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Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* as a Critique of Christian Humanism

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Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* as a Critique of Christian Humanism

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This thesis entitled **Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* as a Critique of Christian Humanism** submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Mr. Damber Bahadur Mahat** has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

The objective of the present research work is to prove Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* as a critique of Christian humanism. Beckett, in order to show the absurd condition of human beings and at the same time flaws in Christian humanism, makes his narrators cum protagonists, Molloy and Moran, satirize the principles of Christian humanism. Both Molloy and Moran take the beliefs of Christian humanism as the point of departure, mock at those deceptive principles such as objectivity of truth, belief in eternity of the soul, existence of God and after life, pre-determined essence of human being and so on. Rather, they, being conscious of their absurd condition, believe in subjectivity of truth, advocate for their individual freedom of choice, become responsible for their own activities, no matter they are successful or failure, and are happy in their absurd life. Moreover, they take the principles of Christian humanism not as an energetic but as a weakening force. So, they never surrender to the doctrines of Christian humanism.

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General Introduction

Samuel Beckett, an Irish –French dramatist, novelist, poet and critic and the winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1969, was born in Fockrock near Dublin, Ireland in 1906. Like his fellow Irish writers George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, and William Butler Yeats, Beckett came from a Protestant, Anglo- Irish background as a younger of two sons in a well-to-do family. He affirms that his parents did everything to make him happy, but he had little talent for happiness. Yet, he mingled easily with family and friends. At the age of fourteen, he went to the Portora Royal school in Northern Ireland, a school that catered to 1920 to 1927; he studied French and Italian languages at Trinity College, Dublin, where he received his Bachelor's degree.

For a short time, he taught in Belfast and in 1928 he received a fellowship to the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. There he first met James Joyce, the author of the controversial and seminal modern novel *Ulysses*, and joined his circle. Contrary to often repeated reports, however, he never served as Joyce's secretary. Rather he

became a part of the *avant-garde* circle and then began to publish poetry, criticism and fiction.

Beckett's first published work, *Whoroscope*, a ninety-eight lines poem accompanied by seventeen footnotes, appeared in 1930. The same year he returned to Trinity College where he took an M.A. degree and taught French until 1932 when he resigned to devote his time entirely to writing and set on a nomadic journey across Europe. He made his way through Ireland, France, England and Germany, all the while writing poems and stories and doing odd jobs to get by. In the course of his journey, he no doubt encountered many tramps and wanderers, and those acquaintances would later translate into some of his finest characters in his plays and novels.

In the 1930s, however, he had to confront the problem of supporting himself. His father died in 1933, leaving him a small annuity. In 1934, a collection of short stories, *More Pricks Than Kicks* was published. In 1935, a slim volume of 13 poems, *Echo's Bones and Other Precipitates*, was published in Paris. In 1936 after completing his first novel *Murphy*, Beckett visited museums in Germany but was upset by Nazi oppression of Jewish intellectuals. In the year 1937, he finally decided to settle down in Paris.

When World War II broke out, Beckett was in Ireland but he returned at once to Paris and joined the underground movement and fought for the French resistance until 1942. It was at the same time that several members of his group were arrested by the Nazis and he was compelled to flee from Paris to the Southern unoccupied zone of France. He started some farming until the liberation of the country and wrote *Watt*, his second novel, which was not published until 1953.

In 1945, Beckett returned to Paris after it had been liberated from the Germans and began his most prolific period as a writer. He briefly visited Ireland and volunteered for the Red Cross Unit, and was back in France as an interpreter in a military hospital in Saint Lo, Normandy. After the death of his mother in 1950, and that of his brother in 1954, Beckett rarely visited Ireland.

In the five years that followed World War II, he wrote his masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* (1954), the novels-- *Molloy* (1951), *Malone Dies* (1956), *The Unnamable* (1960)-- and two books of short stories and a book of criticism, all in French and none referring directly to his wartime life.

Beckett was nearly fifty when he turned from verse, criticism and fiction to the theatre. His first play, *Eleutheria*, mirrors his own search for freedom, revolving around a young man's efforts to cut himself loose from his family and social obligation. His first real triumph, however, came on January 5, 1953, when *Waiting for Godot* was premiered at the Theatre de Babylone. This play immediately established him as one of the most controversial dramatists of his time and brought the 'theatre of the absurd' to a popular attention.

Beckett's position as a master dramatist was confirmed on April 3, 1957 when his second masterpiece, *Endgame*, got premiered in French at the Royal Court Theatre in London. Beckett, thus, exposed his crafts as a great dramatist depicting the life of the meaningless existence and the abortion of the hope. As the main concern of this research is to analyze his novel, not drama, it would be better to focus more on him as a novelist than a dramatist.

In Beckett's major novels, the characters symbolize the human condition, man's impossible striving, meaning and communication with other man or god. One of the particular difficulties in analyzing his work is that it doubles itself. With him

translating his own work from French to English and from English to French, where one expects to find his novel *Molloy*, one finds rather two *Molloys*, one English and the other French, like Siamese twins uncomfortably connected and occupying the same location separately but sharing the same name, space and characteristics.

In spite of Beckett's courageous tackling of the ultimate mystery and despair of human existence in his novels and plays, he was also a comic writer. In a French farce, laughter will arise from seeing the frantic and usually unsuccessful pursuit of trivial sexual gratifications. In Beckett's work as well, recognition of the triviality and ultimate pointlessness of most human strivings, by releasing the viewer from his concern with absurd and futile objectives, should also have a healing effect. The laughter will arise from a view of pompous and self-important preoccupation with illusory ambitions and futile desires. Far from being gloomy and disappointing, the ultimate effect of seeing or reading Beckett is one of cathartic release, an objective as old as theatre itself.

Technically, Beckett was a master craftsman, and his sense of form is impeccable. Most of his novels correspond to the human life cycle, paradoxes involving freedom and determinism. In his work for the mass media, Beckett also showed himself able to grasp intuitively and brilliantly the essential character of their techniques. His radio plays such as *All That Fall* (1957) are models in the combined use of sound, music and speech. Similarly, the short television play *Eh Joe!* (1967) exploits the television camera's ability to move in on a face and the particular character of small screen drama. Finally film script *Film* (1967) creates an unforgettable sequence of images of the observed self- trying to escape the eye of its own observer.

Beckett was also a postmodern novelist. Silence features largely in his earlier fictions such as *Assumption* (1929), *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* (1932), *More Pricks than Kicks* (1934) and *A Case in a Thousand* (1934). In his construction of fictional characters he explicitly renounces the appeal to milieu, race, family structure, temperament, past and present. Beckett reverses the traditional understanding of what is and is not important within the event and structure of a novel. In his novels, Beckett employs pun, paradox, allusion, repetition, and inversion, all in an attempt to disrupt the predictable semantic effects of language. In a spurt of creativity between 1947 and 1949 Beckett wrote *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, and *The Unnamable* in French. Each of the three novels shows in particular the anti-chronological thrust of Beckett's project.

Beckett's latter works tilted towards extreme concentration and brevity. *Come and Go* (1967), a play contains only 121 words spoken by the three characters. He waged his life-long verbal war on words. His *Acts Without Words I* is exactly what the title denotes, and one of his last plays, *Rockaby*, lasts for 15 minutes. Such brevity is merely an expression of Beckett's determination to bare his writing to essentials, to waste no words on trivia.

As Beckett's fictional and dramatic works became progressively more minimalist, he surprised everyone with a renewed burst of creativity. Beckett's principal concern is with the enigma of the first person pronoun. The dominating influences on Beckett's thought were undoubtedly the Italian poet Dante, the French philosopher Rene Descartes, Arnold Geulincx, a pupil of Descartes who dealt with the question of how the physical and the spiritual sides of man interact and finally, his fellow Irishman and revered friend, James Joyce. But it is by no means essential for the understanding of Beckett's texts that one should be aware of all the literary,

philosophical, and theological allusions, including Nietzsche, a powerful German existentialist thinker of the second half of nineteenth century, and a number of early twentieth century thinkers.

Beckett was the first of the absurdists to win international fame whose works have been translated into over twenty languages. He continued to write until his death on December 22, 1989, in Paris, France, but the task grew more and more difficult with each text until he in the end, said that each word seemed to him unnecessary, the theme of silence and nothingness. Thus, he exposed the theme of absurdity in his life too, revealing the connection between his life and his texts.

As the objective of the present research work is to analyze Beckett's criticism on Christian humanism and assertion of existentialist humanism, it would be better to focus on his *Molloy*. *Molloy* is one of the clearest statements of Beckett's ongoing preoccupations: alienation, isolation, exile and the separation of the body and mind, and the last of which subsequently became more and more important in his writings. He had finished *Molloy* just before Christmas and was badly in need of a rest. In his *Molloy* there is often tension between life and death, progress and regression, pleasure and pain. Molloy is the first of Beckett's characters who feels compelled to write down his experiences. Molloy gains a sort of purgation and peace with the knowledge that there are things, which he either 'cannot' or 'will not accept'.

Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* has drawn the attention of many critics and reviewers since its publication in 1951. Its richness is reflected in the reviews and criticisms from various reviewers and critics. Critic Bernard Pingard argues that the two narrators "Molloy and Moran are one and the same" (qtd.in Evenson 273). As they have two separate identities, his opinion is unconvincing. Similarly, another critic David Hayman indicates that "Molloy's mother, Molloy, Moran and Moran's son all

inhabit the same body" (qtd.in Evenson 275). This is an inappropriate effort just for simplifying the text unnecessarily.

But Moran is seeking Molloy when Molloy is lost. This is enough to lodge the hook. The parallels, in turn, force their way on the reader's consciousness. As H. Porter Abbott explains that the problem for the reader is "*Molloy* into two pans that appear at one to be intimately related and to have no relation. The pans are distinct, yet they abound in parallels and cross references" (qtd.in Richardson 5).

Some critics favor this novel *Molloy* as the original version, choosing to apply traditional standards of translation to Beckett's self translated version. Others choose the second version, seeing it as a correction of the initial version, as a revised, perfect text. Many critics choose simply the text that belongs to the language in which they write. As Brian Fitch points out that "the difference is not merely between two identical texts but between two texts in two different languages"(qtd.in Evenson 274). He limits his analysis to exclude the differences inherent in the French and English languages. None of the critics interested in Beckett's *Molloy* has been able to formulate a system, or a series of systems, in which the change between versions is justified. This is in part because Beckett, in both cases, is using a linguistic system that has developed organically and that is not entirely logical.

Dina Sherzer points out that "*Molloy* emerges as a metalinguistic which thorough its linguistic behaviors implicitly comments on the nature of language and language use"(qtd.in Evenson 52). The fact that language and language use cannot be restricted to a basic paradigm, that there are always exceptions, is reflected in the changes of Beckett, *Molloy* from the French to the English. As Maurice Blanchot says, "There is relationship of the word to the thing it represents in *Molloy*." (qtd.in Evenson 34). Michael Mooney says that *Molloy* inverts "Descartes' criterion for

knowledge the presence of clear and distinct ideas and makes it instead the sign of falsehood" (qtd.in Richardson 5). It should also be noted that several other references of this, the cornerstone of Descartes' epistemology, appears throughout the *Molloy*.

Boris Tomashevsky argues that "this novel *Molloy* is not only indication of time but also indication of cause" (qtd.in Levy 86). Another critic Seymour Chatman points out that "events in a narrative tend to be related or mutually entailing" (qtd.in Richardson 4).

Martin Esslin emphasizes that *Molloy* "expresses the senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thought"(qtd.in Levy 85). Though Esslin points out the inadequacy of reason, he doesn't talk about Beckett's criticism on Christian humanism. Significantly, *Molloy* describes this purposeless circulation in terms of the difficulty of fulfilling purpose.

On the other hand, Eric Auerbach takes *Molloy* as "the self realization of the essence" (qtd.in Levy 84). However, for *Molloy* existence precedes essence and does not believe in single essence. Hence, the ontological dispensation in *Molloy* pertains neither to freedom nor to determinism. Any critic interpreting *Molloy* and the namelessness problematizes the sense of identity. Angela Moorjain opines that one of the most pleasurable aspects of Beckett's writing is its "force of reverberation with philosophical thought" (qtd. in Levy 84).

Many critics have observed *Molloy* as disintegration of metaphysical meaning. JD.O' Hora thinks that the overcoming of the Logos principle and discrimination of opposites enable expression of the opposites of the archetypes of the "Jungian collective unconscious" (qtd. in Levy 94). Ernst Carries takes *Molloy* as a reflection of self examination: "According to Aristotle, everything that changes from what is

potentially to what is actually" but in *Molloy* there is no longer a distinction between potency and actuality and hence no more purpose for purpose" (qtd. in Levy 91).

Leslie Hill shrewdly says, "What is left is a binary opposition which invites or solicits interpretation, yet refuses any contextual framework for interpretation. The contrast of *Molloy* becomes both crucial and indeterminate, significant yet devoid of meaning" (qtd. in Levy 92).

None of the afore-mentioned critics have studied this novel as criticism on Christian humanism. So, the present researcher is going to analyze this novel from existentialist perspective to prove that the protagonists explore Beckett's criticism on Christian- humanism and go through problem of meaninglessness and absurdity. So, it would be better to define what Christian humanism and existentialism are in brief.

Christian worldview, as it came, began to rule the western mind since the 8th century. Although the Christian outlook may be imagined as an entirely independent and monolithic structure of belief, it is true that with the rise of Christianity, the pluralism and syncretism of Hellenistic culture, with its various intermingling philosophical schools and polytheistic religious practices were replaced by an exclusive monotheism derived from the Judaic tradition. It is also true that Christian theology established the Biblical revelation as absolute truth and demanded strict conformity to church doctrine from any philosophical speculations. Within these limits, however, the Christian worldview was fundamentally informed by its classical predecessors. Certainly Christianity began and triumphed in the Roman Empire not as a philosophy but as a religion. The essence of Paul's theology lies in his belief that "Jesus was not an ordinary human being but was the Christ, the external Son of God, who incarnated as the man Jesus to save mankind and begin history to its glorious denouement" (qtd. in Tarnas 101). All things had been made in Christ, who was the

very principle of divine wisdom. In Christian faith all human beings are free and equal children of God.

In Christian humanism, God is center and he guides all worldly creatures. Christian humanism is based on the principles such as the existence of a transcendental reality of eternal perfection, the sovereignty of divine wisdom in the cosmos, the primacy of the spiritual over the material, the soul's immortality and high moral imperatives, its experiences of divine justice after death, the importance of scrupulous self-examination, the admonition to control the passions and appetites at the service of the good and true, the ethical principle that it is better to suffer an injustice than to commit one, the belief in death as a transition to more abundant life, the existence of prior condition of divine knowledge now obscured in man's limited natural state, the notion of participation in the divine archetype, the progressive assimilation to God as the goal of human aspiration and so on.

Christian humanism will be distinctive in its interest in the broadest spectrum of human experience. Christianity offered mankind a universal home, an enduring community, and a clearly defined way of life, all of which possessed a scriptural and institutional guarantee of cosmic validity. Human reason was itself the gift of God's original creation for Christianity proclaimed a personal relation to the transcendent. In the Christian world view, the heaven is devoutly perceived as the expression of God's glory and, more popularly, as the abode of God and his angels and saints, and the realm from which Christ would return at the second coming. The world as a whole was understood simply and preeminently as God's creation. God's will ruled every aspect of the universe. All merely human activity, whether independent willfulness or intellectual, curiosity, now appeared secondary- superfluous,

misleading, even sinful God was the exclusive source of all good and of man's salvation. The human surrender to the divine was the only existential priority.

In Christianity God loves mankind. God reaches out from his transcendence and displays for all time and all humanity his infinite love for his creatures. Here is the basis for a new way of life, grounded in the experience of God's love, the universality of which created a new community in mankind. Thus, Christianity bequeathed to its members a pervasive sense of a personal God's direct interest in human affairs and vital concern for every human soul. Christianity brought to the pagan world a new sense of the sanctity of all human life, the spiritual value of the family, the spiritual superiority of self-denial over egoistic fulfillment, of unworldly holiness over worldly ambition of gentleness and forgiveness over violence and retribution; a condemnation of murder, suicide, the killing of infants, the massacre of prisoners, the degradation of slaves, sexual licentiousness and prostitution, bloody circus spectacles all in the new awareness of God's love for humanity, and the moral purity that love required in the human soul. Christianity offered a fully worked out solution to the human dilemma and conditions.

Christianity seemed to derive from the belief that God, in a gratuitous overflow of love for his creation, had miraculously broken through the imprisonment of this world and poured forth his redeeming power into humanity. It was the Christ who had brought humanness and divinity, unity in which the value of humanity itself was exalted. There are many Christian humanists in their own ways. The prominent Christian humanists are Augustine, Aquinas, Erasmus, Thomas More, Martin Luther King Sr, Calvin, Milton and T.S. Eliot.

On the other hand, Existentialism is the modern system of belief that started from the latest movement of European thought opposing the doctrine that viewed

human beings as a manifestation of an absolute value. As the two great world wars, especially the second world war of nuclear holocaust, proved that human rationality no more worked, the terrified people of the western world began to think over the role and activities of an individual. Thrown into an incoherent, disordered and chaotic universe in which individual destinies were obstructed and turned apart by the second world war, they could not believe in old concept like unity, rationality, morality, value and even in Christianity. The artists and writers saw the world totally absurd, incoherent, disintegrated, chaotic and disordered, not governed by the law of providence, but by pure change, pure chance and contingency. This feeling of existence, without justification became the main proposition of the twentieth century. Man is laid bare and face to face to his own destiny.

The widespread feeling of despair and separation from the established order has led to the idea that people have to create their own values in a world where traditional values no longer reign. Existentialism draws attention to the risk of the void of human reality and admits that the human being is thrown into the world in which pain, suffering frustration, alienation, sickness, contempt, malaise and death dominate. Thus, existence means to stand out in the universe that is against us and existentialism means 'pertaining to existence'. Now the 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" (qtd.in Cuddon 316).

Existentialism is an attempt to make life persist by creating a system in which one realizes human loneliness and human subjectivity. It is a set of philosophical ideas that stresses the existence of the human being, the anxiety and depression which pervade each human life. It is a revolt against traditional European philosophy, which takes philosophy as science. Traditional philosophers procured knowledge but

existentialists think that the human being has no essence, no essential self, and is no more than what he is. He is only the sum of life in so far that he has created and achieved for himself. The existence of human being is the basic fact and it has no essence, which comes before his existence.

In existentialism, the human being who is thrown in the world is concerned to be free. He must take this freedom of being, the responsibility and guilt of his actions. The existentialists do not go with the traditional attempts to get the ultimate nature of the world in abstract system of thought. Instead, they reach for what it is like to be an individual, which resides at the core of the existentialists.

The existentialists conclude that human choice is 'subjective', because the individual must make his/her own choice finally without help such as external standards, laws, ethical rules, or traditions. As individuals make their own choices, they are free. As they choose freely, they are completely responsible for their choices. The existentialists emphasize that freedom is necessarily accompanied by responsibility.

Existentialism focuses on the lack of meaning and purpose in life, and solitude of human existence. Existentialism maintains that 'existence precedes essence'. The human being must not miss a way from his responsibilities. He needs to take decisions and assume responsibilities. The human being cannot find any purpose in life, his existence is only a contingent fact. If a human being rejects the false pretensions like the illusion of his existence having a meaning, he encounters the absurdity and the futility of life. Therefore, man's role in the world is not predetermined or fixed; every person is compelled to make a choice.

Existentialist philosophers are of the opinion that metaphysical explanation of existence as given by traditional school of philosophy failed to produce satisfactory

result. Being contrast not only with knowing, but also with abstract concepts, which cannot fully capture what is individual, they also maintain that the problem of being ought to take precedence in all philosophical inquiry. Existence is always particular, unique and individual. It is essential and fundamental. Being cannot be made a topic of objective study and it is revealed and felt by the human being through his/her own experience and his/her situation. So, it is maintained that existence is first and central problem. The prominent existentialists are Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Buber, Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus.

In conclusion, Christianity is the God-centered doctrine, whereas existentialism is a man centered doctrine. In Christianity God is supposed to be guiding all-human creatures and save them but in existentialism it is human who himself is responsible for his own action. Christian humanism focuses on meaningful and certain purpose in life, whereas in existentialism there is lack of meaning, and no purpose in life, and solitude of human existence. In Christianity human choice is 'objective' but in existentialism human choice is 'subjective'. In Christianity God's will rules every aspect, whereas in existentialism humans make their own choice without help of order and laws. In the succeeding chapter the present research will analyze Christian humanism and existentialism.

II. Christian Humanism Vs Existentialism

Christian Humanism

Christian humanism is a philosophy advocating the self- fulfillment of man within the framework of Christian principles. Christian humanism will be distinctive in its interest in the broadest spectrum of human experience. Christian humanism seeks to restore the two peaks of God's involvement with humanity; creation and incarnation. It seeks to remove the impression that God is the enemy of human existence and is only interested in heavenly one. According to Christian humanism, resurrection and the restoration of life to all creation is the eschatological goal of the glory of God. A Christian humanist believes that human experience can glorify the God of creation and reveal God who meets human beings in the incarnation. St. Thomas Aquinas views that "every agent acts for an end because all things seek the good which is their own perfection" (62). In Christian humanism human being seeks to provide an understanding of the implications of the perspective of meaningful life.

Christian humanism is the belief that human freedom and individualism are compatible with the practice of Christianity. It is a philosophical union of Christian and humanist principles. In the teleological view of that tradition to be is to bend, not towards nothingness or indeterminacy but towards entelechy or the complete self-realization whereby each being fulfills its own intrinsic form: "Now everything seeks after its own perfection" (qtd. in Levy 86). The refusal to be a man is here to be explained not as an act of regression, but as a refusal or inability to take seriously the doctrine of man, the rational animal, enunciated in the grand tradition of Christian humanism. Man is, at this moment in history, standing between the past and future drawn magnetically towards the opening of the natural world and new range of

intellectual competence, yet imbued with an unshakable, indeed renewed faith in Christian revelation as Aquinas opines:

The natural world was not just an opaque material stage upon which man briefly resided as a foreigner to work out his spiritual destiny. Nature was valuable as was man, precisely because God gave it existence. To be a creature of the creator did not signify a separation from God, but rather a relationship to God. (qtd.in Tarnas 180)

Christianity is an inherently humanistic and historical faith in Aquinas's view. Our lived experience of the human condition yields an understanding of what it essentially means to be a human being. Within this matrix of experience, we eventually formulate a conception whereby we define the human person. We, then, interpret new experience in the light of this conception, and make moral choices in such a way that this conception is reaffirmed. In doing so, we shape our lives in a way that is consistent with what we believe about our humanity and thereby attain an authentic, fully integrated human existence.

Christian humanism in a world-view was rooted in the Christian history of redemption. It involves the Christian history of the human person in the light of application given by god in Jesus Christ. In terms of application, Christian humanism seeks a recovery and reintegration of two things: the human person created in the image of God, and the created order entrusted to man by God. Created in the image of God, the human person is constituted by a multidimensional relationship with self, individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self- knowledge, of self- possession, and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his creator, to offer him a response of faith and

love that no other creature can give in his stead. An extension of these four characteristics of the human person as created in the image of God is the concrete relationship between the human race and the rest of creation.

Along with creating them in his image, God gives to the human race dominion over creation. This dominion is one of stewardships in which human beings are entrusted to bring forth the natural fecundity of the earth God has created. It is not an autonomous dominion, but a dominion to be exercised according to the original plan of the creator. These four relational dimensions of the human person: a capacity for self-knowledge, self-possession, communion with others and covenant with God were to exist in harmony for the fulfillment of human kind and all creation, to the glory of the creator.

A second important term for Christian humanist thought is stewardship. Being created in god's image, human beings have been given the mandate to care for nature as the God's best creation. The concept of stewardship over creation expresses this mandate. Through stewardship, our creation expresses this mandate. Through stewardship, human beings perfect creation by causing it to express concretely its innate integrity and beauty. It is the call to integrate creation, to bring creation to its integral perfection.

On account of sin, however, this relational nature of the human person is disrupted, infected with alienation and disintegration. We are estranged from ourselves, from other persons and from God when we commit some sins. Moreover, since creation has been entrusted to the human race, the alienating and disintegrating effects of sin make their way into their relationship with the created order. Everything they do in regard to creation -- the building of human community, intellectual achievement, artistic creations, scientific and technological achievements

all manifest disintegration. The applied task of Christian humanism is to overcome this disintegration. However, due to sin, this integration has been disrupted. This leads to a third term that figures prominently in the vocabulary of Christian humanism: alienation refers to that estrangement that has displaced the harmony of creation. It is felt at all relational level of the image of God. The human person is alienated from self, from others, and from God. This alienation also affects the stewardship mandate given to humankind by God. We are alienated not only from ourselves, others and God, but also from creation itself.

Another prominent term in Christian humanism is redemption. By becoming man and assuming our nature and our alienated human condition, God is supposed to redeem humankind and through them, all creation has achieved re-integration and restoration. The human person is crucial in this redemptive process, both fundamentally in the particular person of Christ, in so far as man remains the conduit of creation, and in terms of the concrete realization of the redemption in and through the human stewardship mandate.

Christian humanism is faith informed worldview that considers all things in the light of the redemption wrought by God in Jesus Christ. It expresses the confidence that human life and society are on a historical trajectory of inevitable improvement. Like any humanism, it has the human person as its principle focus, the human person created in the image of God, wounded by sin, redeemed by Christ and called to eternal life in communion with God. The redeemed human person, in turn, cooperates with God in extending this redemption to all creation, "summing up all things in Christ" (qtd. in Bequette 28).

There are certain terms that figure prominently within the vocabulary of Christian humanism, terms that express various aspects of comprehensive summing

up to all things in Christ. One such term is integration. Integration carries two meanings in a Christian humanist worldview. Its basic meaning refers to the integrity of every individual, and created thing. Everything that exists has been created thing. Everything that exists has been created; everything he "saw that it was good" (qtd. in Bequette 31). Christian humanism affirms the integrity or innate goodness of everything God has created. Moreover, integration refers to the interrelation of all things within the created order, an interrelation that finds its center or conduit in the human person.

The task of Christian humanism is to continue the work of this redemption, re-integration and restoration of all creation in Christ through every human endeavor: intellectual life, artistic life, domestic life, economics, politics, race relations, and environmental work. Christian humanism features an optimistic attitude about the capacity of people, but it does not involve the belief that human nature is purely good or that each and every person is capable of living up to the humanist ideals of rationality and morality. If anything, there is the recognition that living up to one's potential is a hard work and requires help of others. The ultimate goal is human flourishing; making life better for all humans. Even among humanists who do believe in some sort of an after life, the focus is on doing good and living well here and now, and leaving the world better for those who come after, not on suffering through life but to be rewarded afterward.

Christian humanism also proposes a more comprehensive and radical view of the unity of the human persons. This organic unity is regarded as goal oriented in that it serves to maintain the welfare of the organism and the species. The soul's powers were extended to five: intellectual, sensory, vegetative, appetitive, and

locomotive. All needed bodily organs to exercise their functions. At death, when the soul is separated from the body, the only function that is immortal is the intellectual.

One prominent Christian philosopher, Saint Augustian, the son of a pagan father and a devoutly Christian mother, was nevertheless progressively drawn to supersensible and spiritual by philosophical preference and religious aspiration, and, not least, by maternal concern. In a series of psychologically dramatic experience, Augustine moved away from his earlier, secularly oriented existence through a sequence of stages holding considerable meaning for his later religious understanding. Augustine's self consciousness as a volitional, responsible moral agent was acute, as was his awareness of the burdens of human freedom- error and guilt, darkness and suffering, severance from God. It was Augustine who first wrote his own soul's experience of doubting but not the fact of the soul's own experience of doubting of knowing, willing and existing thereby affirmed the certain existence of the human ego on God. He further says that without God it cannot exist.

Augustine was Catholic. He was a man of paradox and extremes, and his legacy would be of the same character. It was certainty, the quality and power of Augustine's view:

The experience of overwhelming influx of grace from God turning Him away from the corrupt and egoistic blindness of his natural Self- that was the culminating factor in his theological vision, imprinting in him a conviction of the supremacy of God's will and goodness and the imprisoned poverty of his own. The luminous potency of Christ's positive intervention in his life left the human person in relative shadow. (qtd. in Tarnas144)

Love of God was the quintessential theme and goal of Augustine's religiosity, and love of God could thrive only if life of self and love of the flesh was successfully conjured. In his view "succumbing to the flesh was at the heart of man's fall; Adam's eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the original sin in which all mankind participated " (qtd. in Tarnas 144). All humanity was condemned to pain in childbirth to suffering and guilt in life, and to the final evil of death. Only by Christ's grace and with the resurrection of the body would all traces of that sin be removed and man's soul be freed from the curse of his fallen nature.

It is true that Augustine held that the root of evil did not reside in matter, as the Neo-Platonists suggested, for matter was God's creation and therefore good. Rather, evil was a consequence of man's misuse of his free will. On this pivot rested the tenor of Augustine's moral theology: creation of man as well as nature was indeed an infinitely marvelous product of God's benevolent fecundity, but man's primal sin that creation was set so fundamentally away that only next, heavenly life would restore its original integrity and glory. Man was no longer free to determine his life simply by virtue of his rational will, not only because circumstances beyond his control presented themselves, but also because he was unconsciously constrained by ignorance and emotional conditioning. His initial sinful thoughts and actions had become ingrained habits and finally ineluctable chains imprisoning him in a state of wretched alienation from God. Man was so bound by his vanity and pride, so desirous of imposing his will on others, as to be incapable of transforming himself by his own powers. In his present fallen state, positive freedom for man could consist only in the acceptance of God's grace. Only God could free man, since no action by man on his own could be sufficient to move him towards salvation. And God already

knew for all time who were the elect and whom the damned based upon his omniscient fore-knowledge of their different response to his grace.

Yet history, like all else in creation, was a manifestation of god's will. It embodied God's moral purpose. Although the world history was still under God's command and spiritual in design, Augustine's perceives history in the following way:

Christ had indeed already defeated Satan, but in the transcendent spiritual realm, the only realm that genuinely mattered. The true religious reality was not subject to the vagaries of this world and its history, and that reality could be known only through the individual's interior experience of God as mediated by the Church and its sacrament. (qtd. in Tarnas 147)

In other essential aspects of Augustine's thought and the evolving Christian worldview as in the dualism of an omnipotent transcendent God versus sin enchained man, and the need for a doctrinally and morally authoritative religious structure governing the community of chosen believers it was the Judaic sensibility that dominated. This was particularly visible in the evolution of Christianity's characteristic attitudes towards God's moral Commandments.

Thomas Aquinas, another Christian philosopher, could more freely develop those aspects of the Christian theological tradition. Aquinas was also convinced that human reason and freedom were valuable on their own account, and that their actualization would further serve the glory of the creator. Man could by his unique relationship with the creator enjoy autonomous intellectual and volitional powers modeled on those of God Himself. Human intelligence and freedom received their reality and value from God Himself, for Gods' infinite generosity, allowed his creatures to participate in his own being each according to its distinctive essence and

man could do so to the full extent of his ever developing humanness. In Christianity man would presume to lessen the infinite capacity of God Himself and His creative omnipotence.

To strive for human freedom and for the realization of specifically human values was to promote the divine with God had created the world as a realm with immanent ends, and to reach his ultimate ends, man was intended to pass through immanent ends: to be as God intended, man had fully to realize his humanity.

Aquinas opines:

Man was an autonomous part of God's universe, and his very autonomy allowed him to make his return freely to the source of all. Indeed, only if man were genuinely free could be capable of freely loving God, of freely realizing his exalted spiritual destiny. (qtd. in Tarnas 181)

Aquinas's appreciation of human nature extended to the human body, an appreciation that affected his distinctive epistemological orientation. In contrast to Plato's antiphysical stance, reflected in much of the tenor of traditional Augustinian theology, Aquinas incorporated Aristotelian concept to assert a new attitude. In man, spirit and nature were distinguishable, but they were also aspects of a homogeneous whole. The soul was the form of man and the body was the matter. Man's body was thus intrinsically necessary to his existence. In epistemological terms, it was to man's benefit that his soul was united with a body, for it was only man's physical observation that his soul was united with a body, for it was only man's potential understanding of things. For God's essence was purely his existence, his infinite act of being which underlay the finite existence of all created thing, each with its own particular essence.

Aquinas further opines that "[t]he essence of each thing, its specific kind of being is the measure of its participation in the real existence communicated to it by God" (qtd. in Tarnas 183). What a thing is and the fact that it is at all are two distinct aspects of any created being. In God alone there is absolute simplicity, for what God is and the fact of his being are one and the same: God is 'being' itself unlimited, absolute, beyond definition. Thus, every creature is a compound of essence and existence. The entire creation was dynamically moved relative to the highest form, God. Aquinas opines, "God's true essence was existence" (183). God communicated his essence to his creation, each instance of which became real to the extent of its reception of the act of existence communicated by God. In Christian humanism man's extent of its reception of the act of existence is communicated by God. In Christian humanism man's existence is itself the gift of God's own being. God guides all human beings, then every created thing possesses a true reality founded in God's infinite reality. All created beings participate firstly and most significantly in God's nature, each in its own specific finite manner manifesting a part of God's infinite variety and perfection.

Christian understanding of God can be taken as the loving infinite Creator, giving freely of his own being to his creation. For Aquinas, "God Created and gave being to the world not by necessary emanation but by a free act of personal love" (184). And the creature participated not merely in the one as a distant semi real emanation, but in being as a fully real individual entity created by God. Yet in his emphatic awareness of a superior transcendental reality, his belief in the immortality of the individual soul and his strongly spiritual sensibility which focused on a loving God as the infinite source and goal of being. The ideas and human knowledge are

epistemologically significant ones, for it sanctioned the Christian intellect's explicit recognition of the essential value of sensory experience and empiricism.

The human intellect's capacity to know the ideas directly asserts the intellect's need for sensory experience to activate an imperfect but meaningful understanding of things in term of those eternal archetypes. In Christian humanism man could know truth by being illuminated directly from within by the Knowledge of God's transcendental ideas. Man is matter as well as spirit. Human being can directly know their meaningful life in the world. Man could know an object by comprehending its formal, or universal aspect. Thus, the human mind could make true judgment.

The exercise of man's empirical and rational intelligence had been developed and empowered by Christian cause. For it was the human intellect's penetrating cognition of the multitude of created objects in this world-their order, their dynamism, their directedness, their finiteness, their absolute dependence on something more that revealed, at the culmination of the universe's hierarchy, the existence of an infinite highest Being, an unmoved mover and first cause, the God of Christianity. For God was the sustaining cause of all that exists, the ultimate unconditional condition for the being of all things. Christianity is more resonant with the mystery of the incarnation as the redemptive reunion of nature and spirit, time and eternity, man and God. Man onwards from within to seek perfection.

Erasmus is another prominent Christian humanist. For Erasmus, Christ is not simply our inevitable end but an active principle of life, one to be found in interaction with people challenging ideas, inverting the status quo, urging reconsideration, scoring unthinking dogma. In his "Method of True Theology", Erasmus calls Christ 'Proteus,' thus characterizing him in terms of the classical model of changeableness and versatility. Erasmus called Christ not "the Word" but "The Speech", as if Christ

were either a dynamic orator or a participant with us in an ongoing conversation. Erasmus writes, "If you remain on the surface, a thing may sometimes appear absurd; if you pierce through to the spiritual meaning, you will adore the divine wisdom" (qtd. in Nelson 62). The elements of "The Praise of Folly" that Erasmus takes as serious faults in the society around him are rather obvious, after the illustration from the Adagia. He infuses a living version of the philosophia Christi into the Folly, showing Christ's demonstrations of the way in which to live, as well as highlighting society's failure to live up to that example.

Erasmus exclaims that we no longer even recognize Christ's message, choosing instead to ignore him. In "The Praise of Folly" a monologue, which shocked many of Erasmus's contemporaries (to say nothing for the moment of the church's response), he dramatizes his voice as a singular and unusually learned woman named Folly. She is the Christian fool, a figure equally honored tradition. Here, she embodies the wisdom of earthly common sense as opposed to the lofty thinking of dogmatic Christianity. Erasmus saw himself as having a certain public identity in European Christendom. Erasmus says, "In Christianity we need to keep our eyes on the purposes of our undertaking" (qtd. in Sloane 118).

Sir Thomas More, Catholic friend of Erasmus, tried to save Catholicism and through reform and then through defense of the church's orthodox beliefs and practices. The goal of Catholic Christian humanism was to improve Europe by focusing on the value of what Erasmus called the "philosophy of Christ." This "philosophy of Christ" was born out of the drive for reform in both the Catholic Church and lay society and the rediscovery of the literature of classical antiquity. Christian humanists believe that the study of the ancient texts and original languages could restore to Europe long forgotten skills or application of ancient Christian

writers, would help Christendom to a purer and more authentic understanding of Christian truths.

Thomas More believed that Christianity ought to be both a way of truly living in the imitation of Christ and the goal of every good man. In Thomas More's view, "[t]he wisdom and examples of the Holy Scriptures, specifically by serving on another in the active Christian love found in the Gospels, and the guidance by the universal church and its doctrines, society could better itself until the time that Christ returned to earth" (qtd. in Nelson 59). Thomas More believes that without the scriptures and the assistance of Christ and his Catholic Church no society can be truly good. Thomas More's life and works ultimately demonstrate a substantial transformation in his emphasis on the role of the Catholic Church, its clergy, orthodox tests and doctrines, and his acceptance of certain reformation techniques.

Erasmus's main goal is stated in his work: Christian love for one another. Thomas More added a component to the 'Philosophia Christi' found in *Utopia*: "Christians must believe the dogmas of the infallible Church before Christian love could be active" (qtd. in Nelson 64). By combining the "Great Commandment" from the Sermon on the Mount, and the teachings of the church, More expresses his greatest hope for Christian society:

The Combination of Scripture, the Church Father's writings, and the decrees and practices of the Catholic Church are the finest and most effectual manner in which both to reform and to maintain individuals and societies [. . .] the need for these crucial tests, the original languages of scriptures, and the humanist tool of rhetoric beyond dialectic in order to achieve a pure Christendom. (qtd. in Nelson 64)

Through the wisdom and examples of the scriptures, the writings of the church Fathers, and the leadership of the church, both individuals and societies can lift themselves up and live in the ways of God "until all men are good" and all Europeans reach the "best state of a commonwealth" (qtd. in Nelson 66).

Thomas More says that the society of individuals follows the ways of God. Thomas More concludes that in order for society to be freed from its corruptions, it is the duty of good men as both citizens and Christians to serve those in power in order to better them. One of the most important establishments for More was the Catholic Church, which he viewed as necessary for the function of Christianity. More argues that even if a wise man is confronted with great resistance to his ideas, and cannot accomplish complete change in the system in which he is involved, he must continue to try because this is the duty of every good man. Therefore, even though the task may be difficult, it is necessary if a society and the state will improve for the benefit of the people. God commands all these tasks. More argues that this is the part of the wise man and the duty of every good man, a role that must be played by God. Men will determine in everything how far it suits them that God's commandments should be obeyed. Thomas More says, "It is Christianity which alone of all the others really does being what everyone is trying to get, in some way or another -happiness"(qtd. in Nelson 79). More's suggestion that reason alone is insufficient in matters of religion and that the supernatural revelation of Christianity and the guidance of the Church, along with a humanist education, are necessary in successful society.

Thomas More fundamentally held one belief throughout his life: in order for both individuals and societies to survive and to be saved, men must give themselves over to the ways of Christ and to the legitimate leadership and laws of the universal Catholic Church. More's vision of the "Philosophia Christi" was at the beginning of

his career much the same as Erasmus that men should live up to the Great Commandment for the Sermon on the Mount, to love both God and each other with their whole selves. More continues his message of service and obligation towards one another, particularly in the explanation that it is the obligation of every good man to care for his neighbor as much as he does for God.

Martin Luther King Sr. was one of the prominent Christian philosophers. He was German Augustinian monk who erupted in Europe the momentous Protestant reformation. Luther defiantly confronted the Roman Catholic papacy's patent neglect of the original Christian faith revealed in the Bible. Sparked by Luther's rebellion, an insuperable culture reaction swept through the sixteenth century, decisively reasserting the Christian religion while simultaneously shattering the unity of Christendom. In Luther's time church was powerful doctrine, which drew from the treasury of merits, accumulated by the good works of the saints. At first applied only to penalties imposed by the church in this life, by Luther's time indulgences were being granted to remit penalties imposed by God in the afterlife, including immediate release from purgatory. Luther's experience of Salvation and upon that exclusive rock he built his new church of a reformed Christianity.

It was Luther's personal religious dilemma that was the sine qua non of the Reformation. Luther opines, "It was the whole man who was corrupt and needed God's forgiveness, not just particular sins that one by one could be erased by proper Church defined action" (qtd. in Tarnas 235). Only Christ could save the whole man, and only man's faith in Christ could justify man before God. As Luther exultantly discovered in Paul's letter to the Romans, man did not earn salvation rather God gave it freely to those who have faith. The source of the saving faith was Holy Scripture, where God's mercy revealed itself in Christ's crucifixion for mankind. There alone

could the Christian believer find the means to his salvation. The Christian believer had to be liberated from the obscuring clutches of the old system, for only by being directly responsible to God could be free to experience God's grace.

It had thereby vitiated the potency of the original Christian revelation and placed the church opaquely in the middle of man's relation to God. Only direct contact with the Bible could bring the human soul directly in contact with Christ.

Luther as a propounder of Protestantism argued persuasively for God's exclusive role in salvation, man's spiritual helplessness, the moral bankruptcy of the institutional church, and the exclusive authority of scripture. In Protestant vision true Christianity was founded on "Faith alone", "Grace alone" and "Scripture alone" as Luther opines:

Zwingli, and Calvin proclaimed an emphatic revival of Bible-based Judaic Christianity unequivocally monotheistic, affirming the God of Abraham and Moses as supreme, omnipotent, transcendent, and 'other,' with man as fallen, helpless, predestined for damnation or salvation, and, in the case of the latter, fully dependent on God's grace for his redemption. (qtd. in Tarnas 237)

Man's true freedom and joy lies solely in obedience to God's will, and the capacity for such obedience arises solely from God's merciful gift of faith. Only God could provide genuine illumination, and only scripture revealed the authentic truth.

In the Protestant vision, neither the pope nor the church councils possess the spiritual competence to define Christian belief. Luther taught instead the "priesthood of all believers" religious authority rested finally and solely in each individual Christian, regarding and interpreting the Bible according to his own private conscience in the context of his personal relationship to God. Luther's impassioned

words before the imperial diet declared a new manifesto of personal religious freedom. In this context, Luther says:

Unless I am convinced by scripture and plain reason - I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other-my conscience is captive to the word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen. (qtd. in Tarnas 239)

The increased distinction made by the reformers between creator and creature-between God's inscrutable will and man's finite intelligence, and between God's transcendence and the world's contingency allowed the modern mind to approach the world with a new sense of nature's purely mundane character, with its own ordering principles that might not directly correspond to man's logical assumptions but God's divine government. The Reformation had still other unexpected and paradoxically secularizing effects. Despite the reformers' Augustinian demotion of man's inherent spiritual power, they had also given human life in this world new significance in the Christian scheme of things.

John Milton was also one of the prominent Christian humanists. He was a Puritan poet. As a political activist, Milton explicated "contemporary ideas through a very private mode of thought, a process equally prominent in his poetry at times explicitly so. This mode of thought grows out of complex religious beliefs, to which terms could be proliferated "(qtd. in Sloane 120). Above all, Milton was a monist: God, he claimed in a key argument, created the universe. There is thus a certain substantive wholeness or oneness which pervades life. Milton, above all, was the rationalist. He believed in the possibility of regenerating reason in fallen man. Miltonic true wisdom was of a specific kind and its apprehension remained a most

solitary enterprise. For Milton, “the prime and triumphant value in every situation was invariably obedience to God, but the roadway of obedience is an internal one, not available to external confirmation or disconfirmation. Reason is thus curiously independent of discourse” (qtd. in Sloane 121). Christ in the poem appears to achieve a progression from belief to certainty in Milton’s *Paradise Regained*.

Despite the overt optimism that characterizes the modernist story, however, the human person finds himself or herself in a tragic paradox. T.S. Eliot felt alienation to be characteristic of modern life, “[. . .] I do not find The Hanged Man [. . .] My nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad. Stay with me, speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak. What are you thinking of? What thinking? What? I never know what you are thinking. Think” (The Waste Land 347-49). He also perceived certain alienation within the human person, a schism between thought and feeling in which the human qualities of logic and objectivity are viewed as cold and machinelike, while feeling and subjectivity are associated with sentimentality and self-absorption. Christian humanism explores the significance of the person with respect to the holistic reintegration of human race that has been affected by Christ and is continually realized in the church.

Existentialism

Existentialism is a mode of philosophy which deals with the interpretation of human existence. According to this philosophy, human being is isolated existent into an alien universe, but he has freedom of choice to determine his life. Especially existentialism flourished after the world wars. The World War II brought a radical change in the concept because before it the human being was considered to be a manifestation of the absolute value. Rather than believing in the absolute being that was supposed to rule and guarantee human happiness, a widespread sense of anxious

helplessness appeared there. As the people experienced untold suffering caused by thrownness into an incoherent, disordered and chaotic universe, the belief in the concepts like unity, rationality, morality, value and Christianity were cursed. 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. Unlike in the Christian humanism, nobody was there to guide and help them.

And as such the feeling of loneliness, frustration, anxiety, and absurdity accompanied them. The thinkers and writers found the world totally absurd, incoherent and disintegrated. The writers of the contemporary era could not escape the situation. They captured the human loneliness, meaninglessness of actions in their works. Problematic condition of the modern world became the focal point. These feelings led to the ideas that people had to create their own values in the world in which the traditional values did not work. One has to make choices. According to Jonk Ryan, existentialism focuses upon individual freedom and responsibility: "Hence there is no single existential philosophy, and no single definition of the word can be given, the problem of man is central and that they stress man's concrete existence, his contingent nature, his personal freedom and his consequent responsibility for what he does and makes himself to be" (639). It shows that an existentialist is responsible for whatever he does or whatever decision he makes.

Nowhere is the condition more precise and clear than in existentialism. The feeling of alienation and existence without justification have become dominant aspects of literary texts. The slogan like 'death of God' and the holocaust of the first and the second world wars obviously brought the sense of alienation. It was fully addressed by the existentialists. Richard Tarnas says:

The anguish and alienation of twentieth century life were brought to full articulation as the existentialists addressed the fundamental naked concerns of human existence, suffering and death, loneliness and dread, guilt, conflict, spiritual emptiness and ontological insecurity, the void of absolute values of universal contexts, the sense of cosmic absurdity, the frailty of human reason, the tragic impasse of the human condition. (389)

The spiritual void, sense of insecurity and cosmic absurdity are captured by the writers. Man is just given existence without essence. He is entrapped by immorality, fear, and uncertainty.

Existence means to stand out in the universe that is against us. Moreover, existentialism means pertaining to existence. Now the term existentialism is used to describe the condition and existence of man, his place and function in the world, and his relationship or lack of it with God. It is a "very intense and philosophically specialized form of quest for selfhood" (Ellmann and Feidelson 803). Jean Paul Sartre defines existentialism as an attempt to make life persist by creating a system in which one realizes human loneliness and "human subjectivity" (*Existentialism* 10). So, the focus of existentialism is on 'being' and 'subjectivity' as opposed to logical reasoning and 'objectivity', individual experiences rather than abstract thought and knowledge are fore-grounded in this philosophy. In this context, Lavine defines existentialism as "a set of philosophical ideals that stress the existence of human being, the anxiety and depression which pervade each human life" (322).

Existentialism rejects the idea of traditional philosophy, which advocates for the objective truth or believes in absolute being. Contrary to Christian humanism, for existentialism truths are subjective. As there is no absolute essence but man has to

create it, the truths may vary from person to person. What is true to one may not be true to others. One creates truths from choice and there is freedom of choice. We create truths. Thus, existentialism focuses on freedom, individual existence and the choice. But this emphasis on freedom is not new with the existentialists. Because of freedom, man himself is responsible for whatever he does. That's why, Sartre says, "Man is condemned to be free" (56). Sartre talks about freedom and human beings not about god and cosmos.

Humanism flourished to a large extent during the twentieth century. It emphasizes on the human potentialities. Man became the center of discussion. Every aspect of human life, which was seen through divine light, once again revolved around man. In this way, human being exists through choices and actions not through any predetermined essence. Sartre, a prominent existential philosopher, also defines existentialism as 'humanism'. To clarify the point he says, "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).

Modern existentialism has a lot to do with phenomenology, a philosophical perspective and method, established by German thinker Edmund Husserl. Self or subjectivism is the primary concern for it. There is no single truth according to this philosophy but many truths those are determined by now one appears with them. So, there is no objective truth.

Existentialist thinkers like Martin Heidegger and Sartre continued phenomenological method with certain refinement as Thomas Mautner Comments:

Phenomenology is the attempt to describe our experience directly, as it is separately from its origins and development, independently of the causal exaltation that historians, sociologists or psychologists might

give. Subsequently, Martin Heidegger, Jean- Paul Sartre and Maurice Ponty pursued and continued to refine the phenomenological method, while by not accepting Husserl's conclusions. (319)

Individuality, self and subjectivism are stressed by phenomenology. It rejects the idea of objects. There is no absolute thing in the world. Things are how they appear in our consciousness. And consciousness differs from individual to individual. That's why, truth is always subjective as the nineteenth century existentialist philosopher Søren Kierkegaard opines:

The existentialists are mainly influenced by the idea of subjectivism and individuality. They challenge the traditional idea about absolute being. As they focus on the human beings, they believe that human being is determined by his own choices and actions. In other words, he is what he chooses to be. (qtd. in Gaarder 375)

Søren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher, is regarded as the first existentialist. He developed his philosophy as a reaction against Hegelian philosophy, which stresses on rationalism, which according to Kierkegaard has "obscured the individual's responsibility for his own life " (377). For him, individual counts a lot and there is subjective truth. Search for objective truth is meaningless. It depends on the individual. Jostein Gaarder makes a comment on the point in this way, "According to Kierkegaard, rather than searching for the truth with a capital T, it is more important to find the kind of truths that are meaningful to the individual's life. It is important to find the truth for me." Kierkegaard thus sets the "individual, or each and everyman, up against the 'system'" (379).

Like Sartre and Camus, Kierkegaard supports the choices. He believes that we are free to make choices. And one exists up to the point of making choices. " It is

only when we act especially we make significant choices- that we relate to our own existence” (qtd.in Gaarder 380). He also has belief in personal choices and decisions.

In doing so also there are no rational reasons. He takes religion as a matter of faith and that is also determined by our choice. That's why, subjectivity plays a vital role here, too. Thus, Kierkegaard believes that any system, rules and regulations cannot determine an individual. But one's choices are responsible for one's life. One is not compelled to follow rather he is free to rebel or protest against any system according to his or her choice. In this way, he lays emphasis on individual freedom, choice and subjective truth.

Nietzsche, one of the most influential thinkers of Germany, made a critique on religion especially on Christianity announcing the ‘death of God’ and emphasizing the self to a large extent. Religion snatches away true individuality from a person making him prostrate before unseen power which is the greatest hindrance on the way to happiness. For him "the greatest joy comes from self understanding, self-dominance, and self control" (37). In this way, he speaks in favor of freedom.

He also criticizes the western education system that is historically motivated. It only teaches about the heroic past and makes the people surrender to that heroism. Here the true individualism collapses in his view. It does not serve life but rather corrupts it. And people become purposeless. Such education cannot provide happiness to the people because they always hang themselves in the chain of history, whereas for happiness one has to face with the moment. For him history should be for the sake of human life and existence. In his essay “On the Use and Abuse of History” he states, “We need [history] for life and action, not for a comfortable turning away from life and action or merely for glossing over the egotistical life and the cowardly bad act. We wish to use history only in so far as it serves living” (152).

He also does not believe on the idea of absolute truth. Individual is the product of his own actions made from his actions and choices.

As 'God is dead,' there is nobody to govern an individual. Rather he is the master of himself. For Nietzsche, as quoted in *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, "[n]o moment is more important than the present in which one has the opportunity to make active choices that influence the character as a whole" (292).

Nietzsche denies the existence of God and opines that even if there were God, he is dead now. That is why, there is no God to determine our existence. He calls Christianity a shelter only for the weak and sick, and it harbors slave morality. He tries to clarify the point in this way:

The Christian conception of God- God as God of the sick, God as a spider, God as a spirit- is one of the most corrupt conceptions of the divine as ever represented on earth. It may even represent the low water mark in the descending development of divine types. God degenerated into the contradictions of life, instead of being its transfiguration and eternal yes. God is the declaration of war against life, against nature and against will to life! (912)

Nietzsche highly supports the idea of individual freedom. He does not accept any kind of imposition laid upon an individual. An individual should master oneself. In this context, Roger Scruton comments: "Nietzsche sought for a 'life-affirming skepticism', which would transcend all the doctrines that stemmed from the 'herd instinct', and so allow the individual to emerge as master, and not as slave of the experience to which he is condemned" (186). In this way, he supports master morality against slave morality. The role and position of an individual is supreme; individuality is the focal point for Friedrich Nietzsche.

In his many writings, he disputes the existence of universal moral values, denounces the religious underpinnings of morality, and reflects on the widely varying views on morality held in different cultures. Nietzsche proclaims the death of God as a world-shattering event because it means that some of our most basic philosophical and ethical beliefs have no foundation. No God's eye view of the world exists to identify objective truth; no divine law specifies what is good and what is evil.

Yet Nietzsche does not believe that the nonexistence of God means that everything lacks meaning and value. Instead, he insists that the meaning of human life lies in a liberating undertaking of self-transcendence and the creation of one's own values; the meaning of human life is the 'superman.'

German thinker Martin Heidegger is another leading figure of atheistic existentialism, though he himself rejected to be "classified as an existentialist" (qtd.in Perry et al. 756). To consider an individual only as the representation of mass is the recurrent mistake of metaphysics, according to Heidegger. He held the belief that "man should face explicitly the problem of being; he has to determine his own existence, create and commitment" (qtd.in Perry et al 756).

The feeling of dread due to the awareness of death may incite us to flee away from the problem of Being, accepting a way of life set by others instead of coming face to face with it. But if we take the dread of death as an opportunity, we may construct our life as unique, and our own. On the necessity of being responsible to the true experience of life, Heidegger writes: "The thinking which is posited by beings as such, and therefore representational and illuminating in that way, must be supplanted by a different kind of thinking which is brought to pass by Being itself and, therefore, responsible to being" ("Recollection" 880).

Heidegger accepts that one cannot escape the historical context because he is always bound by conditions and outlooks inherited from the past. He considers human existence as tied by temporal dimension, which is the existential time. The Heideggerian concept of time moves not from past through present to future but from future through past to present. We experience past in guilt and we anticipate future in dread.

According to Heidegger, alienation is another important theme of existentialism. Man feels himself alienated from the universe, as there is nobody to guide him. One is fully responsible to oneself; feeling of alienation comes when an individual cannot integrate into the social system. There is no place for God in this philosophy.

Boredom or anxiety is another major theme of this philosophy. It is the product of one's consciousness about one's existence when a person realizes that he is thrown into the world, a sense of dissatisfaction and despair arises and anxiety erupts. But there is no regret or remorse. In this sense, it is an optimistic doctrine.

Sartre was a leading advocate of existentialism and French philosopher who was offered the Nobel Prize for literature in 1964, but he made the existentialist choice of refusing it.

Sartre defends existentialism against the charges that it gives bleaker view of humanity; it neglects what is good in human life; and it denies the reality and seriousness. Sartre believes that existentialism is humanism since it takes human undertaking as the point of departure. Establishing existentialism as the humanist philosophy, he states, "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). Thus, existentialism gives dignity to man. It encourages human action. In this sense, it is quite an optimistic philosophy.

For Sartre, 'existence precedes essence' is the central idea of existentialism. According to Sartre, we first exist, appear on the scene, make choices and create ourselves. We make what we are only after we exist. It is through our choices that we create meaning in our life. Since our involvement in the world creates essence, there is no predetermined essence to govern our existence. With the manufactured object, essence governs the existence. When we publish a book, we first think about what the book will deal with, who the readers will be or what they will get. The production of the book is governed by preconceived notion. Essence governs the existence in such case. But human case is quite opposite. We first exist and plan on what to do. So, with human beings existence governs the essence.

Sartre's philosophy focuses primarily on personal freedom, and personal responsibility. Thomas Mautner views, "At the heart of his philosophy was powerful notion of freedom and an uncompromising sense of personal responsibility" (379). Similarly, "[t]he central tenet of Sartre's existentialism" says Robert Soloman, " is the freedom of human consciousness, freedom to act, freedom to value, and freedom to make itself" (86).

Although Sartre takes freedom as condemnation, he also says that an honest man always keeps on going in the quest for freedom. We use freedom to achieve freedom itself. In this context, he says:

Freedom in every concrete circumstance can have no other aim than to want itself. If man has once become aware that in his forlornness he imposes values, he can no longer want but one thing, and that is freedom, at the basis of all values. That does not mean that he wants it

in abstract. It means simply that the ultimate meaning of the acts of honest men is the quest for freedom as such. (45)

Sartre does not accept the charges against existentialism that it gives the bleaker view of humanity for it gives human setting to every truth and every action. Jostin Gaarder comments, "Sartre said that existentialism is humanism. By that he meant that existentialists start from nothing but humanity itself " (456).

Thus, as most of the existentialists, Sartre also stresses upon freedom of choice and personal responsibility saying that there is not any absolute force to govern a man. The person himself creates his own essence. So, subjectivity is the pivot in the view of Sartre.

Albert Camus another atheistic existentialist, is basically known for his view on absurdity of human life. For him the condition of man is absurd and his/her search for any purpose is meaningless and fruitless. The world does not possess any meaning, value or truth. According to M.H. Abrams:

Albert Camus, views 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 nothingness when it comes towards the nothingness where it must end as an existence which is both anguished and absurd. (1)

Camus also believes that man makes himself from his own choices. Such choices lead human beings towards repetition as there is no meaning in the universe but man always aspires to achieve it. Anyway man makes his own fate from his own plan or choice. As quoted in Charles Van Doren's *Creation of Knowledge* "Like Sisyphus,

Camus tells us, humans make their own fate, their own choices and to that extent are in control of their own destinies" (67).

People make choices and such choices create the sense of absurdity in this meaningless and alienated world. But absurdity does not mean, for Camus, the loss of happiness rather "happiness and absurd are two sons of the same earth. They are inseparable" (69). In his essay "The Myth of Sisyphus" he presents a character Sisyphus who makes choices rejecting the command of God. When he has to face the punishment for rolling up a rock, he has the feeling of absurdity. But we cannot say that he is unhappy. In this point Camus Says, "I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks [. . .]. The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (70). In short, Albert Camus speaks for individuality, his freedom of choice and his responsibility for his existence.

To sum up, in Christian humanism God stands above and beyond all other beings as both creator of the world and director of its history, whereas in existentialism man creates his own existence in the world and he himself is director of his own fate. In Christianity God guides all human beings but in existentialism human beings are guided by their own tasks. In Christian humanism, there is certainty of life. The life is meaningful in the world. People have faith in God's promise for their future fulfillment. For the God of the Hebrews was a God of miracle and purpose, who saved nations or crushed them of will. Their God was not only Creator but also liberator, and had assured his people a glorious destiny if they would remain faithful and obedient to his law. In Christianity people make choices and such choices are directed and wished by God. On the other hand, in

existentialism people have to create their own values in the world. One has to make choices and create oneself. People make choice and such choices create the sense of absurdity in this meaningless and alienated world. Man is free of routines and conventions that are laid bare and face-to-face to his own destiny. The condition of human being is absurd and his search for any purpose is meaningless and fruitless. Man is responsible for whatever he does or whatever decision he makes. In existentialism 'God is dead'. Man loses even the certainties and values of his own existence. Christian humanists believe in essence. Essence precedes existence in Christian humanism, whereas the central idea of existentialism is 'existence precedes essence.' We first exist, appear on the scene, make choice and create ourselves. We make what we are only after we exist. It is through our choice that we create meaning in our life.

In the chapter that follows the present researcher will apply the theoretical tool, existentialism, and analyze Samuel Beckett's departure from the so-called Christian humanism in his novel *Molloy*.

III. Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* as a Critique of Christian Humanism

In *Molloy*, Samuel Beckett's satirical critique of the tradition of Christian humanism, Beckett seeks to show the absurd condition of human beings. The relinquishing of Christian humanism is alluded to by both of the narrators in Beckett's *Molloy*: Molloy and Moran. Beckett's *Molloy* criticizes Christian humanist definition of man as a rational creature who inhabits a rational universe. Circularity in the novel corresponds to the human life cycle.

Molloy is a deceptively simple novel. It is divided into two sections. In the first, Molloy tells his story in two paragraphs, the first of five hundred words, the second of about forty thousand words; in the second part, Moran tells his story, and in keeping with the regularity of his character, his story is divided by normal paragraphs throughout.

Molloy, the first narrator of the novel, is in his mother's room and has been there for a year. He was brought there in some sort of vehicle but he does not know what has happened to his mother. He writes a story for a newspaper and the office sends a man once a week to collect the pages, and he begins the story for the reader by telling how his journey to see his mother began.

He fastens his crutches to the crossbar of his bicycle and sets out, but he is arrested at the ramparts of the town and is questioned by the police for the way he rides the bicycle. They release him in the late afternoon and he goes to the country. Sometimes afterwards he finds himself in the town again, where he runs over a dog owned by a woman named Lousse. She protects him from irritating bystanders and takes him into her home. Molloy is not sure how long he lives there because she drugs his food but he does know and replaces it for her dog. When he leaves he

discovers that his bicycle is missing. So he moves on with the help of the crutches. Later, the crutches are also lost.

Molloy is a vagrant, currently bed ridden. He is surprisingly well educated, having studied geography, among other things and seems to know something of “Old Geulinx.” He has a number of bizarre habits, not least of which is the sucking of pebbles, described by Beckett in one enormous and irritating passage and also having an old and rather morbid attachment to this mother (who may or may not be dead).

Molloy wanders, then thinks about setting more or less permanently in an alley, then contemplates suicide. Finally, he goes to the seaside to renew his sixteen sucking stones. The description about Molloy’s sucking stones is (one of the great comic passages in Beckett’s fiction and explains at length how he transfers sixteen small smooth stones from various pockets to his mouth and back again in an effort to suck all of them equally, the tone of the novel abruptly changes; the image of his mother hints him, and so begins to try to search for her once more). No longer able to hobble, he crawls. He hears a distant gong, then a voice tells him not to fret for ‘they’ are coming. Finally, at the edge of the forest, he sinks into a ditch from which he is rescued, taken to his mother’s room and made to write his story. The author does not give any hints what happened to him afterwards. The plot is circular; it ends as it began.

The second part of *Molloy* introduces Moran, an unusual among Beckett’s characters, as the second narrator. Moran is a fastidious person, a practising Catholic, a house-holder and is proud of his property. He is employed as a detective by Youdi (a colloquial French word for Jew), who sends Gaber on Sunday morning to tell Moran to make a report on Molloy.

Moran is a private detective, with a housekeeper, Martha, and a son, Jacques. He treats both of them with scorn. He is pedantic and extremely ordered, pursuing to task set him logically, to the points of absurdity. He also shows an insincere reverence for the church and deference to the local priest, perhaps indicative of Beckett's perception of, attitude in Ireland. As the novel progresses, his body begins to fail for no visible or specified reason, a fact that surprises him, and his mind begins to decline to the point of insanity. This similarity of the two narrators in bodily and mental decline leads readers to guess that Molloy and Moran are in fact two facets of the same personality or that the section narrated by Molloy perhaps might be written by Moran.

Gaber tells Moran to leave at once to look for Molloy, whom Moran seems to know. Moran's disquiet grows; he is anxious, then confused, until he finally admits that he is losing his head and floundering. His rigid schedule has been disturbed and he cannot cope with change. He misses the last mass and receives private communion, which still does not calm him. He eats lunch later than usual, which upsets his stomach. In the process of getting ready to start out, he gives his son an enema and feels sharp pain, which strikes his own knee while doing so.

Soon after Moran and Jacques begin their journey; pain strikes and Moran's legs become paralyzed and he sends Jacques to buy a bicycle. In the meantime, as he lies in the woods C approaches and asks him for bread, which he exchanges in return for C's club. The next day a different man approaches Moran and asks after the first. They exchange a few words and Moran clubs him to death. His stiff leg bends normally for a while, but soon he is paralyzed again.

Jacques returns with the bicycle; Moran slides on the carrier and his son pedals towards Molloy's region. They quarrel, and Jacques abandons Moran. Gaber appears

with an order for Moran to return home. Moran wants to know if Youdi is angry with him for failing in his missions, but Gaber, who had been chuckling, says that Youdi says to him, “Life is a thing of beauty [. . .] and a joy for ever” (151).

Moran begins his returning journey to home, growing more decrepit as the journey progresses. When he arrives he finds his house deserted, his bees dead and his hens running wild. He arrives in the garden. In August, he determines to leave again as soon as he writes his report; he wants to be free, to live close to the earth. The second part ends with the report mentioned at the beginning following the circularity of Molloy’s story.

In *Molloy*, Samuel Beckett, by choosing inward and personal characters, makes a leap of faith in God, which he regards as an ethico-religious choice. The Christian doctrine and its quest for objective truth has nothing to do with Beckett as Moran, a Christian character, says:

I missed my son! I busied myself as best as I could. I ate several times. I took advantage of being alone at last, with no other witness than God, to masturbate. My son must have had the same ideas, he must have stopped on the way to masturbate. I hope he enjoyed it more than I did. I circled the shelter several times, thinking the exercises would benefit my knee. (133)

In these lines Moran criticizes on the Christian humanism. In Christianity God is supreme power and every human being is part of God. God is omnipresent and omniscient. But here Moran criticizes the belief on God by saying that God is the witness during his masturbation, the vulgar or perverted activity, but not the witness of ethical or religious activity. His son has had the same idea. It means that man does the thing according to his or her desire.

On the penultimate page of *Molloy* after a circular journey has reduced to wretched trifles all the cherished certainties with which he began, Moran repudiates identification through species of “the human race in its slow ascension toward the light”(130). The Beckettian repugnance for humanity goes deeper than mere misanthropy though Moran does apply that attitude to himself: “It’s a strange thing, I don’t like man and I don’t like animals. As for God he is beginning to disgust me”(105). The deeper meaning of this repugnance, as it is manifested in *Molloy*, can be introduced by a celebrated example of its opposite. Here to have supreme distinction and value as a human individual is to constitute oneself as an incomparable instantiation of the human nature or humanity common to all men. Moreover, unlike in Christian humanism Moran gives up his faith on God nor he loves and sympathizes the creation of God, man and other animals. Rather unlike in Christian humanism he hates them.

In Christian humanism there is some kind of certainty and meaning in life, whereas in existentialism life becomes uncertain and meaningless. Molloy is in his mother’s room and does not know how he has been there as he says:

Perhaps in an ambulance, certainly a vehicle of some kind. I was helped. I’d never have got there alone. There’s this man who comes every week. Perhaps I got here thanks to him. He says not. He gives me money and takes away the pages. So many pages, so much money. Yes, I work now, a little like I used to except that I don’t know how to work any more. That doesn’t matter apparently. What I’d like now is to speak of things that are left, say my goodbyes finish dying [. . .] I don’t know. The truth is I don’t know much. (9)

The above lines clarify that Molloy is in his mother's room. There is a man who comes to his room every week. It means that Christian humanism is based on help, cooperation and sympathy for each other. But here Molloy gets help from the man from the newspaper office for his service. But in existentialism there is no idea of knowing certain truth. Molloy does not know how to work. But he does not get worried about it. Moreover, he says that he also does not know what is happening with him and what is truth, whereas Christian humanists claim that there is objective truth, which is applicable to all.

As it has been already noted the view pertains to having been a man long enough and to reinvolve entails the refusal to identify oneself according to the conventional strictures of what is man. As such, it involves as Moran indicates extinguishing the lamp of reason by which humanity illumines its own meaning in order not to encounter the cognitive disaster which Moran himself eventually confronts: "The kind of nothingness in the midst of which I stumbled"(123). Moran, of course, surmounts this crisis and registers a growing resignation to being dispossessed of self to no longer identifying himself, i.e. as a man as he formerly did. In this process, he repudiates the wretched trifles and "all those things at hand without which I could not bear being a man"(132). Here Beckett makes Moran criticize Christian humanist claim for purpose and the achievement of the goal. According to him, there is no fixed purpose in life and there is not any certainty about the fulfillment of that goal. The humans have to go through absurdity or meaninglessness in life because there is not any pre-established essence for them.

Molloy ridicules and explodes central doctrines of the Christian humanists. The linking of Beckett's art with ontological satire has important precedents beyond those already indicated facts. There is no certainty and perfection but uncertainty and

incompletion. The doctrines entrained by this definition are respectively debunked until to interpolate. In *Molloy*, the narrators, Molloy and Moran, mock at Christian humanism. Moran opines:

I remembered with annoyance the larger I had just absorbed. Would I be granted the body of Christ after a pint of Wallenstein? And if I said nothing? Have you come fasting, my son? He would not ask. But God would know, sooner or later. Perhaps he would pardon me. But would the encharist produce the same effect taker on top of beer, however light? I could always try what was the teaching of the church on the matter? What if I were about to commit sacrilege? I decided to suck a few peppermints on the way to the presbytery. (89)

According to doctrine of Christian humanism, when man dies his soul is supposed to go to heaven if s/he does good for mankind or pleases God. There is faith on eternity of soul in Christianity. But in existentialism, there is no faith on eternity of soul. In existentialism there is here and now. Here, Moran criticizes the Christian practice of fasting for pleasing God. So, he deliberately mocks at his son for fasting. But his son does not say anything. Moran says that perhaps God knows. Perhaps he makes something wrong and hopeful to that God would pardon him. It means in Christianity there is faith on God and he knows everything. He parodies the concept of presence of God everywhere to criticize such nonsensical belief. But in existentialism there is no faith on God. Moran asserts that God is not one who knows everything. But man himself is responsible for his own deeds.

Molloy hopes to find his mother. Though he does not know whether his mother is dead or alive, he has hope and determination to find his mother: "I was on my way to my mother"(22). However he is physically weak and hopeless. His stiff

leg cannot support him. The first of these premises is that the function of reason, the faculty of man, is to know or render intelligible. All men by nature desire to know or hope alternate rendering. All men naturally have an impulse to get knowledge. The mind has dignity, not intrinsically, but only through the achievement of knowledge. This tenet is exploded in *Molloy* where the supreme motive is no longer to know but not to know. To be beyond knowing anything to know that one is beyond knowing, that is when peace enters in to the soul of the incurious seeker.

The desire to know by which the mind achieves nobility is scorned as the falsetto of reason. For Moran, the “effort of the intelligence” (50) only increases perplexity: “I felt a great confusion coming over me” (98). The function of the mind is no longer to illumine certainly, but to increase the scope of ignorance:

It was late afternoon when they told me I could go. I was advised to behave better in future conscious of my wrongs, knowing now the reasons for my arrest, alive to my irregular situation as revealed by the enquiry, I was surprised to find myself so soon at freedom once again, if that is what it was, unpenalized. Had I without my knowledge, a friend at court? Had I, without knowing it, favorably impressed the sergeant? Had they succeeded in finding my mother and obtaining from her, or from the neighbors, partial confirmation of my statements? Were they of the opinion that it was useless to prosecute? To apply the letter of the law to a creature like me is not an easy matter. (24)

Here, Molloy challenges the rules and regulations of Christian humanism by pointing out the fact that the so-called universal or objective truth of Christianity cannot be applicable to him because he creates his own subjective truth as an existentialist. In

Christianity there is certain direction and hope, whereas in existentialism there is no certain direction though there is hope. He has no ideas on which direction to go.

According to Christianity, God in general is supposed to preserve and protect human beings and guarantee their happiness. People pray God to fulfil their desire and think that God helps them in need when one is in great crisis. God is expected to help him. In brief, God is supposed to be the creator and the protector of human beings. He is thought to determine human life. But when a person has to face untold sufferings without any cause, the belief in the existence of God is shattered. Now the question arises: if God exists and is the supreme justice, why does an innocent person have to suffer unnecessarily? And it is the question against the existence of God Himself. If one is helpless in the world, where is God? If he exists why does not he come to help the sufferers? Finally all such questions reduce the faith on the existence of God. In this context Molloy opines:

On this subject I had only negative and empirical notions, which means that I was in the dark, most of the time and all the more completely as a life time of observations had left me doubting the possibility of systematic decorum, even within a limited area. But it is only since I have ceased to live that I think of these things and the other things. It is in the tranquility of decomposition that I remember the long confused emotion, which was my life, and that I judge it, as it is said that God will judge me and with no less impertinence. (25)

The above lines show that in Christianity there is God who helps human beings in their trouble. Moreover, he ridicules Christian faith on judgment day. Molloy is in trouble and says that he is in the dark most of the time. But he is not worried. He wants to judge himself. It is a satire on Christian humanism. In Christian humanism,

God judges every human being and preserves them, whereas in existentialist humanism human being judges himself or herself what s/he does. Man is such a creature who is constantly in search of himself, i.e. he is in the process of becoming a creature who in every moment of his existence must examine and scrutinize the condition of his existence. In this scrutiny, in this critical attitude towards human life lies the real value of human life.

For the perspective of the Christian humanist tradition, it is difficult to speak of a man under such conditions as such, which Beckettian fiction imposes. In the teleological view of that tradition to be is to tend not toward nothingness or indeterminacy but toward entelechy or the complete self-realization whereby each being fulfills his/her own intrinsic form. But in *Molloy* there is no longer a distinction between potency and actuality and hence no more purpose for purpose. The only purpose is finality without end. The disintegration of telos or purpose in *Molloy* is rendered normatively through four related motifs: purposelessness, directionless movement, repetition compulsion, and circularity.

The first of the purposelessness is illustrated by Molloy's comment: "Nothing or little to be done"(54). In Christianity there is some kind of purpose. Life is purposeful. It is linear. But in absurdism, life becomes purposelessness. In above lines Molloy has no purpose. He does not know what to be done. There is concept of nothingness.

The second anti-teleological motif--directionless movement--is formulated by Molloy: "Not knowing where I was nor consequently what way I ought to go"(60). In Christian humanism life goes forward. There is certain direction. But in existentialist humanism there is no certain direction. Life becomes worse and is doomed to be a failure. Indeed, Molloy comments explicitly on the relation between movement and

purpose. For how can he decide on the way of setting out if he does not first know where he is going, or at least with what purpose he is going there. The same idea informs Moran's description of the first intruder. He walks with swift uncertain step often changing his course, dragging the stick like a hindrance.

The third anti-teleological motif, repetition compulsion, is illustrated by Moran: "whereas to see yourself doing the same thing endlessly over and over again fills you with satisfaction" (133). But a more specifically Beckettian implication concerns the reduction of action. In Christian humanism life becomes meaningful, the world does possess meaning, value and truth, whereas in existentialist humanism life becomes repetition. Moran does the same thing again and again endlessly. In this context we can compare Albert Camus' essay "The Myth of Sisyphus" with Beckett's *Molloy*. Camus is basically known for his view on absurdity of human life. For him the condition of man is absurd and his search for purpose is meaningless or futile. The world does not possess any meaning, value or truth. In Samuel Beckett's *Molloy*, the characters are in absurd condition and meaninglessness. They do the same thing again and again. In essay "The Myth of Sisyphus," Albert Camus also presents a character Sisyphus who makes choice rejecting the command of God. When he has to face the punishment to roll up a rock, he has the feeling of absurdity. But we cannot say that he is unhappy. In Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* also the narrators-protagonists are satisfied with their own works. They are also not unhappy.

The fourth anti-teleological motif, circularity is the most complex. The entire plot of *Molloy* is founded on circularity. More precisely, it concerns concentric circles. As Moran undertakes a circular journey for Molloy, he feels his quarry (who also describes a circular journey one involving return to his mother) rises up within him. In Beckett's minimalist mimicry, this reiterated foregrounding of circularity

represents or corresponds to the customary cycle of birth, life and death. The only intrinsic purpose remaining in life is completion of the circuit. The force regarding meaningless cycle, of course, concerns Molloy's celebrated problem of arranging the circulation of the stones from pocket to pocket:

I take a stone from the right pocket of my greatcoat, suck it, stop sucking it, put it in the left pocket of my greatcoat, the one empty (of stone). I take a second stone from the right pocket of my greatcoat, suck it, and put it in the left pocket of my greatcoat. And so on until the right pocket of my greatcoat is empty. (67)

It shows that life is moving in a circle. Life moves towards finality without end. In Christianity life is not circle. There is some direction to gain purpose. Life is linear.

But in existentialist humanism life is circular. It is beginning but has never an end. Life goes round and round. For Molloy each of the sixteen stones will have been sucked once in impeccable succession, not one sucked twice, not one left unsucked. Significantly Molloy describes this purposeless circulation in terms of the difficulty of fulfilling purpose. The implication of the anti-teleological reduction of life to the customary cycle can be clarified by considering Moran's lament after receiving the imperative to find Molloy: "My life was running out, I knew not through what breach" (102). Moran here means not that his life, as a biological process is ending, but that the interpretation of his existence in terms of "the inenarrable contraption [he] called [his] life" has lost its relevance (114). To understand what Moran here means by life and why it eventually runs out though he himself lives on, we can turn first to Molloy's remark about his experience of the same situation. The contradictory notion here of life as over yet continuing contradicts the Christian humanist notion of human life.

Freedom cannot be separated from existence. Where there is no freedom there is no existence in a real sense. Existence does not mean the same as being alive. All the living creatures including plants and animals are also alive but they do not exist. A person does not maintain his/her existence if he/she surrenders before every difficulty in life and remains passive. As there is freedom of choice, one has to choose the way of life oneself and determine one's own existence. Whereas in Christianity there are pre-established rules and regulations; the human beings are guided by rules and regulations, in existentialism there is one's own freedom of choice. Human beings can make their own choice.

In the novel, the characters have their own choice. They have freedom of choice. Molloy and Moran are free to do whatever they wish. They travel from one place to another. They never let their individual freedom go towards the crisis.

Moran opines:

I've always loved doing nothing. And I would gladly have rested on weekdays too, if I could have afforded it. Not that I was positively lazy. It was something else. Seeing something done, which I could have done better myself, if I had wished, and which I did better whenever I put my mind to it. (85)

In above lines Moran says that he is free for doing anything. It means that he has freedom of choice. Moreover, he is responsible for what he has done. He does not blame others for his failure but rather accepts it by himself. But in Christianity there is no freedom of choice. Man is bound by some kind of rules and regulations. Here, not so much to the brevity of life, as to the moral unity which temporal limitation confers on each life.

Each lifetime constitutes a single temporal unit, construed as an integral process of becoming by which the living individual tends towards his or her ultimate end. According to Christian humanist principles, “This is life” a temporalized activity whose true value to interpolate is realized by exercising reason in accordance with an eternal order that admits of change. Man alone possesses freedom of choice, a power composed of intellect and will which though closely connected with the natural disposition and hence always individual reaches out beyond it; it is that power which enables him during his lifetime on earth, to love in the right or wrong way and to decide his/her own fate. But this is not life according to Molloy for whom to decompose is to live too nor it is the context in which he would ever seek “a meaning to [his] life” (19).

In Christian humanism essence precedes existence; first essence comes, then existence occurs later. In Christian belief God exists. God is supreme power in the world. In existentialist humanism existence precedes essence. In this view God does not exist. Rather, it declares that even if God did exist He would change nothing. There is no predetermining essence but one creates essence from the choices one makes. So existence is primary and essence is secondary for existentialists like Molloy and Moran. Freedom and existence go together. Freedom is existence and in it existence precedes essence. The narrators of the novel try to create their own essence. They have their own freedom of choice and personal responsibility. There is not any absolute force to govern them.

In Christian belief God governs all human beings as human beings have no free will. There is at least one being on which essence precedes existence: being is God. In existentialist humanism there is at least one being in whom existence precedes essence, a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept, and

that being is man. Now the question arises: what does it mean by this slogan-- existence precedes essence? -- It means that, first of all man exists, turns up, appears on the scene and, only afterwards defines himself. In the novel, Moran opines:

If I had had colleagues, I might have suspected I had spoken of him to them, as if one destined to occupy us, sooner or later. But I had no colleagues and knew nothing of the circumstance in which I had learnt of his existence. Perhaps I had invented him, I mean found him readymade in my head. (103)

The reduction of living to senseless, speechless, issueless misery overthrows another humanist doctrine: eudemonia. It is man who has created God as the invention of human mind unlike in Christian humanism.

According to that doctrine, the fruit of entelechy or self-realization is happiness, which is always desirable in itself and never for the sake of something else. In this schema, happiness is construed as the appropriate use of the highest faculty (in the case of man, reason) such that its enjoyment is both intrinsic to the subject concerned and supreme among the goods he or she can achieve. Hence, the root of eudemonia is self-sufficiency. The self-sufficiency, we now define when isolated, makes life desirable and lacking in nothing. In *Molloy* there are frequent references to happiness or contentment. Moran, as it has been already noticed, finds happiness not an activity or actions of the soul implying a rational principle but in frustration of the rational principle. Similarly, Molloy associates happiness with mental oblivion: "And just enough brain intact to allow you to exult!" (140). Molloy's happiness in this sense is meaningless. For life offers not completeness, but pointless continuity.

Molloy is appropriate to emphasize that the disintegration of the Christian humanist synthesis in the novel does not necessarily entail an endorsement of

existentialism. Of course, it is a commonplace of contemporary criticism to link Beckett's works with that philosophical movement. God is dead; life is absurd; existence precedes essence; ennui is endemic to the human condition. Although the problem of meaninglessness or absurdity is raised in *Molloy*, it does not provoke an existentialist solution. Far from seeking to make meaning where none is present, the Beckettian project is to confirm meaninglessness or, more precisely, senseless, speechless, issueless misery.

One can clarify this matter by brief consideration of the notion of freedom in Sartre's philosophy. Sartre explicitly opposes his own notion of freedom to the teleology of Aristotle, which he interprets as a form of determinism driven by the exigencies of inherent and defining essence. Indeed, for him man's freedom lies less in the contingency of his evolution than in the exact realization of his essence. To overcome this perceived impediment to freedom, Sartre replaces the notion of essence in man with the notion of nothingness. Thus, liberty is not a being. It is the being of man. But in Christian humanism it is the being of God. First man as such has no nature, no fixed essence in existentialism. His essence is simply his freedom, his indeterminateness. Freedom is the striving of finite non-being towards the being.

The problem of freedom is indeed raised in *Molloy* by both Molloy and Moran. Molloy opines, "Can it be we are no free?" (36) while Moran says, "Does this mean I am freer now than I was?" (176). When Molloy realizes the absence of God, external force to interfere in his life, he becomes happier and finds his life freer. But in so far as freedom means projection into the new. Yet it is a determinism driven, not by essence or pre-existing structure but by their perpetual lack. The voice is a deterministic process of disintegration, which is not determinism at all, but the relapse into chaos. It is the indestructible chaos of timeless things. The refutation of

determinism in *Molloy* can be explained by another roué. For Sartre, the hallmark of determinism is its reliance on a priori concepts. Its sole purpose is to force the events, the person, or the acts considered into pre-fabricated moulds. The same reference to pre-fabricated conceptual moulds occurs in *Molloy*.

Hence, the ontological dispensation in *Molloy* pertains neither to freedom nor to determinism. On the one hand, freedom implies self-directedness and in *Molloy* that faculty has surrendered to the inner voice. On the other hand, determinism implies a stable and definite principle whose efficacy engenders the complete determination or self-realization of the process or entity it influences. But in *Molloy* the first principle is chaos and its efficacy leads not to determination or self-realization but to indetermination or namelessness and the growing resignation to being dispossessed of self. In place of freedom and determinism there is only reiteration of the inability either to be or not to be in Hamletian term. The pre-eminent expression of this state in *Molloy* is provided by Molloy:

To be literally incapable of motion at last, that must be something! My mind swoons when I think of it. And mute into the bargain! And perhaps as deaf as a post! And who knows as blind as a bat! And as likely as not your memory a blank! And just enough brain intact to allow you to exult! And to dread death like regeneration. (140)

It brings us to a final paradox involving freedom and determinism in Beckett's *Molloy*. On the one hand, there is the determinism of narrative repetition and on the other hand, the narrator Molloy Claims the freedom to produce novelty. At bottom, this situation can be construed as a parody of the Christian humanist ontology which posits a reality in which each being repeats in its own distinctly unique way, the same teleological process of tending towards complete actualization. In the Beckettian

universe, however, as Molloy insists, the only end to achieve is essence or de-actualization.

The Christian humanist believes in objective truth, whereas existentialist believes on subjective truth. The existentialists are mainly influenced by the idea of subjectivity and individuality. They challenge the traditional idea about absolute being. As they focus on the human beings, they believe that human being is determined by his own choices and actions. Human life persists by creating a system in which one realizes human loneliness and 'human subjectivity'. Thus, the focus of existentialism is a 'being' and 'subjectivity' as opposed to 'logical reasoning' and 'objectivity'. This is based on individual experience rather than abstract thought and knowledge that is foregrounded in this philosophy. Existentialism concludes that human choice is subjective, because the individuals must make their own choices finally without any help from external standards such as laws, ethical rules, or traditions. As individuals make their own choices, they are free because they choose freely; they are completely responsible for their choices. That freedom is necessarily accompanied by responsibility. But Christian humanism concludes that human choice is absolute or fixed. Human beings are bound by some kinds of laws, ethical rules or traditions. The characters Molloy and Moran mock at social rules and regulations. Molloy's responsibility is to find his mother and Moran's duty is to find Molloy. But both are doomed to be the failures in their duty. They are not unhappy for their responsibility. They have their own freedom of choice. They are completely responsible for their choice. They are responsible only to themselves. So they don't make any confession. They must not miss a way from their responsibilities as Moran opines:

But I also tried to remember what I was to do with Molloy, once I found him. And on myself too I pored, or me so changed from what I was. And I seemed to see myself ageing as swiftly as a dayfly. But the idea of ageing was not exactly the one which offered itself to me. And what I saw was more like a crumbling, a frenzied collapsing of all that had always protected me from all I was condemned to be. (137)

The above lines satirize Christian humanism. Moran has responsibility to find Molloy. But at last Moran does not find Molloy. He is not unhappy. Every person is compelled to make a choice. Choice is the thing that human beings must make. The trouble is that most often the human being refers to choose. Hence as Moran realizes his freedom and the futility of his existence he is responsible for his own duty. He needs to take decisions and assumes responsibilities. He is free and responsible, but he is responsible only to himself. Molloy also wants to find out his mother. It is his duty and he is responsible to find her or not to find her. Throughout his whole journey, his only desire is to meet his mother. Perhaps, he does not know his mother is alive or dead. Even at the end he does not meet his mother. He is not worried. He has his own choice. So he is also responsible only to himself.

In Christian humanism there is insistence on the future, whereas in existentialist humanism on the present. In Christianity human beings are hopeful for their task. They have optimistic view and life goes towards progressivism. The life becomes progressive, progressivism is the confidence that reason, observation and evolution will develop in a positive direction. In existentialist humanism there is no future. The human beings are suffering in the present condition. They accept the present condition where they suffer. In other words, Christian humanism there is belief on after-life, whereas in existentialist humanism there is no faith on after-life.

In *Molloy*, the characters Molloy and Moran have some destination. They have hope and certain direction. In this sense Molloy says:

Time will tell. But I shall do my utmost none the less to keep it in the background in the future. And that will be easy, for the future is by no means uncertain, the unspeakable future. And when it comes to neglecting fundamentals, I think I have nothing to learn, and indeed I confuse them with accidentals. (74)

In Christian faith future is important but Molloy does not know what to do in the future; future is uncertain for him. It shows that it is a satire on Christian faith on after-life, or eternity of the soul. Molloy thinks nothing to learn in the future. But he is happy in his present condition. He is accepting his present time where he suffers; Man is bounded by present condition. There is no future. So, one must accept the challenge of human life in present condition. Likewise, Moran has also made some plan and certain direction to find Molloy. But he does not also confirm how to find Molloy. It means that he has also no certain future whether he finds Molloy or not. In this sense it is a satire on Christian humanism.

In Christian humanism the person who commits crime or makes mistake has to confess. God is supreme and is supposed to guide the human beings. Christian humanism affirms the integrity or innate goodness of everything God has created. Christianity teaches that the human person is created in the image of God and that he bestows upon the person a fourfold relational capacity: A capacity for self-knowledge, self-possession, communion with others, and covenant with God. If human being has committed sin, then there will be confession of God. God is one who forgives all human creatures when they have made mistake or committed sin. But in existentialist humanism there is no confession. Man is himself responsible for his own deed. Man

does whatever he likes; human beings are not bounded by God or any other kind of rules and regulations. In Samuel Beckett's novel *Molloy*, the priest is a religious person. He believes in Christian faith. But he commits mistake and sin. He is a religious person but is engaged in homosexuality. Beckett portrays a priest as a homosexual to satirize Christian humanist belief about pious life.

In Christian humanism human life is rational and meaningful. The human being is a rational creature who inhabits a rational universe. So, life becomes meaningful. In existentialist humanism life is absurd, human being is an isolated existent in an alien universe. The universe does not possess any inherent truth, value or meaning. And it is absurd to seek meaning into this universe. We are simply keeping the illusion that the universe has a meaning. But there is nothingness in the world; the condition of man is absurd. When he realizes that the speculative system of the past provides no reliable guidance to life nor guarantees any foundation of human values. When the absurd man becomes aware of his futile living, he is naturally filled with anxiety and hopelessness but he does not surrender himself to the mouth of death. In Samuel Beckett's novel *Molloy* also the characters Molloy and Moran are in anxiety, anguish, hopelessness and absurd condition but they do not surrender themselves to the mouth of death. They do not commit suicide nor become pessimistic about life. They are not worried about their pain and anxiety.

They face the challenge of life happily and boldly. The only predictable truth is that the world is absurd and unintelligible for them. But suicide cannot be the solution to the discomfort of an absurd man if he is conscious of human pride, which always negates the nihilistic attitude of life. Molloy and Moran travel from one place to another place. They have no certain destination and no certain ideas for their purpose.

Both Molloy and Moran talk about the same thing again and again and do the same thing. But it makes them happy because they are fully aware of their absurd task. They have no illusion about their lives. The same things occur in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* too. The characters of *Endgame* can be compared to those of *Molloy*. *Endgame* has no beginning, no middle and no end. In *Molloy* also there is no beginning, no middle and no end. In both texts there is no clear-cut plot either. The characters of both *Endgame* and *Molloy* have the similar condition. They are physically weak. In *Endgame* Hamm is blind as well as legless but Clov has legs but cannot sit. In *Molloy* also both characters Molloy and Moran have stiff legs. The theme of *Endgame* is that life is meaningless. Life is a kind of game which we are playing not to win but to lose. Though it is difficult to live properly in this world, we cannot die, we live expecting something good. In *Molloy* also life is meaningless and absurd. Molloy and Moran have some mission. But in the end they are failures in their mission. It means that they are suffering from such kind of absurd condition. However, they wish to survive. They don't commit suicide. The characters like Hamm and Clov seem like Molloy and Moran. The purpose of life is to struggle not to commit suicide. *Endgame* is an absurd drama, whereas *Molloy* is an absurd novel. There is no casual relation (cause and effect relation) as what people or characters do is meaningless in both *Endgame* and *Molloy*. We can see the repetitive actions of the characters again and again in both *Endgame* and *Molloy*.

The plots of both texts are circular. There is no motivation of characters; we do not understand characters as they are not well defined. So dialogue is also circular as it is repeated most of the time in both texts. Dialogue goes round and round. It shows that communication, in true sense, is impossible as we speak meaninglessly in our everyday activity. Absurdist writer like Beckett is interested in showing us

human conditions; s/he shows how hollow the existence is. S/he shows picture of human condition and behavior. All characters of *Endgame* and *Molloy* are spending meaningless lives. Both *Endgame* and *Molloy* show human dependence on each other. Hamm gives food for Clove and Clove serves Hamm as his eyes, whereas Molloy also depends upon his mother and wants to meet her and Moran depends upon his son who helps him in his journey.

The characters of *Molloy* mock at Christian humanism for criticizing Christian humanist principles. In Christian belief after-life human soul goes to heaven. In existentialist humanism there is no after life. In this context Moran satirizes on Christian humanism and raises some question:

Did Mary conceive through the ear, as Augustine and Adobard assert?
Is it true that the devils do not feel the pains of hell? What was God doing with himself before the creation? Was his mother in heaven?
Would I go to Heaven? Would we all meet again in Heaven one day, I, my mother, only son, his another, Youdi Gaber, Molloy, his mother, Murphy, Watt Camier and the rest? (153-54)

Here Moran is conscious about himself not only as a human being but also as a fictional character of Beckett such as Watt, Murphy and so on. In Christian humanism Mary is the mother of Christ. It is belief that Mary gives birth to the Christ without having sexual relation to any male partner. But in existentialism, it is impossible to give birth without sexual relation. In Christian belief God is the creator of the world; God creates all things in this world, whereas existentialists mock at Christian humanism: If God creates all things then what was God doing himself before the creation? And another thing when a human dies, their soul will go to heaven in Christian faith. But existentialist does not believe on concept like eternity

of the soul. The human beings are suffering in the present conditions: here and now. So, in the above questions Moran satirizes Christian humanism.

In Christian humanism there is sufficiency of language, whereas in existentialist humanism there is insufficiency of language, there is thought, silence, gap and pause as Moran says:

I had classified a great number of there, with their probable meanings. But there was also the questions of the hum, so various in tone in the vicinity of the hive that this could hardly be an effect of chance. I first concluded that each figure was reinforced by means of a hum peculiar to it. But I was forced to abandon this agreeable hypothesis. For I saw the same figure (at least what I called the same figure) accompanied by very different hums. So that I said, the purpose of the hum is not to emphasize the dance, but on the contrary to vary it. And the same figure exactly differ in meaning to the human that goes with it. (155)

In Christianity there is certain meaning of word. There is sufficiency of language. But in existentialism there is gap of language and silence of language. In above lines Moran plays with the word 'hum'. He takes the word 'hum' and classifies a great number of meanings. He talks about not only one 'hum' but accompanied by very different hums. He means the purpose of the hum is not to emphasize the dance neither to worship God but on the contrary to vary it. And the same figure exactly differs in meaning. It means that he is playing with one word for different meanings. In Christian humanism there is certain meaning of a certain word. There is sufficiency of language. But in existentialist humanism there is no sufficiency of language. In this sense, it is satire on Christian humanism. The characters of *Molloy* are playing with words time and again.

The whole novel is a satire on Christian humanism. Molloy is a character who wants to find out his mother. In his journey he finds himself in the town where he runs over a dog owned by a woman named Lousse. A woman whose dog he kills and who he falls in love with. In fact she is called by three names like Mrs. Loy, Lousse and Sophie. In Christianity Sophie is a Christian name. But he forgets the Christian name. He does not want to call her by Christian name. In this sense, Molloy says, “But the lady, a Mrs. Loy, I might as well say it now and be done with it, or Lousse, I forget, Christian name something like Sophie” (32). The lines clarify that Molloy, himself a Christian, loses his faith on Christianity because of its deception in the name of religion, i.e. flaws in Christianity. He wants to break Christian values. Even he does not want to use the Christian name. But in his further journey sometimes he uses the Christian name but in fact he does not like Christian names. It means that Molloy completely wants to forget the Christian name ‘Sophie’. Better he wants to call her by Lousse. Here, Sophie is the symbol of Christian faith. When her dog dies she wants to bury her dog on the basis of rituals. By making Sophie use Christian ritual for the burial of the dead dog, Beckett makes Molloy satirize Christian faith, values and rules.

In Christian faith man is no better than God. God is powerful who always helps man in his trouble. But in existentialist humanism God is not related with man. It is human being who creates his/her own problems and tries to solve that problem as Molloy opines:

What I liked in anthropology was its inexhaustible faculty of negation, its relentless definition of man as though he were no better than God, in terms of what he is not. But my ideas on this subject were always

horribly confused, for my knowledge of men was scant and the meaning of being beyond me. (38)

The above lines show Beckettian satire on Christian humanism. It is not God who creates the meaning of human beings. It is man who himself/herself creates his/her own meaning and existence in the world. Here, Molloy opines that God does not create the meaning for human being. Molloy does not want to become a part of God. He wants to make his own being in the world and so does Moran. He does not believe on God. He faces many kinds of troubles and anxieties but he is not worried about. He knows that it is human being who creates his own problems. It means Molloy mocks at Christian humanism and so does Moran.

In Christian faith life becomes purposeful. Human condition moves through progressive way. Life becomes a pleasure and goes further and further. There is some kind of ray of hope. But in existentialism human beings do the same thing time and again. There is no purpose. There is no ray of any kind of hope. There is no certain direction. There is no change of certain thing. In this sense, Molloy says, "It was always the same sky, always the same earth, precisely, day after day and night after night" (61). Here, Molloy does not notice any kind of change in his life. His life is circular. In his whole journey, he finds the same sky and the same earth. There is no change. He also does not find day after night but day after day. For him night also is not night after day but night after night. It means that for him nothing changes. In other words, it refers that his life is circular; this life is going round and round. He does not go further more. He has no certain direction. When he starts his journey from one place to another, he does not find the certain direction. He only finds the same sky, the same earth, and the same day and the same night. His journey starts but there is no end. His ending is at the beginning. So, he goes round and round. It

shows that his life is complicated. There is no certain way to go. In this sense, he deliberately satirizes Christianity and especially Christian humanism.

In a broad sense, the entire novel can be taken as a criticism on Christian humanism. Samuel Beckett finished his novel *Molloy* just before Christmas and was badly in need of a rest. In this novel Molloy's mother is symbol of Mary and Molloy is symbol of Christ who are both lost. Moran, the person who follows Christ's footsteps is also totally lost. However, Moran is not hopeless. Rather, he is determined to prove his existence in this 'godless absurd world.'

IV. Conclusion

Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* is a critique of Christian humanism. The relinquishing of Christian humanism is alluded to by both of the narrators in his *Molloy*: Molloy and Moran. Beckett's *Molloy* criticizes Christian humanist definition of man as a rational creature who inhabits a rational universe. In order to show the absurdity of human life, Samuel Beckett makes his departure from the so-called Christian humanism in his novel *Molloy*.

In *Molloy*, the narrators cum protagonists, Molloy and Moran, always mock at the principles of Christian humanism. They always advocate for individual freedom in a society where they themselves are forbidden to live. They are alien and helpless for their mission, pain and suffering befriend them. In such a world they have to live through their choices and they do so. To maintain their freedom and true existence, they do not move from their standpoint. They always satirize on Christianity (though Moran is Catholic). They do not surrender to the Christian doctrines.

Molloy ridicules and subverts central doctrines of the Christian humanism. The linking of Beckett's art with ontological satire has important precedents beyond those already indicated facts. There is no certainty and perfection but uncertainty and incompleteness.

God, in general, is supposed to preserve and protect human beings and guarantee their happiness in Christian humanism. People pray God to fulfil their desire and think that God helps them in need. When one is in great crisis God is expected to help him. In brief, God is supposed to be the creator and the protector of human beings. In *Molloy*, Molloy and Moran are in their mission. Molloy's mission is to find out his mother and Moran's mission is to find out Molloy. They are physically weak as both characters have parallelized legs. Their condition is absurd.

At the end they get failure in their mission. They do not need anyone to help them; Moran's son abandons him. But they are not unhappy. They struggle and face many kinds of troubles. The life is meaningless for them. But they are enjoying with their absurd condition. They do not want help from God. They want to do freely what they like. They speak freely. They do not hide the reality out of fear. They speak their mind not the orders of others. They want to live a life of human being and criticize the doctrines of Christian humanism.

In Christian faith there is confession of human being. In *Molloy* a priest is Christian who himself is engaged in bad activity. He is a homosexual; it shows that it is satire on Christian norms and faith. There is certainty and purposeful life in Christian humanism. But Molloy and Moran have no certain purpose. There is no longer a distinction between potency and actuality and hence no more purpose for purpose. The only purpose is finality without end. Their purpose is meaningless.

In this novel, the protagonists Molloy and Moran cannot tolerate anything that hinders their freedom, individuality or existence. They speak and act against all such hindrances to maintain their true freedom. Molloy and Moran are completely free since they make so many choices and get lots of sufferings. But they find themselves responsible. They do not blame others for their condition. Their life is the result of choices and decisions. They choose in their life what they think is good for them and leads them towards freedom. They have to live in the world that is orthodox and rigid. Still, they do not forsake their quest but remain unmoved. For their entrance to the forbidden place also they themselves are responsible. Molloy does not get his mother. It means that he himself is responsible for his deed. And Moran too is responsible for his task. Although they are responsible for their condition and have to live amidst crisis, neither they give up nor do they remain passive.

Molloy and Moran deliberately criticize Christian humanism. For the sake of their freedom and existence they are ready to break all the rules and regulations, norms and values of the Christianity that is the real obstacle on their way. They think of destroying the prevailing Christian structure and system to create a new one where their freedom and true existence will be guaranteed and they will not be treated worse than animals but rather they will be behaved as a real human being with real freedom.

In Christianity life is not circle. There is certain direction to gain some purpose. But the plot of the whole novel is circular. The entire plot of *Molloy* is founded on circularity. For as Moran undertakes a circular journey for Molloy, he feels his quarry (who also describes a circular journey one involving return to his mother) rise up within him. In Beckett's minimalist mimesis, this reiterated foregrounding of circularity represents or corresponds to the customary cycle of birth, life and death. The only intrinsic purpose remaining in life is completion of the circuit. The force regarding meaningless cycle of course concerns Molloy's celebrated problem of arranging the circulation of the stones from pocket to pocket. Molloy searches for his mother and Moran searches Molloy. It means life becomes a circle which goes round and round.

In short, the protagonists are existentialists who are against Christian humanism. Throughout the life they choose freedom for the sake of freedom. They try their best to guarantee their real freedom and existence because for them existence precedes essence and freedom determines existence. They maintain their authentic existence in the world full of obstacles. So, they are not worried about their absurd condition. Rather, they are satisfied in their absurd condition.

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