

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Existential Crisis in Walker Percy's *Love in the Ruins***

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By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Walker Percy's *Love in the Ruins* dramatizes the existential crisis of the protagonist Thomas More living in the modern world. The protagonist of *Love in The Ruins* undergoes existential crisis, for he fails to choose an appropriate aim in his life. As every other individual, he realizes his freedom of choice. However fails to find the meaning of it. This failure leads him to perceive the world as meaningless entity. As a result he lives an alienated and absurd life with no more willingness. His strong desire of making individual choice and his own existence is failed, and he suffers from being thrown in this world. The struggle of making one's own existence is failed in the modern world. There is no other person to share this failure, neither he sees God to blame for this.

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## **I .Introduction**

### **Walker Percy's Life and His Works**

Novelist Percy was born in Birmingham, Alabama to Leroy and Martha Percy on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1916, his father was a successful lawyer in Birmingham. His childhood was not very happy, for his father committed suicide when he was thirteen and two years later his mother died in an accident. He was living with his two elder brothers, Phin and Roy. All the boys were sent to live with their father's cousin, William Alexander Percy, a writer living in Greenville, Mississippi. This move played a vital role in his life. The boy grew up surrounded by books, works of art and a piano which was never quiet.

Percy began a writing career, using two primary genres: novels and philosophical essays. Among his six novels three received honors and awards. His first novel, *The Moviegoer* (1961) received the National Book Award for fiction in (1962). His third novel *Love in The Ruins* (1971) was awarded the National Catholic Book Award in 1972. Similarly his fifth novel *The Second Coming* (1981) received the Los Angeles times Book prize, a National Book Circle citation, an American book award nomination, a notable citation from the American library Association and a P.E.N. Faulkner Award. In addition, his other non- fictional work *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book* won the st.Louis Litarery Award in 1986. He wrote for more then thirty years. He combined interesting fictions with serious ideas in his writings. Most of his works deal with the nature of the universe and man's place in it. He died from cancer at the age of 74 on May10, 1990.

Percy believed that one of the fundamental experiences of human life was that self-consciousness, that awkward sense of somehow not fitting into universe in a famous essay Percy wrote of "The man on the Train", the typical modern commuter who feels alternately bored and anxious in the grip of nothingness. Another image he used he used in his writings was of the "Wednesday afternoon at four o'clock" feeling: a blankness or lostness that often overcome us. This may sound a bit like the school of philosophy known as "existentialism". In fact, Percy was profoundly influenced by existentialist thinkers. But Percy was not a prophet of gloom and despair. For him, man's status as an alien was also a sign of hope, because painful condition of self-conscious man may recognize himself, in the words of St. Paul, as a "stranger and pilgrim" on the earth a dependent being who may yet find meaning and salvation in an encounter with the source of his being. Percy was particularly fond of catholic existentialists Soren Kierkegaard and Gabriel Marcel, who coined the phrase 'homo viator'-man as 'pilgrim' or 'Wayfarer'.

During the bedridden time due to tuberculosis, Percy read the writings of existentialists such as Camus, Sartre and Kierkegaard, and also works by Catholic thinkers, especially St. Thomas Aquinas. Shortly after, in his mid-thirties, he made three major decisions: to become a full time writer, to marry, and to become a catholic. As he was a seeker in the truest sense of the world, Carl E. Olson remarks, "The quest taken up in his writing would be to 'diagnose' the modern malaise, the emptiness of spirit and darkness of heart so prevalent in the twentieth century, especially reflected in the fact that modern man is a stranger to himself"(3).

Walker Percy belongs to the movement in modern southern writing. In this regard, W.J.Stuckey comments on Walker Percy "He was a traditional in reaction against what is perceived as the decay of moral standards, the loss of sense of community and of shared values"(681).His ideas are given rather full intellectual scope in his work of non-fiction, *The Message in the Bottle*. In his novels the issue is focused on sexuality, and the problem, as expressed in his fiction is how to square sexual desire with traditional ideas of love and sex. What used to be regarded as sin in perversion is now acceptable to, even sanctioned by, church and state. The traditional concept of love is too idealistic to prove Percy's protagonist with satisfactory pattern of behavior. "Inevitably his novels involve the setting up of the problem and the working out of a solution, the protagonist wrestling with his moral confusion, then, finally creating for himself a synthesis in which love lust –giving and taking are appropriately balanced (Stuckey 681). Roger Kimbal describes Mr.Percy as, a "novelist concerned with the dislocation of man in the modern age, with the sense of ennui and meaninglessness that has shadowed so many lives, even –or perhaps especially in the midst of affluenced"(24).Martin Luschei views Walker Percy as influenced by Kierkegaard. He writes:

Percy is a witty, a highly intellectual novelist who is deeply indebted to existential philosophy, particularly to the work of Kierkegaard and Marcel. Percy's great achievement, as Mr.Luschei, 'may prove to have been translating Kierkegaard into concrete American terms' by which he means giving the Danish philosopher concrete expression in the American novel(261).

Commenting on the character and setting of Percy's novel, W.J.Stuckey says:



Percy's rendering of characters and scenes is striking, vivid and bitingly satirical. He is a moral and, ultimately, a religious writer, but a perceptive novelist of manners as well. His sensitive and poetic style elevates materials that less subtly treated might appear contrived and moralistic.(682)

Walker Percy's first novel, *The moviegoer* (1961), concludes with the protagonist, John Binkerson (Binx) Boiling, a lusty bachelor, who after failing in his sexual life, escapes and marries a young woman of his own class, partly out of affection, but also because they share a sense of experienced responsibility. Percy has admitted many times that he is a great admirer of the European existentialist philosophers and authors. *The Moviegoer* has often been compared thematically with Camus' *The Stranger*, and the epigraph of Percy's novel is from Kierkegaard. Thus, due to this influence many critics have interpreted the work in that vein and they emphasize the elements of existential philosophy.

### **Backkground to the Present Study**

Percy's *Love in the ruins* my chosen text examines two kinds of spirituality, one seeks the devine in high places but finds only empty death, the second a more earthy faith eats and drinks the obscenities of Christ's flesh and blood amid the fullness of life's joy and sorrow . In the novel Percy uses Hopkins to represent clear perception and fresh language and correlates Hopkins' poetry with Thomas More's spiritual development. Tom More strives to present himself as a mechanistic psychologist who will use technology, his 'lapsometer' to save the world. This book received the 1971 national catholic book award. In this book writer tends to emphasize the antic absurdities of

cliches and jargon that define contemporary attitudes. The novel is devastating satire of many of the social , political ,religious and scientific shibboleth of the modern world . Here, Percy keeps seeing men and women mightily out of touch with their frail actualities and searching for a way out of the attendant despair.

In *Love in the Ruins* the protagonist Dr. More attempts to provide spiritual healing by inventing the 'lapsometer' , but this absurd device only provokes people to act in extreme ways rather than offering a solution to modern despair. Like Percy himself More is also troubled by the modern world's indifference to being and people's willingness to define themselves in half measures; the angel that falling prey to abstraction , is unable to 'reenter the lovely ordinary world or the beast that adapts to its environment and so becomes the organism behaviorists say the human is . His hero is troubled as his society, but in a different way . He is forty- five years old and a collateral descendent of saint Thomas , he is at once a doctor and a mental patient ,a diagnostician but also a metaphysician in a world of behaviorists ready and willing to condition away any remaining feeling of guilt he may have. The novel divides itself into three different parts. The opening section, 'July Fourth', establishes Tom, the novel's protagonist and narrator, as a lapsed catholic and Cartesian scientist with great ambitions for his "Lapsometer", a device that reads and alters the ionization labels of the brain. The middle portion of the novel, from the section , "July First" through most of the second "July Fourth" is Tom's recollection, in a dream, of what happened on these days. The novel's final section, the epilogue "Five years Later", shows ruined and fragmented life of Thomas More. This protagonist is experiencing a sense of crisis who undertakes a search for spiritual vitality, sometimes it is also labeled as catholic existentialism.

Here, Thomas More is man of substance undermined by ruins. His personal and emotional lives are in ruins. He is more than a southern gentleman, more than a social or psychological misfit. He has been born too late or too soon, and his quest is for some ideological thread that can connect him to a center, however inadequate center is. The novel is subtitled "The Adventures of a Bad Catholic at a Time Near The end of The World", apocalypse almost now. It is mix of scientific humanism and demonstration of American life after the second world war.

### **Critical summary of *Love in The Ruins***

Thomas More's personal and emotional lives are in ruins. He is more than southern gentlemen, more than social or psychological misfit. He has been born too late or too soon. His quest is for some ideological thread that can connect him to a center, however inadequate centers are. More is compelled to live in the shadow of his illustrious name. He is a very ill psychiatrist named Thomas More:

"I am a physician, not a very successful psychiatrist; an alcoholic, a shaky middle-aged man subject to depressions and elations and morning terrors, but a genius nevertheless who sees into hidden causes of things and erects simple hypothesis to account for the glut of everyday events; a bad catholic; a widower and wicked whose wife ran off with a heathen Englishman" (20).

More's positioning of himself vis-à-vis his society and culture is roughly equivalent to that of his distant ancestor Sir Thomas More, who found himself a catholic in a historical era shifting away from him. More held on by insisting on what he knew were individual and religious truths, and paid for his beliefs with his head; our contemporary More- a

scientific who yearns after the Nobel prize has devised a Lapsometer, a machine that "can and treat with equal success the morning terror of liberals and the apoplexy of conservatives".(7)

More's machine called More's qualitative, quantitative Ontological, Lapsometer, quantifies "angelism - bestalism," those wide swings of mood and temperament which make man subject to extremes of behaviour. One of the machine's bad side effects is that even as it makes men happy (like soma in *Brave New World*), it produces a chain reaction in the heavy sodium deposits where it is situated. For all its value as a sedative and soporific – a great pill machine, rubdown – the Lapsometer is a false guide, a solution from outside. It is also an imitation shaman, like so much of Pynchon's technology, which leads to decline even as it reinforces, a sign of entropic exhaustion even as it appears to support all systems.

The Lapsometer functions in a society that has exhausted itself on an Ecuadorian war of fifteen years standing- apparently the Vietnam war- and a racial war, in which Bantus and local blacks are slowly overrunning the countryside. Snipers are everywhere, and More's life is saved only because, as a doctor he has befriended many poor people and blacks. The social fabric has been shredded; everyone is involved in a last ditch effort to save himself, or else to continue as if nothing has happened, while the walls fall.

Pynchon has structured the novel carefully, with all but twenty pages of the narrative occurring in a four-day period, July 1-4. The plan, apparently, was to approximate the creation of the world with something of its decline: the fall to work within more or less

the same terms as the rise. The opening segment was July 4 (5:00 pm) as the date and Dante's "Middle of the Journey" as the psychological equivalent. More muses: I came to myself in a grave of young pines and the question came to me: has it happened at last?"(3) July 4, traditionally Independence Day, now signifies dependence, for more lives in the "later days of the old violent beloved U.S. and of the Christ forgetting, Christ-haunted death- dealing western world"(3).

The time is sick, the narrator, More is ill (hives, loss of breath, alcoholism, fall from Catholicism, fall from grace, purpose, function). Things fall apart. There only remains the Lapsometer, that measurement of one's fall- a scientific marvel of sedation which may win a Nobel Prize and which is sought for the military. Percy than moves us backward in successive segments in July 1,2,3and 4 to an earlier time on July 4 (7:15 pm). The fourth is the key, like the sixth day of creation: "Two more hours should tell the story"(4). The rise and fall of the western world, as embodied in America, lies at stake. The time is now, but the world of the novel is future America, teetering. The sole one who can hold it back is a lapsed catholic, an alcoholic doctor. If the territory seems Grene Percy has enlarged it, so that personal frailties are associated with a global situation.

While More's long- range solution is the Lapsometer. He has had fifty machined in Japan- his short term solution is half-ruined Howard Johnson's fortress against the coming siege. The "oranging of America" –locale for refreshment and relief of physical needs has become an outpost of American civilization. More holes up there provisionally with three women. Percy's perception of the women's movement, in the late 1960s, does not mitigate More's need for more : three women to service one man, an ill man at that.

One, Lola, provides music, her chief attractions, besides her ability on the cello, being a strong set of legs and a powerful back. Her muscular structure seduces More, as he positions his body where the cello usually is. A second woman in his Howard Johnson's harem is Morira, makes him aware of what a marvel female body is. Her cultural tastes, however run to Montovani. The third woman is the nurse Ellen, who caters to his ills. His attacks of hives and suffocation – asthmatic condition – need ministering, and Ellen, strict Presbyterian, is there. He does not sleep with her until their marriage-she wins the man by hanging on to her virginity.

More services his heram –Herzog's ultimate dream!-with more affection. He stocks the Howard Johnson's with a six-month supply of food, runs in a water line from a nearby Esso station, supplies air conditioning, lays in cases of whisky and a set of the Encyclopedia Britannica, and is prepared to establish an alternative life to the guerrilla warfare that threatens to overrun this section of Louisiana. But more than guerrilla warfare is the "apocalyptic" fallout that is expected: a sickness unto death. "For I that is expected: a sickness unto death. "For I have reason to believe [More says] that within the next two hours an unprecedented fallout of noxious particles will settle hereabouts and perhaps in other places as well. It is a catastrophe whose cause and effects – and prevention – are known only to me. The effects of the evil particles are psychic rather than physical. They do not burn the skin and rot the marrow; rather do they inflame and worsen the secret ills of the spirit and rive the very self from itself. Whatever is the unbalanced in man – rage, sense of separation of himself, terror – will be intensified by the fallout, and he will be driven ever further into isolation and solitary wondering.

The Lapsometer may "save" those who have fallen, but Catholicism or any strictly held religious belief might have equally saved, as More recognizes when he seeks absolution for his sins. Yet what really saves is not religion but the discovery of an alternative life, one that goes beyond the hospital, where the sick are well and so called normals are sick. In the pit, where doctors perform for the sake of a student audience, More demonstrates, that an allegedly psychopathic patient, Mrives, is quite normal, simply rebelling silently against what society does to its aged citizens. The twisting of sick and well here, Percy appears to have learned from Laing – is a pervasive sixties theme, perfectly tuned to the needs of the decade when abnormal and normal converged. Laing's clinical rather than theoretical evidence could only have been embraced at a time when sensations became at least as significant as intellect.

Percy's More does not choose to lose his head. He is impressed by countercultural possibilities and considers moving in with some dropouts, in order to live "completely and in the moment the way a prothonotary warbles lives flashing holy fire". In effect, he salvages what he can, by marrying Ellen and carrying on a very low – key medical practice, while living in "salve's quarters". The novel shifts, and we move five years forward. We have the "new age", one that features "the new plague, the modern Black Death, the current hermaphroditism of the spirit, namely: more syndrome, or: chronic angelism – bestialism that rives soul from body. He still believes in his Lapsometer to save the world, but he cannot get it right; meanwhile, men have taken the form of beasts into men. The world now, for more is a Bantu world, achieved not through revolution but through their exercising their property rights. The old area once called

paradise estates, contained oil, and the Bantus profited; now they own 99 percent of paradise. More adapts, unlike his namesake, who refuse Henry's direction.

The lapsed catholic is received back into the church. Although he cannot regret his sins, he has "perceived" his life and altered it. He has forsaken alcohol, has married and settled down with Ellen, has fathered a family, helped the poor for little compensation, and has made his peace with the one issue that was always the great sin of white American race. As blacks form a new Hanseatic League of city – states (Detroit, New York, Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles, Washington, etc.) More stands fast. Without forgoing his body or his plans for the future he contributes himself. But "now" counts. In the last age, men "planned projects and cast ahead" of themselves, hoping to reach goals. More simply lives.

The truly evil element in the novel is represented by Art Immelemann, who is ever present as CIA, FBI, military, government, corporate complex. He is the beyond. For him, the Lapsometer is a weapon, and he gets his hands on More's stock of them. He does not wish to cure, but to hold power. His curious name is emblematic. Max Immelemann, a German, devised for pilot to gain altitude while appearing to fly in the opposite direction. The name is brilliantly applied to someone who represents bad faith. But More's own good faith has hardly been pure. He needed his harem, his drug fix for hives, breathing difficulties, lows and highs, he required his cases of whiskey. Only when cultural and political changes occurred did he alter his style, and he feels like 'Robinson Crusoe set down on the best possible island with a library, a laboratory, a lusty Presbyterian wife, a cozy tree house, an idea and all the time in the world". Such is "*Love*



*in the Ruins*", that mix of scientific humanism gone sour and Nietzsche's "last man" philosophy: only irony wins.

#### Literature review

Ever since its publication in 1971, this novel has accumulated a wide range of critical consideration from a number of critics. Some critics has viewed the novel as a social satire, critique of Cartesian ideal of knowing, novel of ideas, and many more. Among them one of the prominent scholar Franklin in Arthur Wilson argue that Percy's use of grotesque obscenity is explained in part by his reading of bible and certain other related books that he owned:

The grace of divine life enters by the means of sacramental incarnation obscenity eating and drinking the flesh and the blood of a crucified man – enters by means of the low places of or it enters not at all. Percy anchors them more to life through John's, the life tom and Ellen shares is the life Tom receives by eating Christ and drinking to his blood. While the novels end certainly bears romantic overtones, Percy utilizes romance as an expression of the sacramental intersection between flesh and spirit, the marriage of Christ to his church in the Eucharistic feast, and the consequential goodness of the marriage consummated by Tom and Ellen. The life they share is a love in the ruins of Christ's crucified body and blood. It is the eternal life of Christ himself amid the patched-up ruins of daily life. (Para 28)

Here, Franklin Arthur Wilson examines Percy's use of sacramental appearance of love. This interpretation does not make comprehensive study of the text.

Another renowned critic in Jon Young "Walker Percy on Cartesian ideal of knowing".

Tom's evaluation of the Cartesian ideal of knowing has changed even further in the epilogue, set five years after the main events of the novel. Tom continues to use the lapsometer in diagnosis, and he remains convinced that the lapsometer can "save the world". But he has clashed trying to know the world exclusively from the detached, abstract perspective of science. "strange," Tom says, "I am older, yet there seems to be more time, time for watching and waiting and thinking and working" (282). Constant of watch, wait, think and work, Tom has re-entered the human world from which he had been expelled by his own commitment to the Cartesian ideal. (48)

He observes only the side of Cartesian ideal of knowing. This analysis about the text is also not adequate to understand the character truly, his sufferings and perception of life.

In the like manner Joseph also reviews he novel as the influence of Hopkins in the following lines:

Thomas progression from a belief in science that excludes god to a point where he can accept god's grace is represented in microcosm by a sequence by a sequence of allusions to Hopkins early in the dream. These allusions are and integral part of the symbolism of the dream and grow increasingly explicit as Tom moves toward a sacramental view of the world. The sequence begins with the inversion of the imagery in god's grandeur. (6)

Here we see the references to god in the text in the novel allusions to Hopkins poetry are found.

The novel is also discussed as a social satire in "Utopian visions in the *Love In The Ruins*  
In the following lines,

Percy's *Love In The Ruins* presents a society that is a direct satire of our 21<sup>st</sup> century American society. Percy takes what he considers the negative elements and situations from our society and reproduces them, distorting them in order to point out the negativity of them it seems then, that the society presente in the novel would be distinctly dystopian. (2)

The novel has been discussed as social satire, and grotesque obscenity etc. As we survey the critical opinions about the novel none of the researchers seems to analyze this novel and its character using existentialist perspective. Thus, it seems worthwhile to interpret and analyze the novel from the perspective of existentialism.

## **II. Methodology**

### **Existentialism**

Existentialism is philosophical and literary tendency that typically displays a dismissal of abstract theories that seek to disguise the untidiness of actual human lives and emphasizes the subjective realities of individual existence, individual choice. It is virtually impossible to define absolutely as it is now so broad in its approaches. However, some of the major strands can be outlined.

Soren Kierkegaard was the first philosopher who Existentialism. Since his time existential approaches to philosophy about life have grown very greatly in influence and also appeared in several forms influenced by numerous writers and thinkers. In retrospect several writers who lived before Kierkegaard are seen as having been concerned with the same subject matter. All these earlier and later writers' works have influenced the modern world and perhaps by more than we can know.

After the second world war there was a most notable upsurge of enthusiasm among substantial sections of the rising generation and the intelligentsia for philosophic ideas concerned with existential approaches to life. The writer who principally looked into this phase of an atheistic and humanistic approach to Existentialist philosophy was Jean Paul Sartre.

The philosophy has an emphasis on each person finding their own way in life, on making choices (including, particular, all serious moments life-choices) for oneself as one sees fit without reliance on external standards or practice. This tendency to effectively deny that there is an acceptable basis for moral decision-making diverges markedly from an earlier, and often largely unquestioned faith-related, emphasis that there could be, and

indeed were moral standards to which all might beneficially conform, whereas an acceptance of moral standards could provide an objective basis for the making of choices has to be subjective. Persons actively engaged in situations may well make choices that are subjectively valid in terms of themselves, there and then, but which might seem questionable to a dispassionate observer. There is a full acceptance that individuals are free to choose their own path and an associated declaration those individuals' lives and also profoundly influence the ensuing nature and aspect of the person who makes them. Even choosing not to make a choice is a form of choice bringing with it consequences. People are inevitably faced with choice in very many contexts. One of the life's choices Kierkegaard thought that people could make, and the one that he chooses for himself, was a life fully aligned with faith.

The trend for Existentialism after the second world war saw its influence pervading widely and deeply into journalism, poetry, the playhouse and the cinema. The outlook of the modern world has been formed, perhaps more than we readily appreciate, Existentialist philosophy as advertised and sponsored from many sides.

### **Existential Crisis**

After the devastating effects of the two world wars, especially after the second world war, people experienced untold suffering thrown into an incoherent, disordered and chaotic universe; the belief in the concept like unity, morality, value and Christianity was crushed. As the sense of unification collapsed people felt themselves alien in the universe. There was nobody to accompany them and to share their problems. They were free and responsible for their own actions. Though nobody was there to guide and help them yet they had to struggle hard to save from existential crisis. Individual identity

became important to them and they themselves were responsible and free for their actions. The feelings of loneliness', frustration, anxiety and absurdity accompanied them. The writers of the contemporary era could not escape the situation and they captured the human loneliness, meaninglessness of actions in their works. Problematic condition of the modern world became the focal point. The feelings of utter alienation was the product of the recognition of "death of God" on the one hand and the cataclysm of the world war 1 and 2 .Not only "God is dead" as Nietzsche proclaimed, but also all the intermediary values connecting God and man declined. Man lost even the certainties and values of his own existence, which he had originally received from his belief in God. He is thus castrated and deserted animal in the everwhelmig and the absurd universe It was fully addressed by the existentialists. For instance as Richard Tarnas says:

The anguish and alienation of twentieth century life was brought to full articulation as the existentialists addressed the fundamental naked concerns of human existence, suffering and ontological insecurity the void of absolute values or universal contexts, the sense of economic absurdity the frailty of human condition(389).

The spiritual void, sense of insecurity and cosmic absurdity were captured by the writers. Man was just given existence without essence. He was entrapped by morality, fear, uncertainty. No supreme being was there to fulfill the human life.

The term existentialism is used to describe" a vision of the condition of man, his place and function in the world and his relationship or lack of it with God" (Cuddon 316). Moreover, it is a very intense and philosophically specialized form of quest for selfhood "(Ellmann and Feidelson (803). The common thesis of existentialism is "Existence is

prior to the essence" and most of the existentialists believe in the basic principles like human nature is problematic, paradoxical, and each person is like no other. Self – realization comes when one finds out one's own uniqueness by himself. All the men of this are alone and free and universe is indifferent to our expectations and needs. But we have given various chances from among different possibilities and we ourselves are responsible to our lives.

### **Sartre and Existentialism**

This research is based on Sartrean existentialism-freedom is on the center and I will focus on portion. His ontology represents a radical thinking of the relationship between the self and the world. Sartre claims that scientific mode of understanding the universe is in fact derived from the world as it is experienced in everyday life. For him there is no shared human nature; there is nevertheless a human biology, which imposes certain tasks upon all of us. We must all solve the problems of ourselves; we must all learn to make sense of the facts of birth and death.

His existentialism should be more appropriately called a philosophy of human action and involvement. This is a philosophy of freedom; its first and last concern is the vindication of the essential and irreducible liberty of each person and with drawing the ethical implications of this freedom. He strongly believes in the power of human practice. Sartre has explained that "existence makes human life possible" it "leaves to man a possibility of choices" he points the fundamental freedom of man and his ability to create himself. His description would stress the following traits: 1) Activism 2) Optimism 3) Responsibility 4) Universalism.

Sartre states two tenets as defining characteristics of existentialism. a)Existence precedes essence. B)Subjectivity must be the starting point. In other words human life is grounded in existence and subjectivity is the fountain of all human deliberate actions.

Sartre explains his both points in *Being and Nothingness* .He asserts the priority of existence along with a possibility to re –evaluation of its main characteristics of contingency and temporality. Only from this reversed optics he believes, can pay full tribute to man and his self-creative abilities. In his essay *Artistic Creativity* Sartre does not discuss the artistic production in a sense of fine arts, presumably in order not to be enmeshed an early stage into many complications stemming from ambiguous character of artistic creativity. It could be viewed as an extension of human self-creation (non-representational art).

He says technological view of the world will retain its validity for human products albeit not necessarily for men themselves. But priority of essence in the realm of technological production based on the fact that humans are endowed with intelligence that can create new objects by first making designs of and then carrying them out. His atheistic existentialism emphasizes on the point that human reality proves that man is responsible to himself. In other words," nothing can save him from himself, not even a proof of God's existence. "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself"(24). Sartre calls this "the first principle of existentialism". What the principle says is an implication of priority of human existence now described as a dynamic entity that evolves into a self-made creation. Man is what he makes of himself, and not what he inherits or gets from without (or above), this principle is tantamount to "what is also called subjectivity"



The term "subjectivity" could be understood in two ways (a) negativity, as a charge to the effect that existentialism overlooks the objective factors of human condition, namely what man's heritage and circumstances make of himself, and (b) positivity, as an affirmation of human subjectivity against some false objectifications: man is not a mere outcome of anonymous natural and social forces (object) but the creator of his self and the subject of human history.

He says our thinking that we inhabit the world that science reveals is false, rather it is the outcome of our everyday experience. His core ideas like ontology and ethics are related to freedom. His metaphysics, theory of knowledge all are elaborated in order to support the philosophy of freedom. His ontology is concerned with everything, it deals with ultimate constituents of reality. He argues that nothingness gives us the actual experience of world. Sartre denies the French epistemology regarding the consciousness. The thing exists outside the consciousness as Sartre writes in *Being and Nothingness*

A table is not in consciousness not even in the capacity of a representation.

A table is in space, beside the window, etc. The existence of the table in fact is center of opacity for consciousness; it would require an infinite process to inventory the total contents of a thing ... The first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to reestablish its true connection to the world, to know that consciousness of the world (xxvii).

Sartre holds the thesis that consciousness is intentional because inside consciousness there can never be anything at all. As consciousness incorporates more and

more known objects into itself, it would cease to be able to reflect what is outside itself properly.

Regarding the thesis of consciousness, Sartre justifiably calls himself a phenomenologist. He says we live in a world that is, at bottom human. The world as we experience is the subjective world, world of values –ethical and aesthetic. Later on science made the distinction between objective and subjective worlds. Still he is concerned with human universality, "there is nevertheless a human universality of condition"(*Existentialism and Humanism*362) .Scientists interpreted the physical world as a system of interlocking causes and effects.

The cause of scientific progress is to understanding the universe as meaningless system. Sartre has denial to the point. He claims that the objectivist project of grasping the world as it really is without reference to the meanings that our purposes confer upon it, is incoherent: "The point of view of pure knowledge is contradictory; there is only the point of view of engaged knowledge. This amounts to saying that knowledge and action are only to abstract aspects of an original concrete relation(308).For Sartre things are always necessarily known from a perspective. Things are always necessarily revealed to us from the point where we stand. Because things are known in relation to us. In his own words:

It is not even conceivable that a consciousness could survey the world in such a way that the glass could be simultaneously given to it at the right and left of the decenter, in front of it and behind it... because this fusion of right and left, of before and behind, would result in the total disappearance of 'thesis' at the heart of a primitive indistinction.(308)

Sartre views the world as inherently meaningful, a world of significance. The world is not first a meaningless space of exteriority, upon which a human significance comes to be imposed. It is, from the moment that we exist, a space of meaning and we map it accordingly.

He claims manufactured goods have a nature. It provides us with a standard against which we can measure the things. Goods like knife, cups, chairs, watches and soon are manufactured to fulfill some function. The concept of the thing precedes its manufacture, both chronologically and causally, so it can be said that the essence of these goods precedes their existence. The thing can be made by the person who already had the idea of this kind of thing in mind. As he says: "That its essence that is to say the sum of the formulae and the qualities which made its production and its definition possible precedes its existence(existentialism and humanism). But in case of human being, Sartre holds the belief that we have no creator. We are the creation of natural forces, not the work of intelligent designer. Since no one and nothing conceived of us before we were created." There is at least one being whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man" (349) it appears as the suggestion that we do not have an essence because we were not created by a god.

To agree on the point "existence precedes essence" is to say that we are beings who have no nature. This thesis has potentially far-reaching consequences. On a personal level, each of us has an individual nature. Sartre claims that it is up to each of us to mould ourselves in the image we choose.

what do we mean by saying that (for us) existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world- 2<sup>nd</sup> defines himself afterwards.... Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism ( 349).

Sartre's idea of "for-itself" distinguishes human nature from manufactured objects, because we are not consciously created. This also raises the point that if there is no god then animals and plants have come about in exactly the same ways as have human beings. "for-itself" produces the for-itself and its part. Consciousness of being as Sartre argues is intentional. This intends them to maintain their characteristics. He further says that there is no difference between experiencing pleasure and being conscious of experiencing pleasure Sartre's description of suffering is also significant. Since the suffering person can never their suffering, but must instead sustain it in being by a choice of themselves as suffering, they suffer, and at the same time they suffer from not suffering enough.

what we call 'nobel' or 'good' or 'true' suffering and what moves us is the suffering which we read on the faces of others, better yet in portraits, in the face of a statue, in a tragic mask. It is a suffering which has being.... Which overflows the consciousness which we have of it; it is there in the midst of the world, impenetrable and dense, like this tree or this stone; it endures; finally it is what is (91).

Suffering is what the sufferer would like to experience it. In fact this suffering in-itself can never be experienced. One does not suffer by the forces beyond his/his control. Sartre argues that our choices depend upon us. Likewise we choose our values also, we willingly and deliberately assume the burden of choice that Sartre calls 'authenticity'. It

means the acceptance of our place in the cosmos, it is to accept our burden of radical freedom. Sometimes we attempt to find an excuse for our actions. To make it clear Sartre gives an example of a young man who was torn between two mutually exclusive courses of actions. As he describes.

consequently, he found himself confronted by two very different modes of action; the one concrete immediate, but directed towards only one individual; and the other an action addressed to an end infinitely greater, a national collectivity, but for that very reason ambiguous and it might be frustrated on the way. At the same time, he was hesitating between two kinds of mortality; on the one side the mortality of sympathy, of personal devotion and, on the other side, a debatable validity. He had to choose between those two (354).

Sartre examines and assesses the dilemma, and asserts that we make our choice without reason, justification or an excuse . Most of the time we attempt to refuse the burden of our choice. We make some justifications for the selection of our action, Sartre calls this 'bad faith'. When we realize something and at the same time negate it is called facticity. The 'facticity' and 'bad faith are interlinked. As Sartre says:

a certain art of forming contradictory concepts which unite in themselves both an idea and the negation of that idea. The basic concept which is thus engendered utilizes the double property of the human being, who is at once a facticity and a transcendence. These two aspects of human reality are and ought to be capable of a valid co-ordination. But bad faith does not wish either to co-ordinate them or to surmount them in a synthesis(56).

Some affirm their transcendence, in order to deny the facticity. Sartre brought this out after lengthy and demanding philosophical investigation.

Sartre's idea about freedom is not only limited to our choices, as he says we are also free to decide the meaning of our choices. We also try to prove that our choices are right. This freedom is revealed to us by way of an emotion, anguish. He says, the feeling of anguish haunts us when we realize our absolute freedom. This motivates us to deny our transcendence. All our actions have two causes. 'cause and 'internal cause' or 'motive'. Our actions are the result of these two factors.

With reference to these aforementioned concepts of Sartre's existentialism we will read the text *Love in the Ruins* in following chapters.

### III. Textual Analysis

In previous chapter I have discussed many concepts regarding existentialism especially Sartrean existentialism and his ideas about freedom. In this chapter my main concern is to analyze the text *Love in the Ruins*. I will read this novel from existential perspective and see the character's existential crisis. I begin the analysis in order to find whether the text is significant to the elements of existentialism and existential crisis as well.

We know that Sartrean existentialism deals with the nature and exercise of human freedom. So existential crisis comes up with human despair, isolation and responsibility of all his/her actions to an individual. All these elements are shown in the novel *love in the ruins*, because it presents the suffering of an individual as a result of his own free choice. This novel is mainly concerned with modern man's despair. As we have discussed existential crisis is the feeling of losing one's identity and bearing the responsibility of one's free desires and actions. This situation is encountered by the people after the world wars and it has been depicted well in the novel.

In the novel, our protagonist Thomas More is represented as the man in the modern world who denies the existence of god. He experiences a sense of crisis and undertakes a search for spiritual vitality. The protagonist attempts to provide spiritual healing by inventing the "lapsometer" but this absurd device only provokes people to act in extreme ways rather than offering a solution to modern despair. He is very much concerned with his individual existence, individual freedom and individual choice. As he says: "I have fallen into a disorderly life, stopped going to mass. I believe in god and the

whole business but I love women best, music and science next, whiskey next, god fourth and my fellowman hardly at all. generally I do as I please" (6).

These lines show Tom's condition, his desires and general thoughts about life. He is very much concerned with his own existence. Doctor Thomas More is a modern man living a lonely life. He is worried about the condition of man. He thinks the world is about to encounter the catastrophe. It is near to be ruined and More's personal and emotional lives are in ruins. He is living a lonely life as he introduces himself in fiction:

I am a physician, my health, especially my mental health, has been very poor. Lately I am subject to attacks of elation and depression, as well as occasional seizure of morning terror. A few years ago my wife left me, running off with an Englishman, and I have led an irregular life ever since (11).

This introductory paragraph shows the lonely condition of the character. He introduces himself as a man in modern world. The protagonist is devoted to lessen the spiritual void and he wants to secure the world from upcoming catastrophe. He gives all his best to materialize this ambition. He thinks his invention would save the world and rescue it from all the illness. Let us see his ideas:

I can save you, America! I k now something! I know what is wrong! I hit on something, made a breakthrough, come on a discovery! I can save the terrible god-blessed Americans from themselves! With my invention! Listen to me. Don't give up. It is not too late. You are still the last hope. There is no one else. Bad as we are, there is no one else(58).



The passage shows Thomas' worries regarding the destruction. It also demonstrates his high expectations regarding the invention.

Existentialism deals with the relationship or lack of it with god and it is also a specialized form of question for selfhood. In the novel, Tom raises the questions about god, his relations with god and makes a questions about the selfhood. In the novel says:

"I am a roman catholic, albeit a bad one. I believe in the holy catholic apostolic and roman church, in god the father, in the election of the jews Christ. His son, our lord, who founded the church on peter his first vicar, which will last until the end of the world. Some years ago, however, I stopped eating Christ in communion, stopped going to mass, and have since fallen into a disorderly life."(6)

Here, in this extract Tom talks about his relation with god, how was the relation in past and how it is in present. He is not talking about only his individual relationship with God, rather he talks about all the living men and their relationship with God.

Likewise manner Tom is also very much conscious about own selfhood and sometimes seems confused regarding it, let us see this in his own words" but the question remains which prospect is more unpleasant, the destruction of the world or that the destruction may come before my achievement is made known?"(7)Here, we find him uncertain about his own selfhood and moving from one point to another.

Existentialists believe in the basic principles like human nature is problematic, paradoxical and each person is like no other. Self-realization comes when one finds out one's own uniqueness by himself. All the men of this universe are alone and free and the universe is indifferent to their expectations and needs. Here, in the novel the protagonist

is in problematic condition. He thinks whether the destruction has already occurred or it is about to take place, and his problem is concerned with the safety of the world. His nature is paradoxical; he appears as the savior of the world and humanity on the one hand and remembers his wife and daughter on the other. He is in relationship with three different kinds of ladies at the same time. As he says " thoughts about the coming catastrophe and the three girls cause my scalp tingle with a peculiar emotion."(6) He is not like other men in his circle. He realizes his selfhood after realizing his unique nature, ambition and sympathy for his patients. He is free to make the choices and this freedom takes him to other choice of becoming the savior unfortunately his expectations are not fulfilled, which leave him in existential crisis. Let's see these factors as described in the novel,

My contribution, I hasten to add, was in the realm of science not sanctity. Why can't I follow More's example, love myself less, God and my fellowman more, and leave whiskey and women alone? Sir Thomas more was merry in life and death and he loved and was loved by everyone, even his executioner, with whom he cracked jokes. By contrast, I am possessed by terror and desire and live a solitary life. My life is longing, longinings for women, for the Nobel prize, for the basky bite of bourbon whiskey, and other great heart wrenching longings that have no name. sir Thomas was right, of course, and I am wrong. But on the other hand these are peculiar times... (23)

The passage shows the problematic condition of the protagonist, his own paradoxical nature and the realization of his own self. Through this expression the character has shown his existential crisis.

In his view about ontology Sartre represents radical thinking of the relationship between the self and the world. In fact he says that scientific mode of understanding the universe is truly derived from the world as it is experienced in everyday life. Our protagonist Thomas More, has unique relationship with the world. He wants to be a messiah for the world. As a physician his scientific mode of understanding has significance in his existence. This is also derived from his everyday experience. As he sees different patients, he describes some of them, one is suffering from blinding headache. Tom tries to reduce his suffering. Another patient he meets is an abstracted graduate student who has been suffering from massive free-floating terror, identity crisis and sexual impotence. Likewise he meets many patients suffering from insomnia, nervousness, depression, feelings of disorientation or strangeness. All these lead him to a messianic choice of saving the world as he says in the novel.

there is a clearer and more present danger, however. For I have reason to believe that within the next two hours and unprecedented fallout of noxious particles will settle hereabouts and perhaps in other places as well. It is a catastrophe whose cause and effects and prevention are known only to me. The effects of the evil particles are psychic rather than physical. They do not burn the skin and not worsen the secret ills of the spirit and drive the very self from itself. (5)

This experience is derived from his everyday living. Here, he has shown his scientific mode of live and it is derived from his daily experiences.

Sartre's existentialism should be more appropriately called a philosophy of human action and involvement. This is a philosophy of freedom; its first and last concern is the indication of the essential and irreducible liberty of each person and draws the ethical implication of this freedom. He has a strong belief in power of human practice. He explained the statements "existence makes human life possible and " it leaves to man a possibility of choices". He talks about the fundamental freedom of man and his ability to create himself. In our whole novel is woven with the action and involvement of the protagonist.

Novel opens with the action of Thomas' sitting in a pine groves where he narrates all his involvements within four days. There by he has given the description of all his actions for the betterment of the world. Let us observe some examples:

I am a physician, not very successful psychiatrist; an alcoholic, a shaky middle-aged man subject to depressions and elations and morning terrors, but a genius nevertheless who sees into the hidden causes of things and erects simple hypotheses to account for the glut of everyday events;"(11)  
my life is a longing, longings for women for the Nobel prize for the hot bosky bite of bourbon whiskey, and other great heart –wrenching longings that have no name.(23)

These lines show his involvement in different activities as existentialism is a philosophy dealing with human actions and involvement, the passage has shown this very clearly.

The existentialism as Sartre describes says that we must all learn to make sense of the facts of birth and death. He has emphasized the characteristic of existentialism, "existence precedes essence". In the novel, Tom labors hard to make sense of the facts of his life, about his creating his self. His essence is grounded on his existence. All his attempts are oriented towards making his existence. Here, thus we have seen that Thomas' existence precedes essence". Sartre asserts the priority of existence along with a possibility to re-evaluation of its main characteristics of contingency and temporality only from this reversed optics, he believes can pay full tribute to man and his self-creative ability. Sartre gives much more focus on the man's self creativity. In the novel the protagonist possesses the self-creative ability. This creation of self is in contact with his messianic ambition of saving the world. For this, he wants to make a scientific invention, In his own words:

it is my misfortune -and blessing – that I suffer from both liberal and conservative complaints, e.g both morning terror and large-bowel disorders, excessive abstraction and unscarable rages, alternating impotence and satyriasis. So that at one and the same time I have great sympathy for my patients and lead a fairly, miserable life. But my invention will change all this. Now I know how to be happy and make others happy. With my little machine I can diagnose and treat with equal success the morning terror of liberals and the apoplexy of conservatives (29).

Here Tom seems very much concerned with his self-creative ability. His ability to create a machine is the base of his self-creativity, which requires more knowledge about the contemporary condition. The above expression reveals his concern for the worsening world and its study. All this results into his self-creativity.

Technological production is also discussed by Sartre. For him human beings have the capacity of creating new objects. They make new objects after making design of it. The priority of human existence is a dynamic entity and it evolves into selfmade creation. So likewise, Tom is also connected to the technological production. He has the intelligence to create the technological gadget first he makes design of this production. The design is based on his knowledge about worsening world, worsening human behavior etc. Tom's design for him is "my article, it is an extremely important one perhaps even epochal in its significance with it my little invention, in hand and doctor can probe the very secrets of the soul, diagnose the maladies that poison the wellspring of man's hope"(7).

Through this design and creative knowledge of technological production of scientific invention, Tom attempts to make his own existence.

Sartre's atheistic existentialism focus on the point that man is responsible to himself. This is to say that "nothing can save him from his self, even a proof of god's existence can not make any excuse. Here, Tom's relationship with other characters is explained as:

Thoughts of the girls and the coming catastrophe cause my scalp to tingle with a peculiar emotion. If the catastrophe occurs, I stand a good chance knowing what I know about it, of surviving it. So do the girls. Surviving

with one girl who likes you is not such a bad protect. But surviving with three girls, all of whom like you and each of whom detests the other two, is both horrible and pleasant, certainly enough to make one's scalp tingle with a peculiar emotion.(5)

This explains Tom's irresponsibility of his actions. It plays vital role to make his actions in crisis. By giving this type of excuses the protagonist tries to keep himself in safer position. But this doesn't work properly because any kind of explanations, including god's existence does not share an individual's responsibility.

While explaining existentialism Sartre defines man's self. according to him , man is only what he makes of himself . Man's making of himself is his /her priority. His essence lies in his becoming. This is what he calls individual identity. Tom devotes all his life in making his identity and becoming himself. He existence is grounded on his mankind of himself. In the process of making his self he observes his society and finds it as :

paradise estates ,where I live, is a paradise indeed , an oasis of concord in a troubled land. For our beloved old USA is in a bad way. Americans have turned against each other; race against race, right against left, believer against heathen, san Francisco against Los Angels , Chicago against Cicero. Vines sprout in section of new York where not even Negros will live . wolves have been seen in downtown Cleveland , like Rome during the black plague"(17)

After observing the contemporary social structure , Tom decides to make his self or designs his creativity . On this basis he is motivated to make his individual identity, his

existence and his place in the world . Sartre call this subjectivity , and Tom's subjectivity in the novel is his creative self.

Sartre makes us clear about subjectivity by dividing it into negative and positive aspects. Negative refers to the overlooking of the factors like man's circumstances , his /her heritage and also human condition. Now we can find these negative aspects in the novel. Doctor Thomas more does not talk about his heritage . Nevertheless, his talking about father has a connection with his own self creativity. His concern for his circumstances does not influence his doings. So here existentialism has overlooked all these factors. Now let us move to positive aspects of subjectivity. It defines man as not a mere outcome of anonymous natural and social forces (objects) but the creator of his self and the subject of history. This positive aspect of subjectivity can also be implemented in tom's character. He is the creator of self and the subject of human history. His making of 'self ' or existence has got foremost priority in his life. He has a fascination of becoming a historical subject by introducing a 'lapsometer' in the world.

The consciousness, as Sartre says is intentional because it incorporates more and more known objects into itself, it would cease to be able to reflect what is outside itself properly. Tom's consciousness is also intentional. His consciousness incorporates the objects he knows very well. Outside his consciousness Tom doesn't care what is there and how it is. The activity of other people is not the subject of his concern. We view his intentional consciousness through his words:

what happened was that as a young physician in new Orleans I stumbled onto an extraordinary medical discovery, wrote an article for the journal of the American medical association that was picked up by time newsweek , and the papers.



Caption under time photo :psychic fallout ?in newsweek: "doctor treats doctors in swith." Headline in new your daily newsweek .

These are the things objects which Tom knows very well and this knowledge plays vital role in making his consciousness .

Whole novel does not touch anything outside his consciousness . He is deeply interested only to the things and happenings he knows very well. Tom lives in the world of his own ethical and aesthetic values. His ethical values are different from other people's for example he says "our marriage is a collapsed morality , like a burnt out star which collapses into itself , gives no light and is heavy heavy (66)". After putting his views down tom explains this and says "I'm not sure I know what a collapsed morality means. That's it, it is meaning we have lost. What is meaningful between us? We simply follow rules and habit like poor beasts on a treadmill (67). These two different lines show his ethical values . These ethical values are one part of subjectivity . Now let us see his aesthetic values regarding the subjectivity, " my poor wife, Doris , was ruined by books. I loved her dearly and loved to lie with her and would and did whenever she would allow it, but most especially in the morning , at breakfast , in the nine o'clock sunlight out here on the "enclosed patio". These few lines are capable of showing his esthetic values . These kinds of values has built by his subjectivity .

Sartre also raises the issue of universal human condition . The protagonist can not escape it, he has got an universal human biology. This compels him to perform some irksome jobs, which he does not prefer. He takes the universe as meaningless system and fascinated with scientific progress . This nature does not

synchronise Sartre's point however. The point of perspective goes with the existentialist philosopher. According to him we know the things from the point where we stand. These are known in relation to us. This statement can be applied in Tom's character. He understands the world and its happenings from his standpoint, he views the world suicidal, manic, catatonic, mad instinct. He sees sane patients and mad doctors. It took twenty long years to figure out why some got better and others got worse. This perception builds Tom's self-creativity. By seeing all these dreadful conditions he views the world as meaningless entity. At the same time, Tom finds the world as inherently meaningful and a world of significance. He maps the world according to his own perspective. Therefore, it is this assumption that the world is meaningless and he promises to create the meaning.

Doctor Thomas More the protagonist, is a self-creative individual who strongly desires to invent the lapsometer. According to Sartre manufactured goods have a nature. It provides us with a standard against which we can measure the thing. Goods like knife, cups, chairs, watches and so on are manufactured to fulfill some function. In this some direction our protagonist deliberately wants to manufacture an object which would fulfill the function of rescuing the world. Tom's concept of saving the world with this invention is the essence and it precedes the existence of the object, lapsometer. He already had the idea of this kind of thing in mind. Let us see in his own words,

my discovery, like all great scientific breakthrough, is simply itself. The notion came to me during my work with the

encephalograph, with which instrument, as you know one tapes electrodes to the skull and records brain waves which in turn may reveal such abnormalities as tumors, strokes, fits, and so on"(28)

This idea is the outcome of his standpoint. His idea of manufacturing lapsometer is latently shown in this passage. Now we will see his idea apparently,

by craning my head I can catch a glimpse of the box in the hall, the lovely crafted crate form Osaka instruments. It is the first shipment of the more. Qualitative- quantitative ontological lapsometer, the stethoscope of the spirit, one hundred compact pocket sized machines of brushed chrome. I've come a long way since my brownie model(62).

Here, Tom has revealed the nature of the good he is dedicated to invent . The supposed function of this would be made lapsometer is to measure the human heart, brain etc. unfortunately, the good does not perform this act of measuring human emotion and tom undergoes from existential crisis.

Thomas' character also shows that he has an intention of maintaining his characteristics. As Sartre says that there is no difference between experiencing pleasure and being conscious of earlier. This shows his consciousness of the experiencing happiness. Later on when he becomes unhappy because of loneliness we find him conscious of it as well. In first section he expresses this experience of unhappiness. According to him he is unhappy physician. However, he seeks to save the world from upcoming catastrophe, unfulfillment of this desire crushes him totally and he suffers from existential crisis. This suffering is

not imposed, rather it is his own choice. Nobody in his periphery would suggest him to work for the invention.

Sartre says that our choices depend upon us and we choose our values willingly and deliberately. The burden of this choice Sartre calls "authenticity". This refers to the acceptance of our place in the universe. In *Love in the Ruins*, our protagonist makes his own choice and values deliberately. We see him carrying the burden of his freedom. This freedom compels him to bear the responsibility of it. Tom says it is his own choice, his values regarding scientist and other people is different, as he says.

the scientists, who are mostly liberals and unbelievers, and the businessmen, who are mostly conservative and the Christian, live side by side in paradise estates. One speak of "out worn dogmas and creeds", the other of "atheism and immorality". Both sorts are generally good fellows, good fathers and good husbands who work hard all day. There are minor differences Christian housewives drive to town to pick their maids in the hallow, businessmen's wives make their maids ride on the front seat" (15)

These are his own values, he doesn't care for others' attitude and others values. In happiness he is indifferent to others and in crisis too he is indifferent.

Nevertheless he consciously feels both. His sufferings appears beyond his control but he rationally encounters it. These situations disclose his authenticity.

Sometimes we see Tom giving excuses for the shortcomings which according to Sartre is bad-faith. He says the realization of something and negation of it a the same

time is called 'facticity'. Our justifications for the selection of our action is called 'bad-faith' and both are interlinked. Let us examine both factors in Thomas' character:

but the question remains: which prospect is more unpleasant, the destruction of the world, or that the destruction may come before my achievement is made known? The latter I must confess, because I keep imagining the scene in the director's office the day the Nobel prize is awarded. I enter, the secretaries blush."(2)

Here, Tom has disclosed his facticity regarding his masihanic ambition, at the same time his identity becomes important for him. Let us see his justification in relation to the selection of his actions. As he says:

thoughts of the girls and the coming catastrophe cause my scalp to tingle with a peculiar emotion. If the catastrophe occurs, I stand a good chance, knowing what I know about it, of surviving it. So do the girls. Surviving with one girl who likes you is not such a bad prospect. But surviving with three girls, all of whom like you and each of whom detests the other two, is both horrible and pleasant, certainly enough to make one's scalp tingle with a peculiar emotion(5)."

The passage reveals the bad faith of Thomas More regarding his actions. These are the actions which he thinks are not fair but performs, and explains that it is not his fault. This kind of buck-passing is called 'bad-faith'. The bad faith shows his diverted mentality, it can also be viewed as the cause of his being failure.

Our actions, Stare says have two causes 'cause' and 'internal cause' or 'motive'. Combination of these two elements result into the action. The protagonist's action of

inventing the "Lapsometer" is also the combination of 'cause' and 'motive'. In the novel he confesses his motive and says:

"Let me confess that what worries me most is that the catastrophe will overtake us before my scientific article is published, and so before my discovery can create a sensation in the scientific world. The vanity of scientists! My article, it is true is an extremely important one, perhaps even epochal in its significance. With it, my little invention, in hand, any doctor can probe the very secrets of the soul, diagnose the maladies that poison the wellsprings of man's hope(7)".

Here, we have seen Tom's motive and cause for the action. Tom's inventing the lapsometer has the cause of saving the world from the upcoming catastrophe. Moreover, the motive is to make the sensation by his scientific article and to win the Nobel Prize. The combination of these two factors results into his actions. However, Tom's attempt to materialize his vision is failed and he suffers from existential crisis. This is expressed as: "I became ill, suffering simultaneous depressions and exaltations, assaulted at night by longings, succubi, and the hideous shellfire of Verdun, and in the morning by terror of unknown origin (19). These are frustrated expressions of the protagonist, because he becomes unable to fulfill his ambition this shatters his all the expectations. The feeling of being originless appears more overpowering for him. This kind of horrible feeling make him rotten. All these result into existential crisis.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

*Love in the Ruins* by Walker Percy is the portrayal of modern man who undergoes existential crisis. In order to present the crisis he presents the psychiatrist, who exercises human freedom, makes his own choice, questions the existence of God, and lives an alien life.

Set in factious world named 'The Adventures of a Bad Catholic at a time near the end of the World', the novel's main character, Thomas More attempts to provide spiritual healing by inventing the 'Lapsometer' but this absurd device only provokes people to act in extreme ways rather than offering a solution to modern despair. This results into individual's essential isolation for him. His faith is gone, More has his messianic ambition a plan to save America and diagnose humankind's 'fall' from being, he is troubled by the modern world's indifference to being and people's willingness to define themselves in half-measures: the angel that, falling prey to abstraction, is unable to "reenter the lovely ordinary world" or the beast that adapts to its environment and so becomes the organism behaviorists say the human is.

More gives all his best to materialize his messianic ambition of making an extraordinary invention to cure his patients and especially to save the world from upcoming catastrophe. He thinks his invention can turn the ghosts or beasts into men. With the help of this invention he would win the 'Nobel Prize' and day of winning the prize is most important for him. He dreamt of receiving the prize in a big hall of director's office but all this turn into despair. Though he works hard to save the world and invent the machine for it, he does not seem to give up hope and continuously labors for this futile job.

This alienated modern man heroically struggles for his existence. Though he has different choice and ideology but compelled to bear pain, suffering, frustration, and despair. He does not like worldly routine life but can not resist it because the world 'in itself' can not be changed or modified. There is a distinction between the world 'in itself' and the world 'for itself'. This difference comes out of Tom's free choice. He says he had a conjugal life with collapsed morality. He meets many patients and gets troubled as his own society itself is troubled.

The narrative structure forces the reader to attend not to an objective reality but to Tom's conscious and unconscious responses, the images of which are influenced much more by the psychological dynamics of his entire life. He believes the world will be destroyed psychically and he envies global possession. But he is unable to do anything but waiting.

Tom's attempt of suicide is the result of his being failure and he wants to give up his life at Christmas eve. This shows his suffering of existential crisis. Sometimes people regard him as insane man. Still he tries to prove his superiority and keeps on looking for the better opportunity. Later he discovers that nothing remarkable has happened, thinks he had been crazy, this gives him pain, suffering and exhausting.

In the novel Tom minutely observes people who come in touch he finds their lives futile as his own life is. His all companion leave him alone at last he remains alone with his shattered ambition of individual identity, to conclude, the overall pain, heroic struggle for individual identity and the effective world altering invention has no meaning in the world that has no faith, no unity, no coherence etc. Our protagonist struggles in order to save humanity, and this attempt itself becomes futile.



The novel has presented an individual of a modern world who represents the human suffering after the World Wars. Doctor Thomas More has no desire of living in this meaningless world, because he can not materialize the ambition. He is living because he has no other choice. However, his own choice of living in the world and create his own identity is shattered and crushed . This frustration makes his remaining life like the life of vegetable or that of any non human being with no hope and no expectation.

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