

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*  
**"Heroism in Suffering"**

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**in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of**  
**Master of Arts in English**

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**Letter of Recommendation**

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## **Abstract**

The present study of the novel, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, examines the struggles and sufferings of Maggie because of her own self-created system; that is her individual choice, makes her stand opposite to what the society expects from her. Maggie suffers because choices made by her are entirely her own. She does not go according to the choices of average or typical man in society. She is, however, both within and without society. Physically, she lives in the society, but her individual value takes her beyond that. Maggie owes to Sartre's belief that man makes himself and is entirely responsible for his actions. What she thinks, does and expects from others are only her own which are contradicted by social agents like father, mother, Jemmie and Pete. She suffers and meets death simply, because she not only creates choice for herself but also tries to do that for others. She acts and reacts naively and idealistically against unfavourable odds throughout the novel to maintain dignity and nobility and ultimately dies rejecting the labels of the society that try to control her free will and in this process, she gains heroism.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

### Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*

Stephen Crane's first novel, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* deals with life in slums, poverty heroism, and prostitution. This is a story of a drunken widow and her children, Jimmie, a brutalized truck driver, and the protagonist Maggie, pretty and simple worker in a sweetshop, who after being seduced is driven to prostitution and then to suicide. This sordid story could not find a publisher, and Crane had to publish it himself though it did not find enough readers in the nineteenth century but a few years later the book had many admirers. Alfred Kazin writes in *On Native grounds*:

No one in America had written like him before and it became a standard in academic curricula and obligatory reading lists but though his books precipitately gave the whole aesthetic movement of the nineties, a sudden direction and fresher impulse, he could contribute no more than the intensity of his spirit. (71-72)

In the nineteenth century when the novel was first written, many events occurred. The population increased much more than before, different ethnical communities were formed. There were no education facilities nor were any jobs. Further the Industrial Revolution was bringing major changes in the country railroads crisis crossed the nation, moving goods to and from the major cities, and women's no age was too low and that made impossible for women to live in such income the families were finally dependent on women who worked , paid their parents and other relatives until they married.

Stephen Crane's *Maggie* has assumed a special status in American culture. It epitomizes the young man's first novel, the genius of youth. The well-known

Crane's specialist R.V. Stalman writes: It is the "new" novel, the 'anti novel' of its day. It is the work of an "angry young man, the rebel changing conventions and traditions. It is the experimental novel." The importance of *Maggie* then, lies in what it promised and accomplished in both intrinsic and extrinsic terms. It is the great seminal novel.

*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* is a deeply committed and revolutionary novel that reflects frustration and poverty. It posed the imperative need for a new moral code and though a consistent use of irony exposed the false values worshipped by society. The tragic pretensions are modified by Crane's sardonic one, he seems not to be defining human being's place in the universe but something on the foolishness of their conventional morality. The writer does not have to argue, he has proved everything about determinism and shown that human wills can control their destinies.

Crane from the beginning believed that truth is to be found in his characters and their lives. He shows the main character Maggie growing up in the slum of New York City that is against her way of living. He focuses on survival. Maggie is the daughter of the John's a family of poor tenement dwellers living in the Lower East side of Manhattan. A large part of the story is devoted to drinking butts and Maggie's home is the scene of a daily fight for survival. Maggie herself tries to adjust in this degrading atmosphere by working in a shirt factory. But unfortunately Jimmie's friend Pete, an ordinary bartender, comes into her life. Thinking that Pete will take her away from the drudgery of life and her family, Maggie falls in love with him. She is disillusioned when Pete uses her to fulfil his passion, his sexual desire and then abandons her. Eventually, penniless and homeless Maggie becomes a prostitute like her mother to survive she commits



suicide because she does not want to continue such type of life. She faces the death so boldly as every existential hero does. Outwardly she seems defeated but from inside she is very much bold to face death.

There is a not literal reference here to Maggie's death by drawing- this must be inferred by the reader-but Maggie's "action" proves many things. Though an ordinary rather than an extraordinary person, she has a conscience and personal dignity; she refuses to accept her inevitable fate and material success as a prostitute, her spiritual values triumphs. In her death she "rises" above her Rum Alley environment and her social order. Crane presents this last scene in an unorthodox and effective way: it is like a dumb show, aimed directly at the audience, in the "front row at a theatre", who makes a final assessment of Maggie, her dreams and Maggie has paid an awful price for trying to improve her a lot in the world of cruelty and indifference. She is not a victim because her punishment does not fit the crime and she has committed none. She acts and reacts naively and idealistically.

Crane's style is clear that the environment is awful for the cold world of slums. Crane goes into detail to present a satiric assault on the weaknesses in social morals. He forces the reader to recognize the difference between moral appearance and reality within the realm of society. Crane says that Maggie reveals the part of another deep seriousness and the powerful urge again to an audience. It posits the imperative need for a new code and through a consistent use of irony, throws the light on the false values worshiped by society and exposes the part played by collective passivity in the destruction of innocence. The story shows that nothing can be done for Maggie who is blossomed in muddle puddle, has pretty good chance of overcoming even though she is

forsaken by her family, the man she loves and even by god. She has no one to love to them, no one to love her, no one to return because she is not poor immoral but she is the only one who wants to break the cycle of her family as well as social moral codes. She defeats these strong moral forces and commits suicide and thus she solves only a part of the problems because she does not want to be like her mother and dies before her mother, dying before that breaks the cycle.

We feel sympathy towards Maggie because even though she has made a mistake, she does not desire damnation or destruction. In this way Crane has used Maggie as a hope and the symbol of purity, uncorrupted by external corruption, someone to break the natural cycle and it works until the end of the novel because although she becomes prostitute, she is never really immoral and this is one of the qualities of existential hero.

Maggie has paid an awful price of trying to improve her lot in a world of cruelty and indifferences. She is a victim whose punishment does not fit the crimes because she has committed none. She is the innocent-seduced and abandoned not only by Pete but by her family, her tenement, and the society. Maggie tries to avoid being condemned and destroyed, from the bad routine of slum and she is successful outwardly because she does not accept her defeat and dies at her own cost. True, she does not act heroically and tragically but naively and idealistically. True, the reader does not feel the exaltation of her struggle, for she suffers quietly and does not fight back. It is also true that undeserved suffering in itself is tragic. Maggie tries and fails to rise from her empty world; she however never succumbs to self-pity, as her mother does. She faces her dilemma in the best way she knows how, and ultimately faces the heroic death for personal dignity. Thus she becomes the representative figure of collective tragic

situation, the waste of human life and potential in the advancing world of civilization. Crane tells us Maggie's existence, her dreams, her reality, her tenement and self destruction, in an American tragedy. Aristotle reminds us that there are other types of tragedy "besides character". At last, Maggie is "better' and noble" compared to the other in Rum Alley, who are sometimes pathetic, sometimes bathetic. Physically they remain alive but spiritually they are dead. In the same way Edith Hamilton writes that Crane used Maggie as "Christian symbolist expressing faith in the ultimate understanding and redemption of man." (205). He shows his characters baffled and hurried in a crazy world, where they do not function well enough to control their own destinies, or even to understand very well in Maggie, the natural forces are found in the harsh living conditions and the relationship between parents and children. In this way, we are aware of how Maggie, a poor girl belonging to a lower class Irish family, is abused physically by her parent. Her life is described as jungle, a terrible surrounding in which, Maggie has to survive in order to preserve her own nobility and dignity in life. The struggle of poverty becomes a prison, which makes her a prostitute. It shows natural characteristics such as heredity. Her mother is a prostitute so is she: his father is a drunkard so is her brother. The ruin is eternal because there is no hope of redemption. Maggie is forsaken by the family, the man she loved and by God too. The world in which she is living is against her to control her free will but she does not care of external corrupted world. Now she is living in her own world which is godless. But she is so bold to lead her in the hostile world.

Everyone abandons Maggie. First her father dies, and her mother thinks she is a devil and a beast after her affair with Pete. For Maggie there is no home and no rest. She is in complete despair because she has nothing to hope for

perhaps the harshest evidence that the universe of Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* is hell, and one cannot even find comfort in the Church. So to get rid of this environment, she redeems herself by committing suicide, possible escape from moral degradation and for personal dignity. She is existential heroine in this godless, hostile world that always wants to control free will.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

Since the time *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* appeared on the literary horizon in 1893, it has drawn the attention of many critics and literary individuals. It has become a standard stem in academic curricula and obligatory reading lists, and perhaps partly because of that, it has slowly but surely made its way at least among the affected students to the unenviable status of books which to use the fitting words of Mark Twain, everybody wants to read and no body seems to read. Yet, at least beginning with the twentieth century *Maggie* was and still is read by a considerable number of critics whose interpretation can be generally divided into two groups: The "pietistic" and "iconoclastic".

Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* has various qualities. It can be judged from different point of views, therefore, the criticism depends on the reader how he interprets. Edward Garnett remarks in *Modern American Literature* that:

Maggie is not a story about people, it is primitive human nature itself set down with perfect spontaneity and grace of handling. For aesthetic beauty and truth no Russian, not Tehekhor himself, could have bettered this study, which as Howells remarks has the quality of Greek tragedy. (214-15)

Here, Gannet tries to convey us that *Maggie* like primitive human is gifted with the quality of perfect spontaneity and grace of handling life best to get aesthetic beauty and truth. Whatever she thinks and does is perfect and final.

Another famous critic, Donald B. Gibson says *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* was neither to support nor to refute Darwinism as he understood. He

accepted the Darwinism scheme so far as he understood it, with no question as to its truth or its adequacy for defining the life situation. Donald B. Gibson in the "Flawed Maggie" writes:

Maggie manifests a considerable change in attitude from that apparent in the Sullivan Country sketches. In the earlier work there is at least the possibility of free action, action resulting from decision on the part of a character. But in Maggie no such possibility exists. Even if we decide the little man does not actually perform heroic action, we yet must grant that he is not determined in his actions. (15)

This should be called a tragedy that raises fruitless issues, because the book is undeniably filled with pity and fear as Veron Loggins quotes in *I Hear America*:

It is short, a novelette, yet it suggest more life than any American contemporary of crane could have depicted in a thousand pages. In its every crowded phrase and metaphor it is realist. The little book breaks all tradition of fiction. Crane has no model for it-expect possible the page or two he had read from Zola, But it is not Zolasque critics like to call it the first specimen of genuine realism produced by an American. Perhaps it is that .But it should be judged as a thing unique just a faithful and vivid projection of the grim degeration and sordid beauty of the Bowery. (25)

Vermon has the point that Maggie is not only novel but more than that. Maggie like tragic hero goes to different phases of life, experiences it and

ultimately she rejects the social and moral codes of society that tries to control her free will but she rejects all these problems created by antagonistic force so boldly.

It is clear that Maggie's suffering can't be seen outwardly because it is under suffering that is tragic in itself. It rises pity and fear in the readers. The feeling of pity gets intense when she faces heroic death.

It posited the imperative need for a new ethical code and, through a consistent use of irony, debunked the false values worshiped by society, as George Brown Tindal in *A Narrative History* adds:

The reception of *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* is clearly hostile in some quarters, it is undeniable that conservative critics found Crane's unflinching realism disturbing, quite unsuitable for polite readers. Yet it is also undeniable that Maggie is very much a product of its time and a sharper of that sometime. (910)

In *Maggie Crane* superimposes a vague memory of the heroic past upon a savage present. The heroic world has given way to the slums. This novel is his *Maggie Agonists* as Jay Martin writes:

By recalling the Homeric world he reveals us to ourselves as savage and cowardly. But at the same time, his satire, like most forceful satire, criticizes the romance and chivalry of his heroic world as well. His vision is contrary set against itself. He is comfortable with neither the ideal nor the real, but alienated from both. (210)

Similarly, there are some writers who have attentively analyzed this novel as hell, where the characters are treated as animals but not as human beings so Donald Pitzer in *Nineteenth Century American Philosophers* conclude that:

The warfare is more intense and the animal qualities are encouraged by a life of battle strength, fear and cunning. The slum and the home are not only battlefield, however, but are also enclosed arenas .Maggie's tenement is in a " dark region' and her apartment". Up dark stairways and along cold. Gloomy halls." Is like a care. Crane's description of Johnson children eating combines both the warfare and cave image into one central metaphor of primitive competition for food. (188)

Crane Provides his reader with a sensationalist view into city slums to epitomizes the young man's first novel, the genius of youth. It is the 'new" novel, the "antinovel" of its day, it is the work of a angry young man", the "rebel" challenging conventions and traditions. Crane's heroine Maggie creates her own individual choices by not following the established social tradition and values that shapes the average people. She creates her system within which her choices that is her individual values, her choice are functional. So the references of these excerpts from various critics and the plot of the texts leads me to concludes that God is dead that is why there is not other being supreme than man. Crane's heroine Maggie suffers because choice made by her are entirely her own will, she does not go according to the choices of average or typical people of society, ceaselessly struggles against unfavourable odds tries to maintain dignity and nobility and ultimately she faces the heroic death.



## Chapter III: Methodology

### Existentialism

My primary analytic tool is existential theory of Jean Paul Sartre. Which seems to be best suited theory if we study the characters, mainly that of the protagonist in *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*. Existentialism is a philosophical and literary movement that came to prominence in Europe, particularly in France, immediately after the Second World War and that focused on the uniqueness of each human individual as distinguished from abstract form of universal human qualities. The term 'existentialism' is only changing according to time but the content in all ages is the same. Even twentieth century existentialist thinking is long before considered by philosophers like Soren Kierkegaard, Fodder Dostoyevsky, and Friedrich Nietzsche of the nineteenth century. But the very term existentialism was coined by French thinker, Jean Paul Sartre in the twentieth century.

To find the root of the term we have to go to Socrates, Pascal, Pythagoras and Rousseau who contributed to build its foundation. After that we have to come to Martin Heidegger, Scone Kierkegaard, F. Nietzsche, Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus respectively. By gathering different thoughts and feelings from the beginning of its development. J. P. Sartre, a French philosopher, has given the final symmetry after the 1940s, then only it spread all over the world and became popular 'existential philosophy.' The term 'existence' comes from the Latin root "ex" out + sister from Sartre "to stand". Thus existence "means to stand out in the universe that is against us, and existentialism means pertaining to existence" (360). Regarding the definition of existentialism Encyclopedia, Britannica observes:

It can insist on the transcendence of being with respect to existence and by holding this transcendence to be the origin or foundation of existence and it can thus assume a theist form. On the other hand it can hold that human existence 'posing itself as a problem' projects itself with absolute freedom creating itself by, thus assuming itself to it the function of God. As such existentialism presents itself as a radical atheism. (73)

According to Encyclopedia of Britannica, man is transcendental being that can look future in the best way with absolute freedom creating himself. Thus man here assumes himself God and does the function of it

Either they believe in religious mysticism or repudiate the concept of God of an authentic shelter, what they have in common is that they think existence precedes essence. Existentialism maintains that existence precedes essence" which means 'existence is prior to essence'. This proves that human being has no essence, no essential self, and is no more than what he is. He is the only sum of life in so far that has created and achieved for himself. The very term "existentialism" is used to describe" a vision of the condition and existence of man, his place and function in the world", and his relationship or lack of it with God (306). It is very intense and philosophically specialized form of just for selfhood" (803). Encyclopedia international pronounces that existentialism is near to life and death of people. Instead of concentrating on logic or science," existentialism is primarily concerned with human existence, especially with man's most extreme experience, the confrontation with death, anguish and anxiety despair and guilt (589-90).

In existential philosophy, individual is the most important. So, the focus of existentialism is on 'being ' and "subjectivity" as opposed to "logical reasoning" and " objectivity". In this philosophy, individual experience is foregrounded rather than abstract thought and knowledge. So existentialism has been a reaction in favour of individual subjectivity, introspection and feeling. It is a philosophy not of things but of the human situation (603). It has much in common with romanticism, pragmatism, and individualism but it is far from idealism, mechanism and determinism because idealism, mechanism and determinism believe in god external existence whereas romanticism and individualism do not believe in god and any external existence like existentialism. Regarding the existential philosophy, M.H. Abrams' writes:

To new a human being as an isolated existent who is cast into an alien universe to conceive the universe as possessing no inherent truth value or meaning and to represent human life in its fruitless search for purpose and meaning as it moves from the nothingness, whence it came towards the nothingness where it must end as an existence which is both anguished and absurd.

(1)

Man is nothing at birth. He is thrown into an alien universe to conceive the universe. Unfortunately, he wanders his whole life in search of some purpose and meaning of life, but his search becomes fruitless as it goes towards the nothingness. However, man always struggle for his personal dignity which is in reality both anguished and absurd.

Existentialism is often seen as a revolutionary against traditional European philosophy which takes philosophy as a science. Classical

philosophers produced knowledge that would be objective, universally true and certain. The existentialists don't go with the tradition attempt to get the ultimate nature of the world in abstract systems of the thought. Instead of the search for what it is like to be an individual human being in the world. The individual must decide what is true from false; what is right from wrong, which beliefs to accept and which are to reject, what to do and what not to do. "Yet, there no objective standards or rule to which a person can turn for a answers to problems of choice because different standards supply conflict advice", says the world book Encyclopedia (437).

Therefore, the individual must decide which standards to accept and which ones to reject. Jean Paul Sartre is one of the leading advocates of atheistic existentialism. He has classified existentialism into two groups: Theistic and Atheistic and he puts himself, in the group of atheistic existentialism which is more practicable than others. J. P. Sartre says the term existentialism has been defined in many ways so it has no any clear cut definition and it seems as meaningless thing because of its various meaning. He divides existentialist thinkers into two groups: Theistic and Atheistic existentialists. Regarding the issue of divisions of existential thinkers, Jean Paul Sartre writes:

. . . There are two kinds of existentialists; first, those who are Christian, among whom I would include Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel, both Catholic; and on the other hand aesthetic existentialists, among whom I class Heidegger and then the French existentialists and myself. What they have in common is

that they think that existence precedes essence, or if you prefer, that subjectivity must be the starting point. (13)

He categorizes existentialism into two: Christianity, believing in God and anti-Christianity or not believing in God. The first group is known as theist existentialists, who believe in the god and accept the existence of God who is supreme in power. Here Man becomes the remote controlled being and the God controls the man and 'therefore' we are suffering and suffering. In this group Jean Paul Sartre includes Martin Buber, Gabriel Marrel, Jaspers and Soren Kierkegaard. In the second group, he includes F. Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and the French existentialists including himself. They do not believe in the presence of God. F. Nietzsche is the fore-runner and chief source of inspiration for them, who declared that God is dead and wrote a book named *The Death of God*. The atheistic existentialists don't agree with the concept of God as an authentic shelter.

Jean Paul Sartre, who is one of the leading advocates of atheistic existentialism, defines Sartre defines existentialism," . . . by existentialism we mean a doctrine which makes human life possible and, in addition, declares that every truth and every action implies a human setting and a human subjectivity" (10). He was very much influenced by existential theory of Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Husserl. He produced his own theory by rejecting Christianity and presence of God. Like Nietzsche, he says God is dead and we are living in the Godless world. That's why, there is not other being supreme than man. So he mainly focuses on "existence precedes essence" at the principle of existentialism." Jean Paul Sartre defines existentialism,"...by existentialism we mean a doctrine which

makes human life possible and, in addition, declares that every truth and every action implies a human subjectivity" (10). Existence precedes essence" is the main doctrine of existential philosophy which all the atheistic existentialists agree with. This doctrine comes just opposite to "essence precedes existence". To justify his own doctrine, 'existence comes before essence,' he writes:

First of all, man exists up, appears on the scene and only afterwards, defines himself. If man, as the existentialist conceives him, is identifiable, it is because at first he is nothing. Only afterwards will he be something and he himself will have made what he will be thus there is no human nature since there is no God to conceive it. Not only is man what he conceives himself to be; but he is also only what he wills himself to be after this thrust to ward existence.(15)

He says that the being of an object is fixed and static, but the being of human being is fluid and free. It is open towards the future. The human being is nothing at birth and in life he is just the sum of life. Jean Paul Sartre in "*I Am Free*" declares "the human being is the maker of his own destiny and is condemned to make his own decision" (115). Like other existentialists Jean Paul Sartre also believes in action and commitment than in abstract thought. To make his view clear, Alburey Castell and Donald M. Borchet quotes Sartre lecture in his words:

In reality, things will be such as men have divided they shall be. Does that mean that I should abandon myself to quietism? No, first I ought to commit myself and then act my commitment,

according to the time honored formula that "one need not hope in order to undertake one's work". Nor does this mean that I should not belong to a party but only that I should be without illusion and that I should do what I can. For instance, if ask myself will the social ideas as such, every becomes a reality?" I can't tell, I only know that whatever may be in my power to make it so, I shall do; beyond that I can count upon nothing. (91)

Man does not expect anything from the God because he himself is everything. So he himself is responsible for his each and every action because he is free to choose. To justify about human will and every action because he is free to choose. To justify about human will and responsibility, he writes:

. . . there is nothing in heaven; man will be what he will have planned to be. Not what he will want to be. Because by the word "will" we generally mean a conscious decision which is subsequent to what we have already made of ourselves . . . Thus existentialism's first more is to make every man aware of what he and to make the full responsibility if his existence rest on him. (16)

According to Sartre, we have various choices and among them we have to choose the best one. For that purpose we must have power of conscious decision which is known as "will" in existentialism that enables us to choose the more spontaneous choice among the choices. All the time in choosing the choice we must be careful not only for ourselves but also to the remaining human world. He is the strong supporter of humanism. By supporting humanism he writes:

When we say that man chooses his own self, we mean that every one of us does like wise, but we also mean by that in making this choice he also chooses all men. In fact, increasing the man that we want to be, there is not a single one of our acts which does not at the same time create an image of man as we think he ought to be. To choose to be this or that is to affirm at the same time the value of what we choose, because we can never choose evil. We always choose the good, and nothing can be good for use without being good for all. (27)

In human life, two problems are consistently arise either to choose his own liberty by suppressing others which frames the "good faith", or to accept the liberty of others' by repressing his own, which frames "bad faith". But both these options are impossible as one is not completely free from the intervention of another. As regards this Sartre writes:

We will freedom for freedom's sake, in and through particular circumstances. And in thus willing freedom, we discover that depends entirely upon our own. Obviously, freedom as the definition of a man does not depend upon others, but as soon as there is a commitment, I am obliged to will the liberty of others as the same time as my own. I can't make liberty my aim unless I make that of others equally my own.(842)

Sartre has used two terms: "Being for Itself" and "Being in-Itself" in his most important philosophical book *Being and Nothingness*. He makes clear distinction between these two terms. According to him being in itself applies to things, a thing exists in itself. This means a thing is basically what it is. If



this is the case, then the axiom about "existence precedes essence" can not be applied to an inanimate object. In case of man: existence precedes essence, so man is being for itself not being in itself. To make this view clear he writes.

Being is. Being is in itself. Being is what it is. These are the three characteristics which the preliminary examination of the phenomena of being allows us to assign to the being of phenomena. For the moment it is impossible to push our investigation further. This is not yet the examination of the in-itself- which is never anything but what it is which will allow us to establish and to explain its relations with the for itself. Thus we have left "appearances" and have been led progressively to posit two types of being the in- itself and for – itself. ("The Pursuit" 29-30)

Sartre's deepest interest is in individual human beings. His effort to understand them, to form a general concept of human beings has nevertheless been heavily dependent on a number of other such conceptions, among them the Christian religion and Hegelian theory of man. All of these Sartre for one reason or another reason rejects, but he does not regard them as just unfortunate philosophical mistakes. Existentialists do not agree to materialists also. The focus is given upon individual freedom and the subjectivity. By taking these types of existential points Sartre and in general the existentialism is criticized. Fuller and Me Murrin have presented critics' charge upon existentialism and Sartre's response in the following lines:

. . . existentialism in general , is pessimistic, he ( Sartre) replies that such a charge can come only from those who are fearful of

the truth that life is genuinely difficult. "Existentialism", he has written is nothing else than an attempt to draw all the consequences of a coherent atheistic position. The discovery that there is no God and the man is above is the beginning of a genuine humanism that dignifies man as the beginning of a genuine humanism that dignifies man as the free creator of all values and of whatever meaning there is in human existence. (*A History of Philosophy* 612)

Authenticity demands from life a free choice without excuse and without help that presupposes that full responsibility. The adaptation of responsibility, in consequence, causes certain uneasiness of which no one can save oneself. This uneasiness or the anguish is the heart of human existence. Thus existential anguish presents a reality of human life, which has to be faced historically and optimistically according to Sartre. Talking about anguish, Sartre uses the term "Forlornness" from Heidegger. According to Sartre it means. "Only that God does not exist and we have to face all the consequences of this" (*Existentialism* 21). In this condition anguish appears, so Sartre says, "forlornness and anguish go together" (29). In anguish the individual's relationship with the world seems to be uncanny and faithful, though true existence requires that the situation be faced through a commitment to the decision brought him face to face with it . The anguish of existential man is like the anguish of military officer on whom depends the life of several men but he has to order for attack and for this decision he feels anguish and the himself is responsible for his commitment and for lives of other men (20).

Sartre turns his doctrine of existential choice into doctrine of engagement. Engagement of individual means the engagement of society because individual is a component of the society. His choice affects not only for himself but also for the society. In this way Sartre focuses on humanism. By the lack of this humanism two great world wars took place." Humanism" and Existentialism" are the same as Sartre claims but other critics have criticized him as anti-humanist and pessimist.

This research paper stands on Sartre's theory of freedom of choice that man makes himself. Man does so by having "free will" and that is responsible for his own actions. According to him, individuals freely constructs and their own value system which results in forming their own sense of being and creating meaning in the process. That's to says, individuals are not engaged in blindly following certain: or defined guide posts and rules established by others. In fact, in social sphere, an individual encounters with repressive social institutions, laws and conventions. In the course of his opposition to these laws and connections, he struggles and as a result, feels alienated from the society. The struggle of the individuals to define themselves through their actions and social engagement keeps them aloof from their neighbourhood. In the eyes of their neighbours, they are seen as informers. In other words, they are in to without their society. Only thing that accompanies them is their own self- constructed values and laws. As a result, unbridgeable gap between these two worlds- the social world and the world of that individual makes him/ her suffer which can lead to even death.

According to Sartre, God is dead that is why there is not other being supreme than man. The fate of Crane's heroine owes to Sartre's belief that " man makes himself and entirely responsible for individual actions." Maggie suffers

because choices made by her are entirely her own. She does not go according to the choices of average or typical people in society. Her choices unlike Jimmie, is a blossom in mud puddle has a pretty good chance of overcoming even though she is forsaken by her family, the man she loves and even by God, she has no one to love, no one to love her and no one to return because she is not poor rather she is the only one who wanted to break the cycle of her family as well as social moral codes and defeats these strong moral forces and commits suicide and she solves a part of problems because she does not want to be like her mother she dies before her mother, dying before that break the cycle. We see how she is another victim of brewery world, and we feel sympathy towards Maggie because even she has made a mistake, we think that she does not desire damnation or destruction. In this way, the expressionist symbol of inner purity works until the end of the novel because although she becomes prostitute she is never really immoral.

Crane gives the impression that purity and innocence remain as a symbol of inner purity of hope for the future, a symbol that could break the fate of the family cycle. Hence she not only creates her own fate but also is responsible for future generation.

Thus Crane's heroine Maggie creates her own individual choices by not following the established social tradition and values that shape the average people. She creates her own system within which her choices that is her individual values, her choices are functional. She disregards what society demands from her and establishes her own self created values like forcing her mother, her lover, Pete as well as society to stand by their own choice. She suffers and meets death simply, because she is not only who creates choice for

herself but also tries to do that for others. We can say that she is different from the people of the place that reflects her inner purity. She maintains purity, who ceaselessly struggles against unfavourable odds, tries to maintain dignity and nobility and ultimately faces the heroic death.

## Chapter IV : A Textual Analysis

### *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*

*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* illustrates the women's role in the new consumer oriented society of the United States and focuses on the elements of individuals' values in context of social violence and cruelty. It portrays human as supreme creature that does not expect anything from God because he himself is every thing. So he himself is responsible for each and every action because he is free to choose. In human life, two problems consistently raise either to choose his own liberty by suppressing others which frames the "good faith", or to accept the liberty of others by repressing his own, which frames "bad faith". But both these options are impossible as he is not completely free from the intervention of another. Thus it shows that human race has control over its destiny.

Choosing is a difficult task for all. No man can choose the best one but he tries to choose the better one. Process of choosing is never ending. So man struggles for the best choice until his death. Those who can struggle till to the end of their life, can exist in this world. Existentialists speak powerfully to the sense of twentieth century as a chaotic and even catastrophic era, in which certainties have been lost and man is faced with the abyss of nothingness or of his own capability for evil. It stresses on extreme situation, which produce dread, anxiety and awareness of freedom of choice or original sin.

In *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* the nature has no control over the character. Maggie is in dilemma either to accept the circumstance that tries to control her or to create her own sort of life style in accordance with her own

free choice. To create her own choice of life, there is a certain life cycle that must be broken for any of the characters to rise above. And Maggie is the only one who really tries to break this cycle. But she only solves a part of the problem because she does not want to be like her mother. There is only one difference between Maggie and her mother. Maggie dies before her mother, dying before that breaks the cycle. Maggie tries to avoid being condemned and destroyed by the unjust code of the slum and she is partially successful in her mission. Here Crane tries to convey to the reader that the character can control his/ her destiny and can destroy the institution that attempts to control them. In this, Crane's purpose is make people aware that human being is the maker of his own fate, destiny and is free to make his own decision.

Like Jean Paul Sartre, Crane also believes in action and commitment than in abstract thought and to make his view clear he cites from the streets lecturer in his words:

In reality, things will be such as men have decided they shall be. Does that mean that I should abandon myself to quests? No, first I out to commit myself and then act my commitment according to the time honored formula that "one need not hope in order to undertake one's work". Not does this mean that I should not belong to a party but only that I should be without illusion and that I should do what I can. For instance, if ask myself" will the social ideas as such, every becomes a reality?" I can't tell, I only know that whatever may be in my power to make to so, I shall do; beyond that I can count upon nothing. (91)

According to Sartre, God is dead that is why there is not other being supreme but man. The fate of Crane's heroine owes to Sartre's belief that "man makes himself and entirely responsible for individual actions". Maggie suffers because choices made by her are entirely her own. She does not go according to the choices of average or typical man in society. Her choices, unlike that of Jimmie, is blossomed in mud puddle has a pretty good chance of overcoming even she is forsaken by her family, the man she loves and even by god. she has no one to love, no one to love her and no one to return because she is not poor rather she is the only one who wants to break the cycle of her family as well as social moral codes and defeats these strong moral forces too and commits suicide. Thus she solves a part of problem because she does not want to be like her mother and she dies before her mother, dying before that breaks cycle.

Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* opens with a street fight between two groups of boys, the Run Alley boys vs the Devil's Row boys .The boys are hurling rocks and insults each other. Jimmie, a tiny would – champion stands in the middle of the group on heap of gravel articulating his own curses. Soon, Jimmie is a bloody mess with tears staining his dirty face. There comes Maggie, his sister, and finally father hears the news of their fighting and puts an end to it.

Maggie and her family live in the tenements of the bowery, a slum area of New York City. Her father and mother are both alcoholics, and she and her two brothers suffer a violent and abusive childhood. The younger of the two boys dies, but Maggie and Jimmie survive. Maggie grows into a beautiful girl



somehow untouched by the squalor around her. When her brother brings home his friends Pete, who shows her some attention she falls in love with him. She fails to see him as the uncouth braggart that he is succumbs to his charms. She goes to live with him, but Pete soon tries to return home, and is turned away. Both her mother and father condemn her as a fallen woman, despite the immoral behaviour of both who has been arrested many times as prostitute. They laugh at Maggie and compels her to leave the house soon. Thus Maggie is forsaken by her own family, the man she loves and even by god. As life becomes more difficult, penniless and homeless, Maggie turns to prostitution to make a lining. We can imagine how worse the Maggie's living condition is but she is not hopeless by heart. Maggie's life is described as a Jungle in which she has to fight to survive in order to preserve her own life in this hell. The author uses several times the world "hell" to describe their situation and experiences on life. This idea is very well reflected when Jimmie and Maggie's mother tells the only one option for her is to be a prostitute. Robert Wooster Stallman quotes in "Stephen Crane's : *An Omnibus*": "Mag, I'll tell dis ! see ? yeh've edder got the hell or go the work ! "whereupon she went to work having the femine a version of going to hell" (58).

Stephen Crane tells about the girl who struggles in the slum of New York City. Maggie's prison is only physical but not mental. Maggie has no place to stay so she turns to prostitution, to fight in order to preserve her own life. Though she becomes a prostitute, she maintains her inner purity in spite of her physical environment. Her Journey into prostitution takes place through different places may be to reflect similar attitudes in the different class of

man. Vice is not the question of rank or money but only a human attitude. It shows that prostitution can be found in among the rich or poor area of the city. She travels through the city of New York City, first she goes where rich people live, then to the theater, restaurants and eventually returns to the river, the place where she used to live. In her journey she meets characters that represent each part of the districts, and she rejects all of them for one or more than one reasons. She realizes that she is happy and she does not need of others' help. We can see that she is right in her judgment to break the family cycle. She drowns herself in the river and doing so she acts like existential hero. In this way, the expressionist symbol of inner purity works till the end of the novel because although she becomes a prostitute she is never really immoral. Crane gives the impression that her purity works until the end of the novel because although she becomes a prostitute she is never really immoral. Crane gives the impression that her purity and innocence remains as a symbol of inner purity of hope for the future, as a symbol that can break the fate of the family cycle. We must aware that when Pete abandons Maggie, she turns to her mother for helps but her mother laughs at her and kicks her out. Pete does not want anything with her and treats her like, prostitute so she is forced to be a real prostitute. She has nowhere to go at last and she ends life like her mother, so it is a cycle. But we must think that the same thing happens to Marry when she was a young girl. This is a deterministic vision, but gives the idea that she does not want to follow this family cycle and for that reason she drowns herself:

The shield of inner purity does not allow her to continue with such type of animal life. Her suffering is caused by moral code that tries to control her free will, giving her romantic illustrations that will not allow her to control her own free will.

According to Crane, Maggie is a girl "blossomed in a muddle puddle". That muddle puddle was Rum Alley the part of New York city where she lives. Maggie's tenement has down gruesome doorways, which gives the picture of unpleasant circumstances of Maggie's world. In that apartment, load of babies crying and fighting with other people- smoking pipes in obscure corners. Strange man in dark alleys a person in this environment would here to be "blossom in mud puddle". Inside her apartment building, called a dark region, in dark stairways and along cold gloomy halls are adults who are scared of dark, but ready to attack child like Maggie. We can imagine how worse Maggie's living condition is. Crane calls this a battle field and a prison in forming the reader of Maggie's terrible home which place mainly in her mind and thoughts.

He shows the lack of role of parents and religion in society as an element of moral decay. In the first chapter, Crane describes, curious woman in an apartment house observing the people below. The woman symbolizes human indifference to human suffering, a common theme throughout the book. Crane implies that fear and darkness controls the Johnson's lives. Crane provides his readers with a sensationalist view into city slums that represents a large scope the moral standard of society. He goes into detail to present a static result on the weakness in social morals. He forces the reader to recognize the

differences between moral appearance and reality within the realm of society and says that Maggie is created as a pure soul striving to remain clear despite the evil around her.

The girl Maggie is the only one in the entire novel who elicits genuine and continuous concern and sympathy. According to R.V. Stallman, "Maggie is the supreme ideal of all novels that have ever been written in America, where protagonist has tremendous amount of courage in the novel to evoke readers' sympathy for herself and her plight within her brief time in the novel" (129). She generates not only pity but also fear in the readers. Some critics have complained, however, that she does not have enough of a personality in the novel to evoke reader' sympathy for herself and her plight. She may be one of the most absent heroines in American literature, yet her presence is often felt by the reader through other characters like Mary Johson, Jimmie Pete and Nellie and so on. These critics refuse to see anything tragic in the novel because there are no tragic heroes or heroines. Presumably it follows that there is no tragic spirit or vision. It is true that Maggie's actions take place mainly in her mind and thoughts, not in what she says, for she is barely articulate in the novel. But at least she "acts" to do something about her condition, something the other characters in Rum Alley do not do. Within her brief time in the novel, Maggie generates not only pity but fear in the reader. She is not at all like her parents who have reached a dead end, who drink, fight, and abuse their children, but Maggie has very alternatives to their kind of life. Her brother Jimmie suggests this early when serves her an ultimatum.

She goes to work. It does not take her long to realize the emptiness and mechanical drudgery in a collar and cuff factory.

The entrance of Pete gives Maggie the opportunity to fight inevitability and to "rise" above the slums. It is true that Maggie's actions takes in what she says for she is barely articulate in the novel. But at least she "acts" to do. Something about her condition, something the other characters in Run Alley do not do. She has paid an awful price for trying to improve her lot in a world of cruelty and indifference. True, she does not act heroically and tragically, like Sophocles' *Antigone* but she acts and reacts, though naively and idealistically. True, the reader does not feel the exaltation' of her struggle, for she suffers quietly and does not fight back. It is also true that underserved suffering in itself is tragic, as Edith Hamilton writes in the Greek way. As Maggie tries to and fails to rise from her empty world, however, she never succumbs to self pity, as her mother does. She faces her dilemma in the best way she knows how. Thus Maggie becomes the representative figure of a collective tragic situation- the waste of human life and potential in the advancing world of civilization. Edith Hamilton says that Maggie is "better" and "noble" at the compared to the others in Rum Alley, who are sometimes bathetic, sometimes pathetic. Physically they remain alive but spiritually they are dead. (250)

Similarly, to a lesser degree and for a shorter period of time, Jimmie acts like the innocent Maggie. He is aware of right and wrong when his father grabs the beer pail. Jimmie complains. "An, come off ! I got dis can fer dat ol' woman an' it' ud be dirt ten swipe it". For brief moments he shows his

awareness of positive moral and spiritual values, for example, when he tries to avenge his sister's seduction by Pete, Jimmie is rarely out of Sync with his Rum Alley world. He respects only force, the fire engine, for example, he inherits his father's ways for he drinks and quarrels. It is difference between A Rum Alley and Maggie. Through both he and she are members of the young generation and grow up in the same household in the same environment, only Maggie remains a flower in the mud puddle, because Jimmie adapts.

In the first chapter we find how little boys fight to defend their colony as a way of survival for them fight is a characteristic of their life fighting in the streets or fighting at home to avoid their parent's beating. We see that the children are fighting between them and Jimmie's father kicks them instead of trying to bring peace among the boys. The father instead of separating the boys starts kicking them violently. Besides being an alcoholic parent, Maggie's mother is a whore who has been arrested many times. Most of the days when children come home they find their mother lying on the floor drunk, looking sick in a terrible state. When Jimmie is a little boy, he begins to be arrested. Before he reaches a great age, he has a fair record. It is in first chapter that we get glance of Maggie as young girl, and it is very recalling about Maggie's nature because it gives the idea of something rare and special about her. We must pay attention to the language that the author uses. He uses the word "blossomed" presenting an image of freshness and beauty , that is opposite with the next image, " muddle puddle" that reminds us of Sickness, death, and decay, because this "muddle puddle" can destroy the "blossom" of Maggie and can destroy her hopes for better life. We can perceive all that by

the description of Robert Wooster Stallman in Stephen Crane's *An Omnibus* as he says:

The girl, Maggie blossomed in a muddle puddle. She grew to be a most rare and wonderful production of tenement district, a pertly girl. None of the dirt of Rum Alley seemed to be in her veins. The philosophers' up stairs, down stairs and on the same flower puzzled over it. (58)

Through all these battles and the way they act is reflected in the Darwinian theories about the survival of the fittest, means acting clearly that men are acting like animals, fighting in order to preserve their lives in jungle, when only the strongest species survive, a very naturalistic vision of life. This jungle full of struggles and fights is Johnson's environment. Crane calls this a battle and a prison informing the reader to Maggie's terrible home which affected a lot in her life. Robert E. Spiller and Willer Throp illustrate. "Maggie Johnson is an elemental woman and man in the first moment of meeting with death". . . (1023). We can say that is different from the people of the place that reflects her purity. She maintains her purity in this place although that is so corrupted. It is like a colourful flower growing up in a corrupted environment. Here Crane has used Maggie as a symbol of hope and purity, someone to break the natural cycle of life although we see that she does not achieve her aim and solves only part of the problem.

The idea of hell is associated with everybody's life that turns throughout the novel that is associated with decay and death. We can't analyze or judge their behaviour or thought from a moral point of view. We must keep

in mind that we are dealing with a dramatic point of view about life. We have seen how Maggie has been portrayed as a flower and she is trapped in her dream of illusion for a short time that keeps her living in a fantasy world, which shows that she can't control her life and is attracted by Pete and thinks that he is a real knight somebody especially who could take her far away from her hellish environment. Her fantasy does not allow her to see Pete's real personality. Pete takes her to the theater to show melodrama and Maggie tries to imitate the act of the stage. Maggie dreams that she will get rid of poverty and will fulfil her dream to wear fashionable dress. But when Pete rejects her, she comes to know that he is not really in love with her, Maggie also rejects Pete. She controls her choice and makes her free individual choices as existential hero does.

In this novel characters act like animals as if they are inside a cage. Crane's characters are just trained animals trying to imitate the human behaviour in their own dreamy minds. Through this novel, we know how the harsh living condition of the slum affects people's daily life, and allows us to understand how she defeats these strong natural forces and commits suicide. She is a girl born in such environment of misery that has less chance of escaping from it. These natural forces are not her fault but she is a victim of the false moral codes by the people living around her. People like Maggie, in such environment does not fit in this life style.

Johnson's family seems that they are members of society and are just drunken parents that abuse their children constantly. They pretend to be respectable members of society and try to keep beating children in home.



They act in front of their neighbourhood that acts like a real audience. They act in front of their neighbourhood that is not reality but appearance. Maggie is poor girl belonging to lower class Irish family is ill treated physically and mentally by her parents everyday. Her life is described as a Jungle in which Maggie has to fight to survive in order to preserve her own life. They lack family feeling among them, and the Johnsons' are described as animal. For them life is just a battle to defend their territories.

By this Crane gives us an image of brutality and animal behaviour, they act and eat like animal. Maggie and her brother grow up in a family with no feelings of love towards the children: they are bitten and abused from the beginning of their lives. Their parents' behaviour reflects that they were also abused and neglected by their own parents. Her intention of ill treating her children were only her frustration. She takes it out on her son and daughter. Their behaviour is real representation of moral codes that try to limit the individual's choices. Maggie is different from the people of the place that reflects the inner purity who at least realize that there is a certain life cycle that must be broken for any of the characters to rise above. In this way the expressionist symbol of inner purity works till to the end of the novel because although she becomes a prostitute she is never really immoral. Throughout her fall from her seduction by Pete to her ride into the East River, Crane gives the impression that her purity and innocence remain as a symbol of inner purity of hope for the future, a symbol that can break the fate of the family cycle because unlike her mother does not want to follow her family cycle that for this reason she drowned herself.

The shield of her inner purity does not allow her to continue with such type of life as an average people live in corrupted world killing their own free will. Her suffering is caused by moral code that tries to control her free will giving her romantic illustrations that will not allow her to control her own life. We can find several striving ironies that parallel the character's lives. There is a terrible irony that in choosing Pete's escape from Bowery and Maggie runs in to the same world who wishes to escape. Like Mrs. Johnson, Pete describes to maintain the responsibility for Maggie's fall as he cries completely drunk. He says, "I am good for girls to an audience of prostitutes" (51). And at the end, Like Maggie herself, he is eventually a victim of sexual fighting. The girls and Maggie reject him too.

Although we see that Maggie is mistaken in her judgment about Pete, she is not wrong in her belief. Crane tells us how the mother thinks about Maggie when she does not come home and the mother really thinks that the daughter has done a great offense to their "honor" and "home" and she keeps calling Maggie a "whore", when she gets angry. Mrs Johnson tells Maggie that there is only one option for her is to be a prostitute. Thus Maggie is forsaken by her family the man she loves and even by god. But she is not hopeless. Though the environment is hostile, she has hope of better future. She has not lamentation about past because she has chosen her way herself.

Thus, Crane's heroine Maggie creates her own individual choices by not following the established social traditional values that shape the average people. She creates her own system within which her choices that is her individual values are functional. She disregards what society demands from

her and establishes her own self created values like forcing her mother, her love, Pet as well as society to stand by her own choice. She suffers and meets death simply, because she not only creates choice for herself but also tries to do that for others. We can say she is different from the people of the place that reflects her inner purity. She maintains purity, and works till the end of the novel before she commits suicides.

There is not a literal reference here to Maggie's death by drawing. Maggie's "action" proves many things though an ordinary rather than extraordinary. She has a conscience and personal dignity; she refuses to accept her "material success" as a prostitute, her spiritual values triumph. In her death she "rises" above her Rum Alley environment and her social order. Crane presents this last scene in an unorthodox and effective way: it is like a dumb show, aimed directly at the audience the reader, in the " front row at a theatre", who makes a final assessment of Maggie, dreams and Maggie has paid an awful price for trying to improve her a lot in a world of cruelty and indifference. She acts and reacts naively and idealistically. She ceaselessly struggles against unfavorable odds to maintain dignity and nobility and ultimately faces the heroic death.

## Chapter V: Conclusion

*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* portrays human as unique being living in the Godless world where there is no other being supreme but free man. Like other existentialist, Crane believes that the being of an object is fixed and static, but the being of human being that is fluid and free and it is open towards the future. We can shape it as we like. Human being is nothing at birth but he is maker of his own fate, destiny and is free to make his own decision. Crane's heroine Maggie suffers because choice made by her are entirely her own that is against the social moral codes. She does not go in accordance with the choices of average man like her mother, father and brother but she creates her own individual choice by not following the established norm that shapes an average man. She creates her own system.

The story shows that nothing can be done for Maggie who is blossomed in muddle puddle, who has pretty good chance of overcoming even she is forsaken by her family, the man she loves and even by god. She has no one to love, no one to love her, no one to return because she is not poor rather she is the only one who wants to break the cycle of her family as well as social modal codes, defeats these strong moral forces and commits suicide and thus she solves only a part of the problems because she does not want to be like her mother and she dies before her mother, dying before that breaks the cycle. She is like an objective man who creates her own system within which her choices are functional

We feel sympathy towards Maggie because even she has made a mistake, she does not desire damnation or destruction. we can say that Maggie reveals the part of another deep seriousness and the powerful urge to gain an

audience. It posits the imperative need for a new codes and through a consistent use of irony, throws the light on the false values worshiped by society and exposes the part played by collective passivity in the destruction of innocence. In this way, the expressionist symbol of inner purity works till the end of the novel because although she becomes prostitute, she is never really immoral that is one the qualities of existential hero.

The girl Maggie is the only one in the entire novel who elicits genuine and continuous concern and sympathy. According to R.V. Stallman, Maggie is the supreme ideal of all novels that has ever written in America, where protagonist has tremendous amount of courage in the novel to evoke readers' sympathy for herself and her plight within her brief time in the novel. She generates not only pity but also fear in the readers. Whereas some critics believe that Maggie is the one of the most present heroines in American literature. It is true that Maggie's actions take place mainly in her mind and thoughts, not in what she says for she is barely articulate in the novel. But at least she acts to do something about her condition, something the other characters in Rum Alley do not do. She has paid an awful price for trying to improve her lot in a world of cruelty and differences True, she does not act heroically and tragically, like Sophocles' *Antigone* but she acts and reacts, though naively and idealistically. True, the reader does to feel the exaltation of her, struggle, for she suffers quietly and does not fight back. It is also true that underserved suffering in itself is tragic.

Crane gives us an image of brutality and animal behaviour, they act and react like an animal. Maggie and her brother grow up in a family with no feeling of love towards the children: they are bitten and abused from the

beginning of their lives. Their parents' behaviour reflects that they are also abused and neglected by their own parents. Her mother's intentions of ill treating her children were only her frustration. She takes it out on her son and daughter. Their behaviour is real representation of moral codes that try to limit the individual's choices. Maggie is different from the people of the place that reflects the inner purity who at least realize that there is a certain life cycle that must be broken for any of the characters to rise above. Maggie is only one who really tries to break this cycle. The shield of her inner purity does not allow her to continue with such type of animal life. Her suffering is caused by moral codes that try to control her free will giving her romantic illustrations that will not allow her to control her own life.

To a lesser degree and for a shorter period of time, Jimmie acts like the innocent Maggie and he is aware of right and wrong. When his father grabs the bear pail, Jimmie complains. For brief moments he shows his awareness of positive moral and spiritual values, for example, when he tries to avenge his sister's seduction by Pete. But Jimmie is rarely out of sync with his Rum Alley world. He is a measure of the difference between Rum Alley and Maggie. Though both he and she are members of the young generation and grow up in the same household in the same environment only Maggie remains a flower in the Mud puddle, because Jimmie adapts.

In this novel, life is described as free individual choice, where there is no control of environmental forces and the false moral codes of society, and how people mould their own fate, destiny and are condemned to make their own decision. It portrays human as supreme creature that does not expect everything from the God because he himself is every thing. So he himself is

responsible for each and every action because he is free to choose. In human life, two problems are consistently arise either to chose his own liberty by suppressing others which frames the " good faith", or to accept the liberty of others by repressing his own, which frames " bad faith". Both these options are impossible as he is not completely free from the intervention of others Maggie is in dilemma at first either to choose the " bad faith or "good faith" but as existential hero she chooses "good faith" in accordance with her own free choice. In the end, Maggie is "better" and "noble".

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