all the difficult moments and bad experiences. The main obstacle for the human development is our inability to perceive and honor the depth of life. Existentialist thinkers tend to emphasize exactly those darker and more difficult dimensions such as anxiety, uncertainty and death. The human creativity involves moving

beyond our world's commonly accepted habits. Seeing all what life is requires a way of faith; a basic faith in what we are, in what the world is, and how they unfold over time. Christian's journey toward salvation, as his first test he fell into the Slough of Despond, indeed the slough was called despond in the language of the seventeenth century that is synonym to depression. The Slough is a referential allegory to

It is the descent whither the * scum and filth attends conviction for sin doth (sic) continually run, and therefore is it called the Slow of dispond (sic): for still as the sinner is awakened about his lost conviction, there ariseth (sic) in his soul many fears, and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in this place: and this is the reason of the badness of this ground". (Ibid 17)

The mire reflects the psychological state of human nature in their being in the universe; an existential individual is bound to live times of uncertainty, discouragement, and all possible kinds of grief. It is up to man to decide whether he wants to stay in this mire or just endure its distressful circumstances. For Christian it is question of life or death, he hardly gets himself out of the slough. Christian's companion, Pliable, is discouraged, and cursed Christian to have convinced him to follow him in his journey. Indeed, it is needless to justify the attitude of Pliable since his name suggests someone who is easily convinced by what others say, he is fully wrapped in his Bad Faith, Pliable's actions and values are dictated by other people. He does not seek to know himself or govern his life all what he masters following society's standards, without even questioning his existence as individualistic way of existence. Christian is let alone to struggle in the Slough. He finally manages to get himself out. Figuratively, Christian is convinced by a good faith in his mission, and becomes resilient to overcome all the difficulties and be indifferent to the life's challenges as his first struggle against despair. The warrior Graceless leaves the Slough and continues his journey.

Christian becomes very transformative and prosperous. He is very confident in his actions and the process of his life, and he is in state of becoming. He begins his search for truth by asking the question, does God exist. Why am I here? He conforms himself to an absolute morality. According to Christian, life could not be a result of purposeless process of coincidence. It is worth comparing Christian to Bunyan's other character Mr. Badman in *The Life and Death and Mr. Badman*. Unlike Christian, Badman leads a life of uncertainty and untruthfulness. He does not conform himself to any reality, he plunges into a pitch of alcohol, despair and debauchery. His choices most of the time are taken under the influence of drink, for instance he marries a prostitute with whom for sixty years he led a life of immoral and improper conduct. Gordon Wakefield describes Bunyan's protagonist character "Nothing has changed him. He is the selfsame Mr Badman to the end with no remorse or repentance.... For this is the sure sign of his damnation" (96).

In the next stage of the story of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian meets Worldly-Wise Man, who exhorts him to follow his advice: he convinces him to visit Morality town, where he can find a man called Legalist. He claims that in that place, with the help of that man he can be rid of his heavy burden, and not suffer from it anymore, as Legalist knows what is good for other people that he helped too many persons to relieve them from their burdens, and teach them how they can keep themselves pure. Morality Town was a refuge for a mea culpa. Christian believes the claim; therefore, he turns away from his path. He is completely convinced to receive help from this man. Unconsciously, he turns a blind eye to authenticity, and finds himself once again within Bad Faith. Indeed; no one is here to provide help man is a pariah, thrown into the world without a pre-given meaning or selves. The whole mission is a single one; everybody ought to help themselves by themselves. Needless to seek pretexts or arguments that a human being could think that somebody is here to help him, this is a euphemism of the dereliction of freedom and responsibility. The choice not to choose or give

another person the choice to choose for us is not what existentialists see as way of finding meaning.

Christian is quickly dissuaded by the idea that the burden of freedom and responsibility could easily be relieved from. Until this phase, Christian still experiences Bad Faith. His convictions are still somehow wavering, and he is not fully convinced by what he wants to be in the future, whether a pure self-meaning or just throw off the burden from his back and return to his crowd. He becomes aware of his mistake, he laments himself for being easily misled by Mr. Worldly-Wise man, Evangelist explains to Christian that

(T) here is not a more dangerous and troublesome way in the world, than is that unto which he hath directed thou; and that ... thou are like to meet with in the way which thou goest (sic), Wearisomeness (sic), Painfulness, Hunger, Perils, Nakedness, Sword, Lions, Dragons, Darkness, and in a word, death, and what not? These things are certainly true, having been confirmed by many testimonies. And why should a man so carelessly cast away himself, by giving heed to a stranger? (Bunyan 19)

He answers: (T) his burden upon my back is more terrible to me than are all these things which you have mentioned: *nay, methinks I care not what I meet with in the way, so be I can also meet with deliverance from my burden. (Ibid 19)

Mr. Worldly-Wise man could be a typical picture of the people of the world, who are wise about things of the world, they only conform themselves to society, perpetuate the rituals and inherit their forefather's beliefs as a legacy without giving it their own version of meaning or seek for the credibility. They wholly stick their minds to what they have found in this world.

By addressing the significance of finding meaning in our life and the importance of commitment to this meaning, Christian as it seems finds meaning and his own version of reality, that is, the pursuit of God and salvation; although most Existentialists put aside any

existence of God, still they proclaim man's freedom to choose as a fundamental aspect. It bears remembering that Existentialists have different substantially in their evaluation of the human condition. Existentialism is the celebration of freedom of choice, search of personal truth and commitment toward this freedom. Christian sees Jesus-Christ as his only true reality; consequently, he embarks on the pursuit of his God. According to him truth could only be reached in the light of the power of the unseen. Christian's Existentialist reading of the Bible conveys that he recognizes that he is an existing subject, studying the words that God communicates to him personally. Christianity and the Bible do not become an authority in a person's life until he permits them to be his personal authority. Christian acknowledges the existence of all knowing, powerful and all present Creator who revealed himself for the purpose of giving human life meaning; therefore God is the absolute final authority and reality for Christian; the talk between Christian and Pliable reveals this statement:

Pli: Well said; what things are they?

Chr. There is an*endless Kingdom to be Inhabited, and everlasting life to be given us; that we may inhabit that Kingdom forever.

Plo. Well said and what else?

Chr. There are crowns of glory to be given us, *and Garments that will make us shine like the Sun in the Firmament of Heaven.

This is excellent; and what else?

Chr. There shall be no more crying, *nor sorrow; For he that is owner of the place, will wipe all tears from our eyes. (Ibid 15)

Indeed, religion may help us as a guide toward meaning to overcome absurdity and meaninglessness. Christian argues that his greatest aim is to enter heaven where there shall be no sorrow, and grief. It is clear-cut that he seeks truth in religion to make meaning for his life.

A human being should not limit himself to one's own experience; the individual in general should learn from other's experiences that could help him/her to endure difficulties to empower one's self with the knowledge of life; that is what our character does indeed at the House of the Interpreter. The mission of an interpreter is to translate from one language into another. He is also the one who explains things. In this house, Christian is introduced to several pictures. Firstly, the Interpreter shows Graceless two pictures of small children, the name of the first was Patience and the name of the other was Passion. The latter is such an angry, stubborn child. The picture refers, in particular, to the people of the world who are stubborn and cupid; in other words, children are believed to be stubborn with no real image of life; we mean by saying so that children are dependent on their parents to teach them what is good and bad for them. The first picture is the representation of all people of the world as their first stage. They cannot develop any commitment or responsibility who remains so still in the same linear, passive development of life, these children would grow up to adults with a same no sense of responsibility and commitment, to reproduce the task of their parents : to bring children and live in a fatale routine and die.

Patience, in the second picture, stands for people who understand life. According to Christian and the Interpreter, the image corresponds to the heavenly minded people, who are not concerned by all the treasures of life; they are those self-committed individuals; who do not treat their lives as banal or over-familiar. In the next room, the Interpreter shows Christian another picture, a burning fire over the wall with someone casting water to quench the fire, but the fire burns higher and higher. By pouring water to the flames, Satan tries to put off the flames. In Christianity, God wants his believers to be flamed by the fires of love, faith, and

passion; but Satan tries to quench the fire. This belief in invisible demons can be subject to suspicion. However, Existentialism comes against human rationality, and puts focus on human faith and passion. Faith transcends moral values; rational grounds for theology and divine revelation do not exist. True faith transcends rationalism. For the Existentialists thinkers, a person's attempt to understand the world through reason is doomed to fail, because the world is absurd, so it is impossible to discover personal being and faith through reasoning. Christian asserts that he acts on his own individual term on what has meaning for him rather than what is rational. To enhance this idea of the irrelevancy of reason for understanding the world, for instance, Sartre sees rationality as bad faith; an attempt of the self to impose structure on a fundamentally irrational existence and random world of phenomena. Personal experience and acting on one's own convictions are essential at arriving at truth; Christian chooses his Christianity as a way toward meaning. He is fully convinced by entering heaven as his reward it is necessary to keep faith aflame not extinguished to avoid becoming cold, that's why Christian keeps emphasizing that he must be full of Christ to supply his flames. The oil is church's faith in particular and all Christian people in general

Christian in the next room is introduced to a man in the iron cage whose conditions are worse than Kafka's the Hunger Artist."So he took him by hand again, and led him to into a very dark Room, where there sat a Man in an Iron Cage" (Ibid 34). A picture of a person in despair, engaged behind the bars of iron cage, helpless and alienated. He caused himself to be in such an ignominious state of being in the world. He put himself in a lockless prison of despair. On the one hand, the Cage Man stops searching meaning. Like Christian, he is without personal will and authority; therefore, he becomes the prey of absurdity that wildly devours his strength, on the other hand, he denies the freedom of choice. According to the Interpreter, the man has no desire to repent and he keeps sinning willfully:

God hath denied me repentance; his Word gives me no encouragement to believe; yea, himself hath shut me up in this Iron Cage: nor can all the men in the World let me out; O Eternity! Eternity! How shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in Eternity? (Ibid 35)

The Cage Man suffers from an agonizing pain; he is embarrassed and tormented at the suggestion that his belief could not be pure. Christian leaves the house of the Interpreter to continue his journey, through the Wall of Salvation, where he comes across the grave where Jesus Christ “was buried”. Therefore, Christian’s burden suddenly falls down:

He ran thus till he came at a place ... upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below in the bottom, a Sepulcher. So I saw in my dream that just as Christian came up with the Cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders to tumble; and so continued to do, till it came to the mouth of the Sepulcher, where it fell, and saw it no more. (Ibid 37)

Christian was born a sinner; it is up to him to decide whether he wants to become a Christian or not. According to the Puritan religion, people are born sinners and Christ did not die for Christians, but he died for sinners. There should be a noticeable sense of emptiness to come to Jesus Christ empty handed to receive the joy of salvation. The three shining ones (angels), other characters in the book, came to Christian to provide him with passport or a visa that belonged to God, it is an assurance of salvation that he should preserve otherwise he will be denied access to heaven. The fact that his heavy burden rolled down when seeing the “grave of Christ” is a crystal-clear proof of his belief in his salvation through Him.

It is noteworthy that not all Christians are like Christian, aware of the importance of their lives. A Christian person may treat life as matter of habit. In the next event Christian came across three men who are chained and sleep called Simple, Sloth, and the third Presumption chained in their legs, he awakens them from their sleep and warns them of their

careless way of life, but they ignored him and went to sleep again, “Awake therefore,; by willing also, and I will help you off with your Irons...Simple said I see no danger; Sloth said, yet a little more sleep: and Presumption said, every Fatt (sic) must stand upon his own bottom, ...And so they lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way (Ibid 39).

Actually these three characters are an ideal description of an individual who could not live up to the truth and transparency of their existence. For Bunyan, they are those who ignore God’s warning and continue to live without any grain of faith or even a version of truth. They live life for the sake of life. The three men are unconscious of their individuality, they kill individuality. According to Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and de Bouvoir the crowd is the untruth, it renders the individual irresponsible and weakens his sense of individuality. Passion and faith are key aspects in finding meaning. Kierkegaard’s Symbolic Immortality: a belief in life after death or reincarnation could be related to the people of the world who live their life aside of God’s light.

Christian’s spiritual experience makes him best equipped to face and overcome problems. The Hill of Difficulty is another supreme test to his faith. It bears remembering that Christian chooses religion (Christianity) as his path toward truth, meaning, satisfaction and happiness, abstract qualities thought by him to be found in the Celestial City. In this hill real problems arise; Christian refreshes himself and begins to sing:

This Hill, though high, I covet to ascend,

The difficulty will not me offend:

For I perceive the way to life lies here;

Come, pluck up; Heart; let’s neither faint nor fear:

Better, thou difficult; th’ right way to go

Then wrong, though easie (sic), where the end is wo (sic)” (Ibid 41).

From the spring of water, he reads the Scroll so he feels happy. He then becomes proud of his achievement; however, pride comes before fall. So when Christian admires himself he falls asleep emotionally and motivationally. Consequently, the certificate falls down, without noticing he falls down from hard working and devotion. When he wakes up he meets two men running in fear from lions. Christian is scared; therefore, he searches for his certificate, but he does not find it. Christian searched for his Bible to find comfort and security he could not find it, however, in an effortful search he found it under a bunch. Once Christian loses his faith and guide, he joins other Christians running in fear, because God is the only comforter in the nothingness of the world, he asks God for forgiveness for his carelessness and falling asleep, salvation brings joy.

As the sun is set, Christian sees Palace Beautiful. Purposely, he turns to reach it, but the lions at the gate are close to the palace. a voice said not to be afraid, for as he walks in the right path, lions could not touch you. Christian lives by fear, but in truth, devil could not harm him. The dread could not be overcome, because it is instinctive within the human nature, people tend to fear everything. They are so overwhelmed by the feeling of existence, thus they cannot bear to leave this global home. Through a good faith, for instance, Christian’s faith in God keeps him safe from the lions’ threat. Indeed, the house is like a church. The house is established for all pilgrims to learn about godliness, carefulness, and divine-love. Christian spends the night in a room called Peace, and he also puts his head in a pillow called Good-Conscience. This goes to mean that life is divided in day and night. At night people are supposed to have rest from the fatigue of the day, each individual who comes at sleep should be at peace in the mid darkness of the night. In other words, people should not be as troublesome as the day. Christian sleeps on a pillow of conscience, meaning that a single individual should be conscious about his life and his burden upon his back, that he should not

treat his existence as simple or unimportant. A human being should gather his full strength to stand firmly against all the encountered difficulties and be genuine in his acts so that at night his spirit would be at peace.

At the Armory place, Christian is well-equipped with all the necessary arms to fight evil. He is granted the Shield of Faith, a Helmet of Salvation and shoes that Never-Wear-Out (Gospel), and a Sword of Spirit (word of God). He is well-fitted from head to foot. Leaving the House, Christian is that close from an Armageddon, a completely destructive battle. Christian has a fight against the devil Appolyon. The monster is clothed with scales like a fish and wings of a dragon, feet like bear, out of his belly comes fire and smoke, his mouth is the mouth of a wild lion. Appolyon claims that he is the God of the City of Destruction and that Christian was his subject. Appolyon undervalues Christian's quest for authenticity. Appolyon wounds him in his head, hand and foot. He casts down to the ground. This deadly combat lasts for half a day. Though Christian is initially afraid, he is able to kill the monster by using the shield of faith; he wins a great battle against his fears and manages to be what he decides to be; resilient to follow the path of God. Appolyon is unable to resist the power of faith, which depicts its ultimate power. The latter has no faith, as he lives without a set of purpose or goal. Appolyon's biggest role is to depress and turn aside those people, who authentically follow the path of faith.

Through each battle, Christian becomes stronger and readier to the next battle; authenticity is a long process of self-becoming, he has to keep the rhythm of his journey through the River of the Shadow of Death which is a steep cliff, deep ditch, and muddy mire. Christian is balanced in the middle of the cliff. Christian finds the Sword not enough, which allegorically means that it is not enough to have faith alone in something, because this faith should be put into the ground through acts, Christian decides to pray; Two in visible demons come to him to whisper all the bitterness, thoughts of discouragement, to defile him, to

weaken his strength. At the same moment he hears the whisper of Holy Spirit in his heart confessed the word of God. Darkness begins to turn into shining light. Christian is amazed he could not believe that he walks through the way without sleeping or hurting himself, he is sure that it should be his faith that kept him awake and preserved him from falling down, he frequently looks back to the past.

The search for authenticity is usually underestimated by most of people not for personal dereliction but for the hostile atmosphere and the outcomes of this quest. To paint a picture of these outcomes it is worthwhile to analyze the character Pope. Christian meets a person in the cave called Pope. The latter is devoid of any force. Pope is Bunyan's direct allegorical allusion to the Roman Catholic Church, who savagely killed and tortured other Christians for not conforming to medieval Church. During the years of the Papal rule of the Roman Church tens of millions were persecuted and killed because they refused to bow to the authority of the Church; harsh persecutions were imposed on the Protestant Christians. According to Edward William Lecky:

(T) he Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that have ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history...it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no powers of imagination can adequately realize their sufferings (32).

During the reign of the Papal Church, to tyrannize over the nation by the pretext of Divine Right was a legitimate claim; to imprison their persons and condemn the Protestant Christians. The Protestant's refusal to surrender the Bible was a great offense that the Papacy could not tolerate. The Roman Catholic Church was determined to exterminate the Non-Catholic Christians from this world, because they refused to worship God according to the

will of the Pope. For this reason the “heretics” suffered from overuse humiliation, insult and torture. Indeed, the truth advocated is the one that preserves the social and economic well-being of the country. According to modern historians, a large part of the Roman Church’s disdain of Protestants was this set of belief that is corrosive to society. Ultimately, an individualistic version of truth could not endear us to the government.

Though authenticity is of an expensive price, Existentialists thinkers preach the responsibility of all individual to be authentic. Christian along his journey meets Faithful- a citizen of the City of Destruction- who follows Christian after his escape, Christian urges him to cool off to catch with him. Faithful answers,” No I am upon my life” (Ibid 67). It is needless to explain the attitude of Faithful is going his pace and not somebody else’s pace. It is worthwhile to note the authenticity is individuality, an existential individual can have negotiation only with his self, he should not rely on other’s pace, reason, and attitude, otherwise, he is going to fall into bad faith, needless to reassure that bad faith is the attitude of not being authentic.

4. Society Vs Individuality

The relationship between individuality and society is a very close, as it involves an extremely important co-existence. Man would never survive apart from his crowd, and the crowd is constituted of a large number of individuals, therefore; each voluntarily depends on the other to exist. The main issue is whether a human being relies consciously on society to know himself, or is it really acceptable to say that the true reality of human being could be depicted through his fellow herd.

To live in society is a basic demand as man is a social animal. Existentialists treat society as subject of controversy due the conformity-culture. Existentialism is the only philosophy among all other philosophies that is person-centered. A great importance is

bestowed to the single being; the focus is put on the minority rather than the generality. In the context of Existentialism each individual should be valued to his singularity; an existential being should know himself by rediscovering himself, and not by discovering society. Most of people, in the existentialists' perspective, tend to hide among the crowd; this gives them a sense of security and belonging. It is noteworthy that Existentialism does not want to violate this paradigm of living in society, however; there are some permissible cases, which include necessity and need.

Does Existentialism ceremoniously celebrate the community? It is worthwhile to note that human being is seen as supreme. Existentialists focus upon the subjective personal lives of individual human beings. They accentuate the fact that there is no basic and known human nature to all people. Each person must define what humanity means and what values would dominate his life. Interestingly, there can be no any single set of morals and values that will apply to all people at all times. The head of the discord is that someone or society tries to impose or demand beliefs, values, and rules to be obeyed, that typically destroys individuality, and renders a person to be what people in power desire, thus they are reduced to submit to the standard norms. Existentialism repudiates any involvement of the other to know ourselves; our values can not necessarily be that of the crowd. Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, which maintains that a human being must submit his will to the general will, is not what Existentialism advocates or preaches as doctrine, because our will is personal and the well-being of the general (society) is also personal and subjective, It is strongly denied in the field of Existentialism that persons should subject themselves to the ruling power, a human being is the only master of his life, no outside influence should be permitted. In the same vein, Thomas Hobbes in his most famous *Leviathan* claims that there is an implicit social agreement between the ruler and his fellow individuals, that people should subject themselves to the king in return the king would provide them with security. According to Hobbes, man is

subject to the king that requires him to surrender his individuality for security; paradoxically, Existentialism stresses responsibility and not security.

Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* gained most of its fame thanks to its unprecedented event, for it sheds light on singularity and not society, the importance of the single individual's authenticity and way of life. All the actions of the allegory turn around Christian from the onset of his journey till his last destination. Christian does not find truth in the society-person, or in his family. Rather, he finds truth within himself. Christian strongly disbelieves that society determines personality; he bears to be alone, devoid of understanding with others. With his two trusty companions Faithful and Hopeful, he discovers the allusion of the conformity-culture. Thus, he becomes non-conformist, as is well-illustrated in Vanity Fair.

In the Town of Vanity Fair, a twin city of Destruction, Faithful and Christian are the target of its inhabitants. Bunyan says that these two pilgrims must continue their travel through this market, it is the only road, which is called Vanity, but why? The name of the town as it suggests is pride without value. In this town of entertainment, the people of the town sell: houses, lands, trades, lusts, pleasures, countries, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and all things. It bears remembering that Christian and Faithful do not belong to this town; they are strangers to the natives. Bunyan implicitly foresees the danger of society and the severe impact of conformity. Christian and Faithful are regarded as suspicious, the people of the town think they have come to destroy their city, the reason behind this suspicion is:

First, the Pilgrims were cloathed (sic) with such kind of Raiment of any that traded that Fair. The people therefore of the fair made a great gazing upon them: some said they were fools... some they are Outlandish- men

Secondly, And as they wondered at their Apparel, so they did likewise at their apparel; for few could understand what they said... they seemed Barbarians each to other.

Thirdly, But that which did not a little amuse the Merchandizers (sic), was, that ... if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears... signifying that their Trade and Trafick (sic) was in heaven. (Ibid 87)

Through these three arguments, we can summarize why these pilgrims represent a threat to society. Firstly, a society could be a serious threat to authenticity, because an authentic individual should conform to himself, live as he wants according to his own given standards; the pursuit of self-interest is not allowed when it stands against society, governments treat society as one single individual; power man think it will function in a better order when individuals are governed by a single system. Society would not help to the development of a truly authentic self free from Bad Faith and untruth. Christian and Faithful are mocked because of their cloths are different from the standard uniform of the town people. This difference is t which enough to win the attention of the crowd, and they were harshly criticized and caught to be examined. Bunyan writes:” At that, there was an occasion taken to despise the men the more; some mockingly; some taunting, some speaking reproachfully, and some calling upon others to smite them... So the men were taken to examination” (Ibid 87).

Secondly, most societies are governed under one single regime; people’s freedom turns to be a lie. Citizens are supposed to follow what the authorities decide as the best truth. One cannot raise his own voice against a strong and totalitarian regime. Governments’ abuse of power gives floor to the greatest assaults on the privacy of ordinary people.

Total submission is threat to individualism and to a democratic society; one need to break free of this social control. The reason for this confusion is fairly simple, to live in society of absolute conformity, people would not have freedom to choose their occupation,

and people cannot act freely. Sometimes the use of terror reign makes people afraid of their lives; that they give up quest of authenticity, they do all what is asked from them to do; to be one's own master is not free of consequence. Faithful and Christian are genuine, and their reason and moral values are not bequeathed from society; they challenge society and are ready to put their lives at risk.

Under an iron investigation, Christian and Faithful are found guilty for what the judge of the town consideres as an unpardonable crime. They are asked their origin, destination, and job. The two pilgrims told them that (T) hey were Pilgrim's and Strangers in the world, and that they were going to their own Countrey (sic), which was the Heavenly Jerusalem... when one asked them what they would buy, they said, they would buy the Truth (Ibid 88).

The judge therefore do not believe Christian and Faithful, as a result, they make of them a spectacle that day, so that they would serve as a lesson in the future for others who would follow their path,"(T) hey beat them pitifully, and hanged Irons upon them in chains up and down the fair, for an example and a terror to others, lest any should further speak in their behalf, or joyn (sic) themselves unto them" (Ibid 88). Christian and Faithful despite all the mistreatments, stand firm as a rock. They are put in a cage, brought before the examiners to trial. Meanwhile they behave themselves in a wisely patient manner; they endure the condition in which they are by "committing themselves to the All-wise dispose of that ruleth (sic) all things, until they should be otherwise disposed of" (Ibid 90). They commit themselves to their own version of truth and reality.

The day of the trial, three witnesses, named Envy, Superstition, and Pick-thank, appear to give their evidence against the prisoners. Envy says that Faithful does not admire Prince and Pope, and does not follow Custom or Law; more importantly, he condemns the doing of the people of Vanity Fair. Superstition is the next eyewitness, he states that Faithful opposes to their

religion and their way of interpreting Bible. Pick-thank affirms that he knows Faithful for a long time; he accuses him of being a traitor and not to submit himself to the laws. The Judges concluded to sentence Faithful to the penalty of death, and:

Therefore they brought him out, to do with him according to their law; and first they Scourged him, then they buffeted him, then they lanced his flesh with Knives; after that they stoned him with stones, then pricket him with their Swords, and last of all they burned him to ashes at the Stake. (Ibid 95)

The cruel death of Faithful shows how Vanity society treats individuals. Several are those who paid their lives as a price for their truth. The death of Faithful echoes the death of the famous English theologian and writer William Tyndale. Both Faithful and Tyndal were prey to society. Tyndale, the leading figure of the Protestant Reformation, was against the established Church of England, and he passionately encouraged translation of the Bible into colloquial languages so the ordinary people could read, an act that was strictly forbidden, because the Bible was banned to be translated into the native tongue by Cardinal Wolsey and the Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More. The only authorized Bible at that time was the Latin version, *Vulgate*, made in the fourteenth century by Saint Jerome; it could be understood only by erudite people. Tyndale's translation was the first English Bible to draw directly from Hebrew and Greek texts, his work played a key role in spreading the Reformation ideas. Tyndale, like Faithful, was arrested under charge of heresy. His crime was his disagreement of the official Church. He was then executed by strangulation, and his body after was burnt at the stake in 1534. The *Tyndale Bible* is the first Bible written in the English vernacular.

Bunyan saw in his dream a chariot and horses waiting for Faithful to take him after his death to heaven with sound of trumpets. Faithful leads an authentic life free of bad faith; he does not blame the circumstances or deny responsibility, his only guilt is that he takes himself

out of the crowd. The fact that he is taken to heaven is a cut-clear proof of his genuineness. He believes in Christianity and sees it as his ultimate truth. He conforms himself to his truth; therefore, he is admitted to heaven, the waited reward. Now for Christian, he is alive, he is recommended back to prison for further examination. However, using all his wisdom, he manages to escape imprisonment. Christian does not leave the town alone. A new companion, called Hopeful, is greatly influenced by the death of Faithful and the fixed belief of Christian. The latter decides to accompany Christian.

5. Suicide: a Philosophical Question

The philosophical concept of suicide is a subject of great discord in the realm of human knowledge. The act of killing one's self is not necessary disfavored by most of the intellectual individuals. The consensus of the debate results into two divergent standpoints: one the one hand, suicide could be treated as an unethical and immoral behavior; on the other hand, to commit suicide is considered irresponsible. Besides, there are those who deny the claim that suicide is a crime. The latter maintains that committing suicide is a personal choice.

The true fact behind the rejection of suicide lies within the argument that killing one's self is a criminal act against society, family, and even against the person's self. A person who kills himself wants to escape his duties in a way or another. There are several factors that could lead a human being to commit a suicide such as: financial problems, depression, severe disease, loss of a relative and so on. All these social problems have the power to convince a man that life is not worth living; therefore, the person will seek for an alternative to make an end to his sufferings chooses to die; death would become a sought-after refuge to leave behind all malevolent experiences that worsen the living conditions.

In the philosophical context of Existentialism, The Algerian French journalist, essayist, and novelist Albert Camus starts his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* with a well-known

sentence” (T) here is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide” (3) (French: *il ne y’a qu’un problème philosophique vraiment sérieux: c’est le suicide*). For Camus suicide is a response to the absurdity of the world: when an individual is confronted with the meaninglessness and indifference of the universe, he is going to think of suicide as a solution, however, Camus in particular and Existentialists in general are against the notion of suicide. Existentialism preaches the doctrine of the importance of human action and choice. Absence of life (suicide) is considered in the existentialist terminology as a rejection of freedom, because death would prevent further choices. To justify the view of Existentialists, firstly, they do not deny the horrific living conditions of the existent, and secondly, they claim that a human being enjoys the right of choice, through his choices that he is going to bring meaning to his life and embrace life passionately. Suicide is a handicap for further choices, a human being should advocate the right to live under any given circumstances as it is his own unique mission to find meaning and bear the hardships.

The concept of suicide plays a central significance in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, like Camus, Bunyan rejects forcefully the negative attitude of killing oneself, he deliberately incarnates himself within the characters. Christian and Hopeful are the voice of Bunyan; through them he reassures his position *vis-a-vis* suicide. John Bunyan’s religious creeds as a Puritan preacher could not tolerate or accept suicide as solution for the human problems. In Christianity, killing one’s self is a violation of the Sixth Commandment; God asked his believers to harm neither the body nor the soul. A Christian believer lives passionately in the light of God’s mercy and turns a blind eye to hard moments. Similarly, these moments forge the belief in God. A Christian person should never think of suicide as there is which is worse than life that is hell.

In the course of their journey, after leaving Vanity Fair, Christian wants to reduce the time of their travel and to arrive much earlier to the Wicket Gate. The two companions decide

to take another road; they turn aside from their path they fall into a steep cliff. They are unable to get themselves out of the besieged place where they fall. The way of going back is very dangerous. They are in danger of drowning. As they step back, heavy waters flood the place. Christian and Hopeful spend the night there till the next day. Being tired, they fall asleep. Not far from this place where they lay, there is a castle called Doubting Castle. The owner's name is Giant Despair, one of the grotesque characters in the novel. Indeed, Christian and Hopeful have transgressed his floor. When Giant Despair woke up in the morning, he finds them in his ground and carried them to his Doubting Castle. Being so strong he forced them to go with him and:

The Giant therefore drove them before him, and put them into his castle, into a very dark Dungeon, nasty and stinking to the spirit of these two men: Here then they lay, from Wednesday morning till Saturday night, without one bit of bread, or drop of drink, or any light, or any to ask how they did. They were therefore here in evil case, and were far from friends and acquaintance. Now in this place, Christian had double sorrow, because 'twas through his unadvised haste that they were brought into this distress. (Ibid 110)

Under these pitiable circumstances, Christian and Hopeful seem to suffer greatly alone in their den, hunger, thirst, alienation, loneliness, and pain threaten the pilgrims' life. Their life changes from bad to worse, without any light of hope to escape. The character Giant Despair and his castle symbolizes the general state of being in the world, we mean by this that human beings evidently are subject to these moments of depression, distress, and difficulty. A human being should grasp that life consists evidently of strange dichotomies: death/life, sadness/happiness, victory/ failure, day/night and so on; the main problem is under which conditions suicide is warranted? A suicidal person is much more likely to feel the value of life and existence, because in the existentialist context, life is valued because of the evidence of

death. A person who attempts to commit suicide is, for sure, underrating the real mission that he ought to accomplish before death. There are no particular conditions that could justify suicide, as we are in the Existentialist context of study, suicide should be forgotten and repudiated.

Being depressed and emotionally suppressed, Christian and Hopeful enter into a deep critical psychological state of being. Christian starts to think of suicide as an adequate solution to his miserable fate. Hopeful, however, does not give up his faith and struggle for life. Christian wants to follow the advice of Giant-Despair to end up his life, as he thinks it is the best solution for this unnecessary endurance, he is wavering between life and death, he talks to Hopeful, saying:

Chr. Brother, said Christian, *what shall we do? the life that we now live is miserable: for my part, I know not whether is best, to live thus, or to die out of hand.*My soul chused (sic) strangling rather than life; and the grave is more easie (sic) for me than this Dungeon: shall we be ruled by Giant?.. (Ibid 112)

Giant Despair appear before Faithful and Christian with knife, poison, and row in case they have chosen to kill themselves, or let him kill them in the coming days. At the beginning both refuse to commit suicide. Giant Despair seems discouraged from their faith. As time passes Christian slowly surrenders his struggle and sees life as not worth living. He thinks that by drinking the poison, or hitting himself with a knife all his nightmares shall be vanished. He was in urgent need for help. Faithful is much more convinced by his existence in life, he tells his fellow friend:

Hope. *Indeed our present condition is dreadful, and death would be far more welcome to me than thus for ever to abide: but let us consider, the Lord of the Country to which we are going, hath (sic) said, Thou shalt (sic) do not murder, no not another man's person; much more then are we forbidden to take his counsel to kill ourselves.

Besides, he that kills another, can but commit murder upon his body; but for me to kill himself, is to kill body and soul at once. And moreover, my Brother though talkest (sic) of ease in the grave; but has though forgotten the Hell whither, for certain, the murderers go for no murderer hath eternal life, &c. And, let us consider again, that all the law is not in the hand of Giant Despair: Others, so far as I can understand. (Ibid 112).

Instead of thinking of ending his life, Faithfull thinks of solution. He is sure that the despair and the misery will not last forever. He seeks to convince his friend by making allusion to the Sixth Commandment: if they commit suicide, God is going to reject them. According to Faithful, hell is thousand worse than life. For him, it is better to suffer in life than amidst the flames of fire.

It bears remembering that Christian and Hopeful have chosen the path of religion toward their search for meaning and truth. We learn from this event in Doubting-Castle, that a person may overcome his despair when he holds a version of reality. Since individuals need to believe in something that keeps us understanding life and just living life once again. We cannot find meaning and truth or understand the purpose of our existence without being subject to tragic experiences. Hope cures as it is important to reconsider past experiences and difficult moments. Life is like a sky sometimes it shines brightly in a sunny day, and other times a cloudy raining weather.

God that made the world, may cause that Giant Despair may die; or that, at some time or other he may forget to lock us ;or, but he may in short time have another of his before us, and may lose the use of his limbs; and if ever that should come to pass again, for my part, I am resolved to pluck up the heart of a man, and to try my utmost to get from under his hand... my brother, let's be patient, and endure a while; the time

may come that may give us a happy release: but let us not be our own murderers.

(Ibid 112)

To get to the bottom of things, an existential search for meaning requires a fundamental ingredient which is finding one's own version of truth. As it is mentioned before the world remains meaningless, absurd, indifferent, until we attribute it meaning. This attribution of meaning is such an individualistic perspective. To get his friend out his despair, Hopeful invites Christian to reflect on past victories and aids:

Hope.*My brother, said he, remembrest(sic) thou not how valiant thou hast been heretofore; Apollyon could not crush thee, nor could all that thou didst(sic) hear, or see, or feel in the Valley of the shadow of Death; what hardship, terror, and amazement hast thou already gone through, and art (sic) thou now nothing but fear? Thou seest (sic) that I am in the Dungeon with thee, a far weaker man by nature than thou are... let's exercise a little more patience... bear up with patience as well as we can. (ibid 113)

Christian suddenly realizes that he is in a possession of a key that can open any lock in this Doubting Castle, a key called Promise that he forgot in his pocket, a key that could open any lock. Christian happily opens all the locks of Giant Despair. The latter runs after them. The two pilgrims manage to flee. Despair has no greater power than faith and promise of God. They climbed over the fence, put a warning

Christian... brake out in this passionate speech, what a fool, quoth (sic) he, am I, thus to lie in a sinking Dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty? I have a key in my bosom, called Promise that will, (I am perswaded (sic) open any lock in Doubting-Castle. Then said Hopeful, that's good news; good Brother pluck it out of thy bosom, and try: Then Christian pulled it out of his bosom, and began to try at the Dungeon

door, whose bolt(as he turned the key) gave back, and the door flew open with ease and Christian and Hopeful both came out. (Ibid 114)

Bunyan warns his readers that when someone trespass the land of doubting castle, in which despair is the chief commander, he should pay attention not to lose control of the situation. Despair could destroy his/her life.

6. The Stealth of Death

The theme of death has spurred much more confusion and bafflement than any subject of debate. Hence, it is a topic for further philosophical discussions and analysis. We know that we are going to die sooner or later; we have acquired this knowledge through the school of life and the experience of others, all human beings are pre-defined to face death.

Death is a certain event in human life. It is the most arguably phase of our existence. Death is a phenomenon of universality and certainty. It is more certain than birth, because birth is a contingent fact, parents can decide not to bring up children while they are still paralyzed to escape death. All the existential individuals would be accustomed to the reality of death, thus they would be familiarized with. We are born to die; we live in the world as guests. The experience of death is not limited to human beings only; it is a joint characteristic to all species.

The significance of death consists in its primo role to live authentically away from Bad Faith. Existentialism condemns the rejection or ignorance of finitude and mortality. To live authentically is to take death to our lives, face it, and acknowledge it squarely. The unaware person tries to live life as if death does not exist to avoid the pettiness of life; it is only when we acknowledge death then we will be free to become who we want to be. Death is an authentic moment; because it is another witness of the world's indifference and hostility.

In the last stage of the story of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian and Hopeful reach a deep river. From the bank of the river they can see the gate of the heavenly city. They are so happy to reach the gate of the city. However, there is a problem: the river contains no bridge to pass through into heaven. Also, there is no other road beside the river. They should, in a way or another, cross the river, to enter to heaven. Bunyan, in his dream, considers the problem, "Now I further saw, that betwixt them and the Gate was a River, but there was no Bridge to go over; the River was very deep; at the sight therefore of this River, the Pilgrims were much stounded (sic), but the men that went with them, said, you must go through, or you cannot come at the Gate". (Ibid 147)

Indeed, the river is called The River of Death. Allegorically, the River symbolizes mortality. . Death is not desirable to human nature though by it Christian and Hopeful will pass out of this world into heaven. Christian becomes so depressed seeking for another road, but no way can be found. The moment comes when Christian will face death along with his friend, Hopeful. In truth, death is considered to be an evil, even to these two pious characters. It is not a welcoming fact that life on earth would not last. Though Christian and Hopeful are fully convinced by their version of truth and their ultimate faith in God's, they falter to cross the River. Christian wants to enter the Celestial City without crossing the river. However, God, in Christianity, made it clear that death is inescapable,"Death is not welcome to nature though by it we pass out of this world into glory" (Cordiant 15 .51, 52).

The obvious reality quickly comes to mind of Christian and Hopeful: the hour of death has arrived; they dive into the river, and began to sink in the deep waters. Fear of death weakens them. In the mid of the River, Hopeful attempts to console his friend; telling him to endure these difficult moments. But Christian replies: "Ah my friend, the sorrows of death compassed me about, I shall not see the Land that flows with Milk and Honey, and with that great darkness and horror fell upon Christian". (Ibid 148)

At the very beginning, Christian discovers the allusion of death. He starts a life of pilgrimage to face adequately mortality. He knows he will die; therefore he searched for meaning and authenticity. Death is a bitter reality, but man can get rid of his terror through his belief that there is a general possibility of life after death. Hopeful comforts his friend by reciting biblical verses to cure his distress and empower his belief: “Be of good cheer, Jesus Christ maketh (sic) thee whole: and with that Christian brake out with a loud voice, Oh I see him again! And he tells me, When thou passest (sic) through the waters, I will be with thee” (Ibid 149). After hearing all God’s promises, Christian seems to be delivered from his fears in death.

What after death? This question may be answered from different standpoints. There is no clear-cut explanation for what would happen after death. There is great mystery concerning life after death, especially in the modern period, as humanity turned focus from spiritual to material and from abstraction to concreteness. Neither science nor religion solved the mystery as it remains a matter of personal belief and spiritual convictions. As we are concerned by the study of Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, we are in the context of Christianity and what it offers as the credible version of the afterlife.

In Christian religion, there are two divergent roads or worlds. God created what comes to be known as heaven and hell. After death, man is admitted to heaven as reward or is thrown into hell as an ultimate punishment. The final destination after death depends completely on the individual’s deeds during his lifetime. A person in the Christian theology should subject himself and give up his will to the general will of Providence; in return, God would accept him into his heavenly kingdom as a reward of his good deeds. “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life”. (Mathew 25:46)

In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian and Hopeful, choose Christianity by their own personal will as the supreme truth. Upon the bank of the Death River, the narrator, the two pilgrims, Christian and Hopeful, see two angels waiting for them to greet them welcome, as they leave behind this world. This belief in a life after death is highlighted by John Bunyan.

(O) ut of the River, they saluted them, saying, we are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those that shall be Heirs of Salvation. Thus they went along towards the Gate... they safely got over the River, and had such glorious Companions to attend them (Ibid 149).

Christian and Hopeful are able to reach the gates of heaven after they experience death. The person at the door or the Gate keeper asks them for their certificates as a testimony on their faith. Christian and Hopeful grants the man with their two certificates which were Bibles. The Gate keeper opens the door of the City and allows them to enter. They are dressed in so beautiful attire and are warmly admitted to heaven. Therefore, they will spend the rest of their lives in full bliss.

So what started as a wilderness ends up as a Utopian dream. Christian and Hopeful are two heroes who tamed absurdity, anxiety, meaninglessness, anguish, and despair to reach truth and meaning in a form of a heaven. Even though this story remains a fictional tale; however its message is so powerful. Bunyan throughout his dream saw the necessity of the human action and his responsibility to master his life and set a purpose for his existence. A human being, as an inhabitant of Earth, should bear in mind that he exists for a reason; we mean his existence for sure is not a coincidence. Now, what path to follow or what truth to believe remains an individualistic choice, single individuals are given freedom, they are condemned to be free (Sartre), so think, choose, and act that's Existentialism.

In this third chapter we have investigated themes of Existentialism in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. We have explored the story, characters, and events according to the Existentialist terminology and vocabulary. At first, we have analyzed Christian's journey in association to authenticity, and then we have treated some actions in the book as they are jointly treated by John Bunyan and the Existentialist thinkers. As a conclusion to our analysis, we may suggest that John Bunyan is a Proto-Existentialist, because as a Puritan writer, he underlines firstly the absurdity of human beings. In Bunyan's limited scope, absurdity is rooted within the Original Sin. Secondly, Bunyan, like the Existentialist philosophers, believes in freedom of choice, a person must choose and act upon one's choice. Finally, he retains the responsibility of each single individual to change his life and find truth. Bunyan can be considered a Puritan Existentialist *par excellence*.

Chapter Four
Existentialism and *The Beach*



THE BEACH

Motion Picture Soundtrack



Introduction

Existentialism blossomed as a philosophical movement through the vehicle of literature; numerous writers adopted the written word as a weapon to defend their doctrines and enhance the proliferation of their Existentialist worldview. Also, Existentialism benefited widely from the audio-visual technology advancement in our contemporary era, which extravagantly paved the way for translating the Existentialist philosophy through media mainly cinema.

Hollywood movie industry might be best-fitted to dig for the stealth of that philosophical attitude. Sundry movies depict characters that undergo existential crisis experiencing despairing anguish in the face of an undermined existence; it looks as if cinema and Existentialism share a mutual ability to describe the human condition.

This fourth and last chapter will attempt to analyze and explore the implicit interrelatedness between Existentialism and *The Beach* in terms of their co-relationship to describe the Existentialist modern individual and his surrounding world. Throughout this intended analysis we will seek to examine the movie through the viewpoint of some Existentialist thinkers such as Nietzsche, Camus, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Heidegger and Kierkegaard; therefore, the analysis would be purely Existentialist.

1. Biography: Danny Francis Boyle

Boyle was born on 20 October 1956 in Radcliffe, Manchester, to Irish Catholic parents. Self-declared spiritual atheist, he studied drama at Banger University. The *début* of his artistic carrier was at the Joint Stock Theater Company, where he had the opportunity to direct *The Genius* by Howard Breton and *Saved* by Edward Bond. He was also an important figure in the Royal Shakespeare Company, where he directed five productions successfully.

Boyle is an English director, producer, screenwriter, and theatre director. He started working in television as a producer for BBC Northern Ireland, before turning his focus toward film production. Boyle's name is best linked to a series of important movies that contributed to the development of the British film making industry. Boyle's films include his first film *Shallow Grave*, *Trainspotting*, *Sunshine*, *Steve Jobs*, *28 Days Later*, *127 Hours*, and *The Beach*. The latter was filmed in Thailand in Maya Bay. It caused a vitriol controversy between the film crew and the Thai politicians. *The Beach* portrayed Thailand in a negative image due to the drug culture. Critics suggested that Di Caprio's post-Titanic fame might have helped in the financial success of the film. Boyle spoke negatively on the movie saying that he did not like any character.

Danny Boyle's Hollywood achievements comprise several awards and titles. His film *Trainspotting* was ranked by the British Film Institute as the tenth greatest British film of the twentieth century. *Shallow Grave* also won the BAFTA Award for best British film. His *Slumdog Millionaire* might be his greatest achievement and is regarded as the most successful British film of the decade; it was nominated for ten Academy Awards and won eight, including an Award for best director. He won also the Golden Globe and BAFTA Award for best director. Boyle managed through his movies to revitalize the British cinema and gain a reputation for his country.

2. Summary: *The Beach*

The Beach portrays the life of an American young citizen called Richard, who seeks adventure in Bangkok. Richard, a backpacker, tries to escape his generation's computer-obsession and civilization. He meets a Scottish erratic man Daffy who tells him of a secret. Daffy informs Richard that he used to live in an uninhabited island in the Gulf of Thailand: a beautiful hidden beach. Daffy explains that several other travelers settled there but difficulties

arose and he chose to leave. Daffy surprisingly commits suicide leaving Richard a map of the island.

Richard convinces a French couple, Francoise and Etienne, to embark with him *en voyage* to the island for exploration. Before departing, he meets two American university students who have already heard some rumors on the island. Richard unwisely leaves them a copy of the island map. *En route* to the paradise-like beach, the three adventurers make their way through an island and are warmly hailed with acclamations into the secret island settlement. The community's leader Sal explains that the Thai farmers allow them to stay and protect them if they keep the secrecy of the place.

The trio easily becomes integrated in the life of the community, a leisurely self-reliance experience, depending on themselves without external authority. The relationship between Richard and Francoise becomes romantic and Etienne avows that he will not stand in their way. The community's settlers seem to have found More's Utopia on earth.

3. Modern Man's Alienation

The philosophical concept of "alienation" is initially utilized by Fichte and Hegel. The term was tightly diminished in its use only to small groups of thinkers. It became almost forgotten in the time that follows. Now, in the modern period the word "alienation" becomes a psychological, economical, social and more importantly a lifestyle fashion. Our modern age witnesses alienation from everything.

Man's alienation is well expressed by several theologians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and philosophers. Most of them do not treat the problem of estrangement as a result of a specific point of history, but rather as an innate abstract feeling rooted within the human

condition. The latter becomes a catchword and a landmark characteristic that describes the actual living of the human race in the age of digital technology and consumer society.

The alienated man suffers from an inner crisis which forcedly triggered our awareness and recognition to the mood of skepticism that haunted the human spirit during the first decades of the twentieth century. The Existentialist outlook of our age represents the apparent disconnection between man and society, man and his fellow human being, also between man and the universal God. Indeed, alienation was a term that illuminated the Existentialist scene, mainly through the works of Sartre and Heidegger in the post World War period. As a result of his alienation, the alienated man only recognizes the tremendous pervasive forces of his alienation in time of crisis. He becomes fully aware of his detachment, then he starts to sense it.

Alienation is a central theme in the Hollywood movie *The Beach*. The reasons why Richard is alienated are not explicitly stated. Danny Boyle wittily created his main character as a reflection of the modern man's situation and social reality. He introduced his character as a reaction against the norms of society. The beach resort in the movie is a metaphor of Richard's unsubstantiated comfort in society. Richard's journey to unknown destination gives no rational explanation. Indeed, he acts in an honest aloofness. Richard is viewed as indifferent in the eyes of society.

In the expository scene, Richard walks in the street, busy and full of Thai citizens and travelers. Richard picks up his way through the crowd. He fills the scene as he passes through houses and hotels, shops and stalls selling food. Restaurants are full of Western travelers watching American films or European sports. The early scenes are an adequate representation of the modern period. The street represents all aspects of life in the contemporary age. The modern society gives evidence to the fragmentation of the collective self, where citizens may

feel the depth of their souls in indifferent society.. Ultimately, People in the modern time vacillate; sometimes they hide within society and other times they reconcile their identities.

. Richard's alienation is most evident in the hotel scene. When he meets the French couple, Etienne and Francoise, he becomes obsessed by his deep estrangement, "*I was travelling alone for two reasons. First of all, being alone allows you more opportunity to absorb your experience on the personal level. Secondly, and this I felt actually at that moment, there was no one who wanted to go with me*" (*The Beach* 04:31). For sure, the romantic relationship between Francoise and Etienne contributes immensely to the worsening of Richard's condition. In order to understand the self, it is necessary to locate one's own social relations to his time. Romantic relations allow people to experience a sense of belonging where alienation is transcended through an intense emotional union with another individual.

In his small room, Richard lies on his bed, contemplating each single minute detail in the room. He is frightened by the silence of his loneliness when some light enters from the street through the small window. The next room in the other direction, a new disturbance begins. It is a man, Daffy, just above Richard's head shouting. The Character Daffy remains ambiguous as he appears only in limited number of scenes.

The feeling of loneliness risks also the early mortality. Individuals lacking social performances are at risk for suicide. People need to feel connected to the world. The Scottish man Daffy is devoid of any single relation. He fails to establish connections with his neighbors, this is shown when he tries to convince them to lend him some money. Everybody refuses to accept to lend him some dollars. It is worth to note that Daffy is one among the founders of the secret beach. He talks with Richard about the beach resort, but Richard tends to disbelieve him. In the next day, a new activity begins, Richard like usual sits alone at his

table to eat his breakfast. He notices Etienne and Francoise in the next table. Returning to his chamber, he notices a folded sheet of paper attached with a pin. It is a detailed and carefully drawn map of cluster of islands. Some are named while others are left unnamed. A letter X was written at a corner of an island, it signifies "X= Beach". Richard studies the map and walks to Daffy's room; there is no sign of Daffy. Indeed, Daffy's corpse is within a pool of blood on the floor.

The true fact behind Daffy's suicide lies within his despairing alienation and lacking social ties. The existential individual in general and Daffy in particular experience the social distancing between the world and themselves. When they sense the meaninglessness and powerlessness of the world many people would not overcome alienation; therefore; it kills them. According to Camus, people commit suicide because they judge life as not worth living (4). Daffy's detachment and aloofness from the world result in cutting his wrists. It is the feeling that he is abandoned by the external universe that paves the way to his ruination. Sometimes this sort of estrangement takes the shape of inauthenticity of not being oneself. For Heidegger, our everyday social existence is not guarantee of originality.

Kierkegaard and Heidegger condemn the modern age to its prevalent reality of alienation. We shall focus mainly on the social aspect of alienation. All the Existentialist philosophers agree that such estrangement is not only a trait of the modern period, but also of the human situation in general. Alienation is a byproduct of society, because all "the individuals of the contemporary generation are fearful of their existence ... only in great masses do they dare to live, and they cluster together ... to feel that they amount to something" (Kierkegaard 318). In the same vein, Heidegger describes the way in which the modern social existence imposes the leadership of the "they" upon the single individual (294). Identity in Existentialism is not social given. Richard distances himself from the life of herd this is not to suggest that he is unaware of the problems and defects in the society of his time.

The result of alienation is not purely negative. Alienation can be overcome and individuality developed. It is true that Richard's alienation is experienced as hostile to his individuality and subjectivity; however, his alienation does not last long time. Disalienation will not take place until the human being admits his responsibility and freedom, because "one aspect of alienation is ignorance" (Sartre 294). Richard's alienation thrusts upon him a frightening burden of responsibility. He clearly feels frustration from his situation. However, unlike Daffy, Richard is not indifferent to his estrangement and human relationships.

Throughout the whole movie, Richard communicates his feelings to the viewers to gain their sympathy with his dehumanizing alienation. At the very beginning, the main character's primary objective is to attain opinions and judgments of others. In other words, in the deep recesses of Richard's mind he is conscious of his inauthenticity and lack of identity. To fulfill his search of subjectivity, Richard tries to reconcile his guilt of irresponsibility. For a minute, he reassesses the weight of his past and the anxiety of his present. Undoubtedly, Richard considers the map as his only left cure to his alienation. Therefore, he sets *en voyage* to the island.

4. America and Radical Freedom

We suppose that you are not an American citizen and we shall ask you about the American land, what would you tell? Most of us would certainly think of the American Dream: opportunities, wealth, money, success, and, especially, freedom. The United States of America is mostly conceived by non-Americans as the country of the free where dreams become true.

The American land was, and continues to be, a universal symbol of political, religious, and economic freedom. It is a fundamental element in the American identity and constitution. Numerous migrants flock from all areas of the world to seek a better life and opportunity for

extra money in the New World. More than thirty million European migrated to the USA in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century for several reasons, including the devastating famine in Ireland, economic troubles and political unrest in Germany, and the religious persecution of the Jewish ethnicity in Russia. No doubt that the American Utopia is a fascinating and inspiring dream to the oppressed and the one who seeks freedom.

Democracy and freedom are highly valued by the American administration and politics. A human being might express himself and find his inner identity in this place. America gives each single person a priceless opportunity to be himself and authentic. The Bill of Rights guarantees the freedom of speech, press, and religion. For instance, America fought Civil War to bring about a “new birth of freedom” and abolish slavery. While most of the countries in the world banned homosexuality and considered it a social cliché, America gave lesbians and gays a free ticket to the new world and declared homosexuality as a political right in the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Policy. The Iraqi War also was claimed to be fought under the title of “Operation Iraqi Freedom”. It looks that freedom is the key directing force in the American domestic and foreign affairs.

The philosophical concept of freedom was an essential theme of discussion of several philosophers, for it is so important to know whether a human being is free or not and to what extent this human being experiences freedom. From Thucydides to Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill and Jean Jack Rousseau, all these thinkers were the groundbreakers of the analysis of the concept of freedom. Indeed, freedom as a concept means different things to different people. Most people, when they ponder at the notion of freedom, think of liberty which includes freedom of expression.

Most of the philosophies in the world focus on freedom as a matter of controversy. Philosophers apprehend freedom in their writings without being sure enough whether a

human being is a free person or subject of control by power. However, Existentialism as a life-philosophy preaches freedom as the ultimate definition of human beings. Existentialist thinkers value individuality, free thought and self expression. Our anguish and dread are not only linked to the absurdity and meaninglessness of life but also to the fact that we are free as existential individuals. Sartre, for example, believes that human beings live in a constant fear not only because life is miserable, but because we are condemned to be free. Freedom is closely linked to the concept of anguish. Both our freedom and responsibility are absolute. We are free to define our essence and responsible to decide who we want to be in the future. Mostly, anguish manifests itself as result of our fear from freedom. Even if the circumstances of our birth and death are beyond control, still Existentialism urges each single human being to be free, responsible, and live authentically.

Hollywood movie industry widely exported the Existentialist doctrines through movies not only to American audience but to all over the world. The viewer may watch a movie without noticing the producer's ideology or the American propaganda through Hollywood for such philosophical theories that are implicitly conveyed through the TV screen. According to the film critics, a viewer may apply Existentialism to interpret a certain movie even if the movie itself is not necessarily existential if certain conditions are fitted.

The list of the Existentialist movies in Hollywood is a never ending list, but here we may give some examples of movies that teach us about Existentialism. For instance, *Anomalisa* (1959) is a movie directed by Francois Truffaut, it tells the story of Antoine Doneil whose rebellious behavior pushes him to clash with his parents, teachers and society as a whole. Sean Penn's movie *To the Wild* is also a pure Existentialist movie made by Hollywood in (2007). The movie portrays the life of Chris who ran away from the impersonal self of society. Chris sets up in his journey toward the wilderness to find himself and live by the laws that he made by his own will. *Into the Wild* remains a powerful movie that translates the

Existentialist preached doctrines of life, mainly freedom, authenticity and death. Another important movie is *Things to Come* by Maria Hazen-Love (2016). Indeed, French film makers have a rich and long history with philosophical films. *Things to Come* is a story about philosophy; it treats the effect of the self-contemplation and reflection. The protagonist character Nathalie, a middle-aged philosophy teacher, is hit by a critical tragedy and which is up to her alone to find out a solution and meaning of her life. In our own perspective, *The Beach* by Danny Boyle which is our second selected corpus in this thesis could be a great movie to be interpreted by the Existentialist worldview.

Boyle's character Richard is an American citizen who lives in the land of The American Dream. The country that long claimed the love of freedom and autonomy. Richard, an American university student, is on trip to Bangkok to discover new things: culture, spirituality, and rituals. His love of exploration caused him to be a backpacker. There in Thailand, Richard was convinced by Daffy to leave America in quest for an unspoiled society.

Why did Richard decide to leave America in quest for a new world? To answer this question, one must seek to grasp whether the United States of America is a land of freedom or not. According to several modern historians and thinkers, the American freedom does not mean the absence of authority. They claim that the Dream requires someone to work hard and observe rules and laws. In other words, freedom in America did not mean that a person can do all what he wants because social institutions shackle his identity and weaken his sense of self-dependence.

The United States of America is surely the land of freedom and democracy compared to other countries in the world. Any person may choose his own version of truth and follow any religion, an opportunity that is not given by many non-secular countries. Also the American citizen or the migrant can be self-dependent in his economic activities. However,

America is not the land of ultimate freedom, a freedom that is free of any social influence. In the Existentialist terminology, to be free does not mean a paramount freedom but rather a radical freedom. We suppose that even the land of The Statue of Liberty cannot afford this Existentialist freedom to its citizens.

Danny Boyle sets up his character, Richard, to a new place unknown to the external world. The Beach is a place different from our familiar universe. It is a land devoid of politics, economy, or a pre-defined set of values, morals, or popular culture that the settlers are bound to adopt. The secret island is a place where Richard will find his true identity and practice his freedom. The beginning of the movie paints a picture of Richard's psychological discontent the human –made civilization. Modern society is characterized by its materialistic demands. Many persons today live their lives to gain money. A worker may spend several hours behind the desk working as a machine to gain some money to live a respectable life. In Existentialism, Money is also considered a constant danger to our freedom. Sartre declares in his writing that money restricts man's freedom. The French Existentialist harshly attacks the Capitalist system. He likens Capitalism to a machine that traps people and obliges them to work in jobs they do not like and, finally, to buy things that are not necessarily needed. He argues that this ultimate need and demand for material things do not necessarily exist by nature but rather man-made, which push people to deny their freedom and live as prisoners of their created objects.

To abandon civilization and live in the wilderness away from society become a popular culture in the United States of America. Most of the American people express a nostalgic feeling for the primitive style of life devoid of man-made world. The American citizen, Richard, is among this kind of people who are upset with modern society. In America, Alaska is a hostile wilderness that stands as a living testimony for all those authentic individuals who challenged themselves to live as outcasts and sought help only from

themselves. The Alaskan wilderness is a destination for those who seek freedom without bounds. Some people want a comfortable life: a beautiful house, good job, and a nice car to live in security. But others, like Richard, want just a place far from the sophisticated people, where they can explore and construct their essences. Richard, realizing his ultimate freedom, chooses to take the map and sets up in journey to the Beach, where there is no civilization only, Mother Nature.

To grasp one's own true identity is of crucial importance. Richard's abandon of civilization is not a random decision. Richard knows that life is precious that it should be lived to the utmost. He becomes homeless and jobless by choice; even if it is a challenging experience to live authentic, but surely it is worth it. Richard convincingly communicates his thoughts to the viewers, *"You hope and dream. But you never believe that something is going to happen for you. Not like it does in the movies. And it actually does, you want it to feel different, more visceral and more real. (The Beach 11:01).*

The Utopia-chaser Richard believes that freedom is not without responsibility. Human beings generally admit freedom but this freedom is scarcely put into practice. Richard's life would no longer be as it used to be in the past banal, common and hackneyed. Richard wants to be a single human being distinguished from a group. His freedom triggers a powerful compelling emotion to embrace his passion, he explicitly declares, "I found my vocation, the pursuit of pleasure" (*The Beach 36:32*). His voyage to the unknown destination is the starting point to reach originality and find pleasure. When Richard, with the French couple, Etienne and Francoise, arrive to the island, their freedom is reinforced because the island is an arena of explicit freedom. It is perfectly decisive and critical that the Beach is the antithesis of our well-acquainted world of civilization.

As it is already explained, freedom is commonly blended with fear and anguish. According to the Danish Existentialist, Soren Kierkegaard, anguish is the dizziness of freedom (105). In the hotel, Richard suffers from an acute dread and an extreme anxiety which cause him deep distress. To take the decision whether to search for the island or not is not an easy choice. However, he is fully aware that even the choice not to choose is considered a choice. The nothingness within his life allows Richard to transcend the givens of his situation and accept responsibility for his own life. In his deep angst, Richard realizes that he is compelled to choose as there is no escaping of freedom. The decision not to act is a self-defining choice.

By acknowledging the importance of action, Richard through his journey shows the audience that the freedom to act is inescapable; therefore, freedom is part of human being. When a human being clearly understands that his life should complete the realities of death and finitude, then his understanding of freedom will be widened. The central message of Boyle through his movie in general and through Richard in particular is to accentuate that freedom is to be self-made. Similarly, we are our choices, and human development is an infinite process.

The French Existentialist, Simone de Beauvoir, discusses the concept of freedom. In her perspective, single individuals are not only answerable for their freedom, but also for other's freedom, and the practice of this freedom. Human beings think they we want freedom while in reality they escape it. Because when people recognize the ultimate freedom they become alienated causing for them a deep sense of estrangement. Richard before embarking to the great unknown, he leaves a copy of the map to his American neighbors Zeph and Sam, in case they wanted to live the experience and to be free. He, clearly and simply, asserts, "*I told myself spreading news was a part of traveler's nature, and if I was being completely honest, I was just like everybody else, still scared of the great unknown, desperate to take a*

little piece of home with me” (The Beach 01:35). Man’s ultimate freedom requires that each action, each decision, and each act to be of great impact on other individuals. So, in the process of self-becoming and self-transformation, individuals must include other’s freedom and embrace it. The true fact is that ultimate freedom is coupled with responsibility, aloneness, courage, and anxiety. All of them are issued from the human condition.

5. Subjectivity and Inwardness

The genesis of the concept of subjectivity or inwardness witnessed its birth within the philosophical works of the Existentialist thinkers, such as: Jean Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger. Authenticity is referred to numerous arts and fields of study. It is a common feature within psychological psychiatry, Jazz music, as well as the Existentialist philosophy.

In Existentialism, authenticity is the degree to which a person is true and sincere to his own identity and self despite external pressures. Sartre’s novels are the reflection of the inauthentic individuals who emotionally and psychologically accept the social imposed behavior, and their actions are based on external pressures. Society imposes on Sartre’s characters a definite mode of living. These Sartrean characters disown their own moral values and convictions for the aim of a comfortable life. Sometimes, his characters are also those who do not understand the reason of their existence or the pressure force of their actions.

Authenticity is a wide concept that concerns a person’s relation with the world. Authenticity is creativity; therefore, it cannot be accomplished through the reproduction of the same set of actions. The notorious divorce between theistic and atheistic Existentialism affords evidence of the legitimacy of each person’s duty to achieve authenticity. Similarly, both grandparents, the Danish theologian Kierkegaard and the German God-assassin Nietzsche, agree on the law which is “the responsibility they place on the individual to take an active part in the shaping of one’s beliefs and then to be willing to act on that belief” (Taylor

56). To say that someone is authentic is to profess the characteristic of authenticity that is attributed to his personality. A human being needs to be honestly oneself, representing one's inner character and to be with oneself.

How to be authentic? The issue of everydayness is a critical problem. Richard noticed the attitude that he is not authentic and he is keenly aware of the different paths toward the self-improvement. He starts by observing himself as he meets new people. To find authentic connections, he truly seeks to perceive his world and people around him. He asks thoughtful questions and listens wisely by developing a genuine understanding; therefore, he is more likely to feel authentic himself. Indeed, self-awareness is the millstone of originality. Richard expresses willingness to act in accordance to his genuine tendency, *“the only downer is, everyone is got idea. We all travel thousands of miles just to watch TV and check into the same where with all the comforts of home, and you got ask yourself the question what is the point of that”*. (*The Beach* 2:47)

Authenticity is about identity and responsibility. Decision-makers usually deny the burden of freedom, because most of their recorded actions and choices are not truly private and faithfully expressive. Unlike most of people, Richard seeks to achieve his future by focusing on the present situation. He wants to elevate himself from the basics and approach life through a new perspective, *“my name is Richard. So what else do you need to know ... stuff about my family or where I am from? None of that matters... not once you cross the ocean and cut yourself loose looking for something more beautiful. Something more exciting... and yes I admit something more dangerous”*. (*The Beach* 2:47)

To reach authenticity, one must undergo a radical transformation. Richard wants to make a sincere deep commitment to his version of truth as a means to escape bad faith, as a result of this becoming process, he will be right and authentic only “if he recognizes himself

as being that is which is not and is not what it is” (Bell 45). *The Beach*'s hero, Richard, recognizes himself that he is not what he is supposed to be. He should at any cost experience the universe and its dangerous experiences. To really experience all what life is, Richard must step back from his safety zone. This idea of experience is well clarified in the market scene, when a Thai Hustler citizen invites him to drink the snake blood and challenges his fears to newness:

Hustler: *You want to drink snake blood?*

Richard: *Did you say snake blood? No I do not like the idea*

Hustler: *Or maybe you are scared, afraid of something new*

Richard: *No, I do not like the idea.*

Hustler: *Ha! Like every tourist you want it all be safe... like America. (The Beach 01:18)*

Inauthenticity is denying one's own freedom to change oneself into something better and unique. Authenticity co-exists with radical freedom. Through each choice and act, individual persons consciously liberate themselves from inauthenticity. So to be authentic requires the absence of pretence and the removal of the social masks. In achieving one's own authenticity, it is highly recommended to keep death in mind; because even the advocated ultimate freedom is constrained by nature, what Sartre called facticity. Death is beyond man's control. Though facing death seems a scaring experience, however, the value of life and freedom is more appreciated when human beings realize how close they are to be devoured by the jaws of death. In the shark attack scene, Richard is swimming in the beach when suddenly a white shark appears before his eyes,” *You see in a shark attack or any other tragedy ... important thing is to get eaten or die, in which case there is funeral ... I had*

nothing left to offer but pure reflex. Pure reflex and mankind's basic drive for survival that somehow shouts NO I WILL NOT DIE TODAY!"(The Beach 52:59). Richard's passion for life provides him with all necessary tools to kill the shark and experience life again. This is not to suggest that an individual may escape death because death is just another human absurd definition of existence. In the Existentialist's respect, These Scary and sickening moments help individuals to reinvent themselves. Similarly, to live in the truth of death certainly it would be of utmost importance to be authentic.

5.1 Nietzsche Vs Richard

Nietzsche's view of authenticity repudiates the central role of religion in finding truth and authenticity. According to Nietzsche, The authentic person should rebel against the social, religious, ritual, moral, and cultural identities that imprison his self. Man who succeeds to elevate himself over others and transcend conventional morality and religious dogmas is best fitted to be called The Creative Overman or simply the *Übermensch*.

The *Übermensch* or the Superman emerges as solution to the death of God. Nietzsche sees the desperate need for the creation of the Overman, the one who is going to establish his personal values and occupy the place of God. The mission of the *Übermensch* is to affect other's minds and thoughts. Nietzsche mentions several examples of those he considers as the embodiment of Superman: Socrates, Jesus, Julius Caesar, Leonardo Davinci, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Goethe, and most importantly Napoleon. Nietzsche greatly admired the biggest conqueror of Europe, Napoleon Bonaparte. This admiration is obtrusive because the Superman affects history, and Napoleon not only affected history but he also played important role to reshape the European map; therefore, Napoleon is an *Übermensch*.

Could Richard be included in the list of the Nietzsche's *Übermensch*? To answer this question, we ought first to grasp the characteristics of the Superman. Firstly, the *Übermensch*

denies God and acts as a new god; we mean a god in experimentation and not in creation. The death of God is stressed because nothing would be created if God existed. The Übermensch is also characterized by a will to power. His will would unlock his implicit moral shackles and liberate his suffering. The Übermensch is a definition of self-overcoming. When the Superman feels alienated and senses the meaninglessness of the world he would impose his truth as a way of dealing with the despair. The Übermensch should stand alone and bury the moral principles; as it is up to him alone to decide about good and evil.

Now, we want to apply these characteristics to the principal character in *The Beach*, Richard, in order to depict him as a Superman. Nietzsche's concern with the authentic self is its primordial decision on morality about what is good and evil. Through all the scenes in the movie, we notice that Richard is not acting according to a specific set of moral values and principles, and most importantly he is skeptic about other people's habits and beliefs.

According to Nietzsche, artists, philosophers and explorers are those who expose the human brilliancy and uniqueness to uncover the mystery of life. They implicitly establish an invisible bridge to new paths and new ways. These figures, Nietzsche informs us, "can be nothing other than your liberators. And that is the secret to all cultivations" (1). It is important to mention that these "teachers" are not row models to be imitated or divinized saints to be worshipped, but rather an example to consider. Richard, as an explorer, recognizes the given possibilities of his freedom and he is inspired to his own singularity and subjectivity. He bears within his personality a fertile uniqueness. Indeed the Übermensch could not be described in complete terms because it is a constant process which is different from each of us.

Richard blindly embodies Nietzsche's description of authenticity when he avows that his utmost occupation is to follow his own vocation, which is pleasure. The reader should not

misinterpret or misunderstand the word “pleasure” and compare it to lust. When Richard declares his personal pursuit behind pleasure, he implicitly refers to his rebellion against rationality and embraces passion and faith. According to Nietzsche, authenticity requires “an individual to posit his own ideal and to drive for it his own fan, joys, and rights” (143).

True human greatness is produced away from the impersonal self of society. Richard needs to improve his own self-esteem and boundaries. He never hides behind masks or ignore his imperfection and mistakes. Authenticity requires courage. In each scene Richard risks his life without faltering or regretting, therefore, Richard is a metaphor of the *Übermensch*.

The death of God provides a vast arena of contingencies and allows creativity and innovation. Human beings, in the Nietzschean perspective, must not sympathize with this tragic death of the God of universe; quite the contrary, this death should be celebrated. The death of God witnesses the birth of the Superman, “God is dead and now we want the Overman to live” (2). Nietzsche considers the concept of God to be naïve and insignificant (58). Superman cannot co-exist with God because the existence of God restraints man’s power and the disappearance of God is a necessary pre-condition for the authentic freedom.

It may also be of interest to state that Richard is an Overman because he is a backpacker; he leads a life of adventure, “The *Übermensch* aspires continually to greater living a life of creative adventure” (76). Richard’s life is not without an appeal. Through his voyage to Bangkok first then to the secret beach, Richard aims at finding new innovative ways of life to transcend the routine of the daily life. Richard’s voyages to the unknown are his life’s spice. According to Nietzsche, it is the explorers that are most likely to taste the true meaning of life.

The Overman creates his own morality and his personal understanding about good and evil. Accordingly, the *Übermensch* liberates himself from the universal values and

conventional morality, as he is the only answerable for his own version of good and evil. By analyzing Richard's morality, we notice that he acts according to his self-established morality. After the shark attack scene, Gregorio is deadly injured; consequently he is affected by gardenia. Etienne, following his universal morality, refuses to leave Gregorio alone as he believes that it is his onus to take care of him. However, Richard considers Gregorio a burden on his safety; he consciously and deliberately suffocates Gregorio to free himself. According to Richard's morality, a sick person must not live; but rather preferable to die honorably than to live miserably. Richard kisses Gregorio's forehead as an explicit sign of his human tenderness. He kills him because his morality urges him to do so.

The Overman is the antithesis of the Last Man. Nietzsche believes that society is ruled by herd mentality. In society, human beings are absorbed by the social identity, and Last Man is the embodiment of society. The Last Man obeys rather than command; he is the mirror of the herd. "No shepherd and one herd! Everyone wants the same; everybody is the same, who ever feels different goes voluntarily into a madhouse" (Nietzsche 5).

6. From Existentialism to Totalitarianism

Existentialism is a philosophy of non-conformity and its philosophers are the eloquent advocates of absolute freedom and individuality. At first sight, this would look as opposed to totalitarianism. However, this perennial opposition between totalitarianism and Existentialism might be contextualized. We think it is relevant to wonder whether this notion of Existentialist freedom may lead to totalitarianism.

Totalitarianism appeared first during the 1920s in Mussolini's Italy through the use of the widespread of terror by the authoritarian fascist rule. Totalitarianism is the political authoritative rule of a single party through one leader where there are no limits of the authority of the state. In a totalitarian regime, there is absolute control of the state over all the

aspects of life including the everyday life of the citizens. The most common well-known totalitarian regimes in history include Hitler's Germany and Stalinist Russia. The aim of a totalitarian state is to dominate all the aspects of life.

The unique particularity of ultimate freedom to each single individual threatens, in greater or lesser degree, the concept of freedom in general. Though Existentialism is anti-totalitarianism, but on the ground Existentialism may lead to autocracy. To link it to *The Beach*, the beginning of things look to be very hopeful. The Beach resort is founded by Daffy and the Sweden woman Sal. The Beach founders escape the man-made society to find for themselves a new place where they shall find their freedom and be authentic to establish their own morality. Richard as soon as he reaches the beach, he describes this new-found community and its leader as follows:

She (Sal) was the leader, but it was not a big deal. I mean, there was not any ideology... it was just a beach resort for people, who do not like beach resorts. For years they kept this place secret. They did not tell anyone. They were practically self-sufficient. The only thing they had to do was sail back once in a while to trade marijuana and buy some rice. (The Beach 34:45)

So, the Beach is paradise-like. Richard thinks that the primitive and tyrannical tools of rule were left behind him in our real world. The beach, according to Richard, is an arena of full freedom and individuality.

In order to examine whether Existentialism is another mask of totalitarianism, we need first to analyze the character Sal. When Richard first arrives at the island, Sal expresses her worries about the way they reach the place. Richard answers that Daffy gave him the map before his death. Hearing this answer, Sal was relieved from her worries, she asserts, "We value our secrecy" (The Beach 36:14).

Is Sal an autocrat leader? Sal certainly maintains a monopoly control over the beach. There exist two different characteristics of totalitarianism. First, in a totalitarian regime we find an ideology that controls all the affairs of life to attain a specific goal. Second, the state's subjects are governed by a single mass party. The party is generally led by a dictator. Sal imposes a specific ideology on her settlers. She forces them to keep the secrecy of the beach as a fundamental condition which guarantees for them to stay. The first signs of her dictatorships appear when Gregorio suffers from a toothache and asks her permission to visit a dentist, "*I want to visit a dentist? I must go to the mainland to see a dentist.* Sal replies: "*It is out of the question* (The Beach 46:45).

The autocrat leader Sal attempted to exercise control over the lives of her subjects by whatever means available to her. Sal is the ultimate authority in the beach. Indeed, Sal depends heavily on the Thai farmers as a kind of a secret police to help her establish order and submit the thirty settlers to her morality and version of reality.

Sal seems to have unlimited power. She clearly considers freedom as crime when it stands against the well-being of her community. For instance, due to the shortage of rice, Richard is asked by Sal to accompany her to Koh Pha Ngan to buy rice. In the city, Sal discovers that Richard lies as he left a copy of the map to the American university students, Zeph and Sam. As a result, she blackmails him into having a physical relationship. Richard is obliged to pay for Sal's silence to win back his ticket to the beach. As time passes, Richard's condition is getting worse. Richard starts to recognize that the beach is not really different from his old world. He miserably laments his life, "*I tried to remember the person I used to be. But I just could not do it. To the island! To you! And so long I stayed here ... to the future! I would never find him again* (The Beach 01:25:17).

Zeph and Sam, who already heard about the secret island, decide to chase the beach. Similarly, this worsens Richard's situation and his settlement in the beach. When Sal hears the news of the new-comers she orders Richard to watch them and bring back the map," *I want you here every day until those people come here?! Yes here and when they come, I want you to get the map back. Okay? Whatever happens you get the map back*". (*The Beach* 01:14:29). At the end of the movie, Richard's authenticity and ultimate freedom turn to be a blind illusion. His personal subjectivity collides against the autocratic rule of Sal. Sal maintains her ultimate freedom and her version of truth at the expense of the settlers' freedom. Richard's freedom clashes against Sal's.

Richard's sanity enters into a grey area between his own consciousness and Daffy's insanity. After eating a worm, his transformation into Daffy's affinity begins. Richard tells Daffy" I am with you all along the way" he adds," *you showed me the truth*" (*The Beach* 01:27:14). In the final scenes, the character Daffy reappears through Richard's hallucinations; a new combined subjectivity of Richard and Daffy starts. Richard's perspective changed to that of Daffy. Now, we can grasp why Daffy is despaired and chooses to leave the island. In the expository scene, Daffy informs Richard:

*It was the beach you understand? The beach? It was beautiful, too much input, too much sensation... I tried to keep it under control, but it just keeps spilling out. Right you see. Um she is an island. I was the one that was trying to find the cure, procurer f the cure. And I said to them, "you have got to leave. You got to leave this place", but they would not listen. (*The Beach* 05:51).*

The state of totalitarianism results in subjecting individuals under one person. People are governed by the leader's own morality. Sal performs her freedom with great courage away from any cultural dogmas or political domination. Indeed, Sal creates her single morality

when she differentiates herself from the herd. However, her absolute self-individuality gives floor to the beginning of totalitarianism.

It is worth comparing the beach's leader Sal to Nietzsche's Übermensch Adolph Hitler. As it is already mentioned, Nietzsche claims that each person has complete freedom over defining oneself in the course of life that the Übermensch should be different from the crowd. Now, Hitler created his own morality and he carefully avoided the herd, however he forced the rest of people to follow his own version of truth and morality. It is clear-cut evidence that Existentialism can be a danger to society and the absolute freedom of each single individual would threaten also the freedom of the rest.

The overuse of terror by the dictator Sal leads to a collective hysteria in the beach. In the gunshot scene, Sal's game is over. The Thai farmers discover the hidden truth when they find new-comers on the island. The American students Zeph and Sam with two other persons are vengefully murdered by the farmers, as soon as they step the island. The Thai dupe farmers order Sal to leave immediately; however Sal, following her own morality, refuse to leave the beach:

Sal: We are not leaving. This is our home too, this is our house. We built it with our hands and we are not leaving

Richard: Oh, Sal, Sal. I think ... I think you are making a big mistake here. If he says that we should leave...

Sal: Richard, shut up! This is all your fault, anyway. You copied the map Richard.

Richard: Sal, listen. Do not be crazy, Okay? You can not be crazy.

Sal: You let us dawn Richard. You brought us trouble.

Richard: *you cannot, Sal. Make her stop. Please, Sal! You cannot do it. Cause if you pull that trigger, Sal if you pull that trigger, it is all over and you know it, because this time is not like Christo rotting out in the woods, where no one could see. It is not like the four people that I saw killed today. This time everyone has to watch it, Sal. Everyone has to see what it takes to keep our little paradise a secret. Come on, every one watch Sal do this. (The Beach 01:42:47).*

This shrouded confrontation between Richard and Sal pushes us to reconsider the notion of ultimate freedom and Existentialism in general. Both, Richard and Sal are authentic and completely free. Sal disdainfully wants to maintain her own morality by creating her own perception about good and evil. Sal is ready to kill Richard who stands against her own morality. Richard and other settlers are highly terrified at the extent which Sal performs her ultimate freedom. Sal pulls the trigger to kill Richard but the gun was empty. In the final scene, Richard addresses the viewers to console their feelings, “*and as for the rest of us... we carried away our sins and made our way back to wherever it was. That we called home ... to pick up the pieces of whatever was waiting. Of course, you can never forget what you have done. But we adapt. We carry on. (The Beach 01:46:03).*” The beach resort turns to be a metaphor of the modern society. Richard thinks that he found a place different from the real present world where he shall find his authenticity and live according to his rules. This mythologized secret island is the reflection of the modern age.

Even though Richard lost temporarily his subjectivity and authenticity, he returns to America, is ready to reassess his life and find meaning. According to the Existentialist thinkers, an individual is not what he is until he disappears or dies. Therefore, we cannot say whether Richard found meaning or not. In the final scene of *The Beach*, Richard receives an e-mail from Françoise; she sends him a picture taken during their happy times in the island. For Richard, he still believes in an exit from the meaninglessness of the world, he confidently

asserts, “I still believe in paradise. But now at least I know it is not some place you can look for, because it is not where you go. It is how you feel, for a moment in your life, when you are part of something and if you find that moment ... it lasts forever. (*The Beach* 01:47:14)

Conclusion

In the respect of this analysis, the last chapter revealed that Existentialism has exported and traded successfully its doctrines through the Hollywood movie *The Beach*. Though the movie is not primarily an Existentialist movie, and its producer is not well-known for advocating Existentialism, the Existentialist philosophy is omnipresent in *The Beach*. The movie’s main character Richard is studied within the four areas of Existentialism. Firstly, we have highlighted the psychological alienation of modern man and its connection to Richard’s estrangement in his civilized society. Secondly, we have treated the issue of freedom in America in relation to Existentialism. Thirdly, the full focus has been put on the element of authenticity and in a broader sense we have introduced Nietzsche’s philosophy of the *Übermensch*. Finally, the movie triggered some specific new interpretations about whether Existentialism is a new mask of totalitarianism and how it is dangerous to live in one’s own ultimate freedom.

General Conclusion

This research places all the weight of its emphasis upon the truthiness of the Existentialist philosophy in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Danny Boyle's *The Beach*. The thesis comes to prove that Bunyan's chef- d'oeuvre and Boyle's movie share a philosophical outlook; since both authors are fascinated by how human beings live in the world, as they show characters who experience themselves and most importantly who can decide their own unique purpose.

This work has been divided into an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. The general introduction has given an insight into the Post World War Europe and has tried to shed a light on the indicative historical events that fueled the movement to describe how the story of Existentialism began. The introductory chapter is entitled "Text in Context". The chapter was relevantly associated with the socio-historical and literary sketches of the two dissimilar periods that helped in the makeup of Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Boyle's *The Beach*. It has related the two works to their particular social milieu. The second chapter is entitled "Review of Literature". As explained in this chapter, we have provided the reader with a fuller understanding of Existentialism as a literary and philosophical movement; it has exposed the components and thought as mean to unveil the truth of this philosophical attitude. This paves the way for the next chapter, "Existentialism and *The Pilgrim's Progress*". This analytical chapter has penetrated the mental vision of Bunyan's characters. Truly, the book has absorbed many Existentialist aspects. The Existentialist philosophy, we contend, has bridged *The Pilgrim's Progress*, mainly through the character Christian. Ultimately, the fourth and last chapter is entitled "Existentialism and *The Beach*". The aim of this chapter was to investigate and elucidate the hidden Existentialism. The movie was analyzed from an explicitly Existentialist perspective.

Through an Existentialist point of view, John Bunyan and Danny Boyle delved into the existential problems that shape human existence. The two works have given a broader

understanding of the characteristics that define the human reality through two different genres; while Bunyan wrote a book that painted Christian's life as lived in guilt and anxiety, Boyle produced a movie through which he bothered about the post modern suffocated life.

The two selected corpora within this dissertation are not randomly chosen. In truth, both *The Beach* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* share some affinities. For instance, Bunyan's creative character Christian is the most representative of the Existentialist ideals. Bunyan makes a very usual reference to the self-absolute individuality and responsibility. Alike, Boyle's hero Richard is another illustrative example on how individual persons must define their well known notion of reality and existence. At the very beginning, both Richard and Christian lead an empty life, void of any interest. The heroes go through a long chain of changes to reach authenticity and meaning. The two principal characters set off on a journey. Christian is urged by Evangelist and guided by a Bible toward the Celestial City. Richard is motivated by an old map, drawn by a Scottish man called Daffy, toward an island, known as The Beach. Purposely, themes of Existentialism are the fundamental notions which the reader can explore after reading the *Pilgrim's Progress* and watching *The Beach*.

Penultimate imagination is the reckoning point by which literature and cinema hunger and thirst after. In truth, the two artistic fields of literature and cinema are radically different, though they are of the same offspring parent, somewhat as Cain and Abel. Each of them has its own unique stamp. Through an exalted aim, literature and cinema seek to perfect their weapons in order to trigger new forgetive interpretations. Spiritually speaking, the two fields target strenuous inwardness as an instrument to perpetuate their senescent literary or visual products. The tempo of beauty lies within the capacity of each single person to interpret a book or a movie according to his/her own greed for suspense and originality. Imagination is the gateway that leads from literature to cinema as they seem much in accord with each other.

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