

Chapter-I

Introduction

The research work attempts to explore the impacts of spiritual and material values on human existence as found on Graham Greene's famous novel *The Heart of the Mattes* (1948). It is the study of existentially troubled character Scobie, the protagonist of the novel. The research work is the testing of said hypothesis that inability to distinguish between divine faith and pity and responsibility for humanity caused uncertainty of Scobie's existence. The protagonist, Scobie, intentionally takes his life. The research analyzes the motif behind his suicide.

Dichotomy is the situation which occurs when the two contradictory things are divided. Cambridge International Dictionary of English defines it as 'a division between two opposing things'. Similarly, Webster New Word Dictionary defines Dichotomy as 'division into two usually opposed parts or groups'. Both the definitions agree upon the condition where two opposing forces are come together that causes a conflict.

Spiritualism as a religious movement has a varied set of beliefs and practices related to the conviction that the living and the dead could be in meaningful communication. It is a conviction that all souls no matter what their earthly history will be granted eternal salvation immediately after death. Webster New Word Dictionary defines spiritualism as 'the belief that the dead survive as spirits which can communicate with the living'. It is religious belief that goes beyond the worldliness. In that sense it is belief on supernatural things like spirit, soul, grace etc. it considers spirit and soul as

distinct from the body or material things. It is taken as a practical demonstration that the working of cause and effect extend to heaven and the afterlife.

Materialism is a philosophical thought that focuses on material, economic, and social relations as the determining factors of the society as well as the human beings. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines materialism as 'the name given to a family of doctrines concerning the nature of the world which give to matter a primary position and accord mind or spirit a secondary (Vol. III 179). Similarly, Webster New World Dictionary defines it as 'the philosophical doctrine that everything in the world, including thought, will, and feeling can be explained only in terms of matter'. Both the definitions are concerned more with material than with spiritual values. It concerns with worldly reality not on abstract things.

While going through the novel, it is found that the protagonist is caught between worldly activities and divine faith and pity and responsibility for humanity. He has a strong desire to do well and has innate love for God. He is willing to be damned himself for the sake of others. He loves human beings as nearly as God might have loved them. In a certain sense he might even be termed ascetic, but his asceticism is corrupted by the inevitable interaction of man and women. He moves on a plane that is basically metaphysical and spiritual and has the appearance of a man possessed. He is too weak before the temptation of the flesh. Equally he is also attracted by other material things. He is involved in crime in letting the Dutch Captain go free. To pay for his wife, Louise, intended trip to South Africa, he borrows money from Yusef, the unscrupulous Syrian trader.

His easily awakened pity and his persistent sense of responsibility lead to his own moral decline, and finally to his suicide. Scobie's indomitable religious belief and his refusal to shift his burden of pity and responsibility to anyone else is the main cause behind his suicide. Suicide rather adds a further problem. But the protagonist has taken it as the weapon to get rid of his spiritual anguish. He sees his freedom under suicide. There is existential motif behind the suicidal act of the protagonist, Scobie. The internal struggle and the suicidal act of the protagonist in Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Mattes* attracted the attention of many critics since its publication. But the critics have taken the act of suicide as the corruption by sentiment or his moral dedication.

Daphan Erdinast - Vulcan sees Scobie's suffering as his moral superiority. For him Scobie's downfall is the outcome of his high morality. He states:

The excellence of the book is due, first and foremost, to the tension between Scobie's indomitable religious belief and his refusal to shift his burden of pity and responsibility to anyone else, including God. Scobie is a man who serves God, even as he defies the institutional church and refuses its guidance. Scobie is a rebel, and his revolt against orthodox doctrines leads him into a different relationship with the God he believes in, and gives him the stature of a tragic hero. (Vulcan 45)

Similarly, Mark Montimer in *The Heart of the Matter* interprets the text in terms of religion. He states:

It is Scobie's religious dilemma, as much as the pity and responsibility he feels for others, that guides his actions, colours his thoughts and reveals his personality throughout the book. Had he not been a believing Catholic, there would have been no dead lock, no internal struggle, virtually none of the suspense that holds the interest from first to last.... the story grips us largely because of its religious theme and the hero's spiritual anguish, his knowledge that suicide is the unforgivable sin, his conviction that taking communion in a state of Catholic terms means damnation. Reduced to Catholic terms, his problem is that communion is impossible without giving up Helen, whom he has promised to love and protect. (Montimer 35)

Likewise, Lisa Crumley Bierman in his writing *Scobie reconsidered: A Casualty of Catholicism or Conscience?* considers Scobie's as the victim of his own conscience. He argues that:

Traditional Catholic beliefs are only one factor in Scobie's interpretation of his world. He is not constrained or condemned by any kind of religious imposition as much as he is a victim of his own conscience, which includes but is not limited to traditional elements of Catholicism. His sense of obligation to others, particularly his often self imposed obligations of duty, justice and responsibility, ultimately leaves him with no other option than to take his own life. (5)

D.E. Vulcan's method of interpretation is typical and innovative for him, patriarchal image is dominant in Greene's novels. Vulcan names as *The Childless Fathers* for both of their common thematic value and the title of the book. His analysis of a character bond in the novel *The Heart of the Matter* casts some light over human relation in general. He writes:

Scobie's relationship with his wife is one of unilateral responsibility. He has no illusions about her; Louise is neurotic, unattractive, pathetically literary, patronizing when she can afford to be, and entirely dependent on pride and social acceptance. But Scobie's awareness of these characteristics binds him to her all the more powerfully; he believes that this is entirely his own doing. (Vulcan 46)

Irma Maini examines the text as man's relation to himself, society and God so as to explore the nature of evil and the possibility of Man's redemption. Irma Maini finds the nature of evil and the possibility of man's redemption in *The Heart of the Matter*. Finding grace as the dominant there, he argues:

Although suicide is considered to be a great sin in Christianity, it is difficult to believe that Scobie is deprived of God's grace. Greene knows the worst that can be said about human beings, but he still regards them as made in the image of God. They commit abominations, their sins rise up like a foul stench in the nostrils of God, they are vile but they are also the children of the Lord and even

in their drunkenness and fornication and betrayal they bear witness to the miracle of God's grace. (Maini 56)

In *Graham Greene: A Catholic Novelist* Neil Mecwan finds Scobie's selfish pity and stupidity prevalent in the novel, *The Heart of the Matter*. For him, the entire story moves around Scobie's pity arises from a monstrous pride. He sums up these issues in the following words:

The Scobie of the novel is 'Scobie the just' a man who tries to be a just rather than a good man who tries to be a just rather than a good man. His wife and his confessor, at the end, judge him to have loved God but nobody else.... Scobie's selfish pity and stupidity are apparent and the pity commented on throughout the story but, even so Greene allows us to take his side. (68)

B.P.Lamba pointing the sins committed by the protagonist in *Graham Greene: His Mind and Art* argues *The Heart of the Matter* as the story which deals with the loss of faith on part of the protagonist. His downfall, for him is the outcome of his acts of evil intentionally. He says:

Scobie tries to do what is right as he has faith in his own puny intelligence. And this sets him the steeply inclined road to prediction and damnation. He does again break the commandment, when he commits adultery with Helen Rolt. Out of hidden pride, he assumes the mantle of a father figure and lacks the sense of discrimination. He commits an act of

evil intentionally. He knows the consequence of this, but still he commits the sin, since he has tried to replace God's divine mercy by the flawed human compassion. His sense of reasoning replaces the absolute faith that is demanded of the faithful. (46)

These critical responses demonstrate that the issue of existence needs serious attention. The critics, despite their difference, unanimously agree on the fact that Scobie commits suicide either because of his religious dilemma or because of his high morality or even because of his lack of judgment. A group of critics have commented on the apparent breach with religion in the novel. For them Scobie's downfall is a byproduct of his imprisoned Roman Catholic conscience. It is not just his religion that imprisons his conscience. He believes he can bring happiness to Louise and Helen and feels responsibility for their happiness. It shows that he is a victim of his own conscience. Scobie has an affair, he lies, he takes bribes he does not have faith in God's grace, and he ultimately commits suicide a mortal sin. All these activities may be unrecognizable to devout Catholics. Rather he focuses as much on his sense of responsibility duty and pity, that is his own action, as he does on his religion that is his own faith.

So much so, it is obvious that Scobie is a staunch Catholic. His internal struggle suggests that fact. But at the same time he feels responsible for the happiness of those he loved. It is not suited to a devout Catholic. So the argument of religious dilemma does not do complete justice to the novel.

Critics believe that Scobie is corrupted by sentiment. For them, the protagonist's sense of duty his profound goodness, his inability to be happy when those around him are

unhappy springs from his sentiment. But it is not only his sentiment but also his sense of religion that are the causes behind his downfall. It is his moral responsibility that bounds him to ignore or forget God but at the same time his strong belief on religion that causes his internal struggle. So again the argument corrupted by sentiment doesn't do justice to the characteristic of the protagonist.

Another side of argument accuses Scobie of spiritual pride and of exercising his own imperfect judgment. Scobie's strong faith in religion and his refusal to shift his burden of pity and responsibility to anyone else, including God prove the fact. It is his spiritual pride that leads him own moral decline. But it is not only his spiritual faculty but as a man he has responsibility and relationship. Man's responsibility and relationship to the society that guides and colours the thought and position of the human being in the society. A man having an affair with a widow is not accepted in the society. Similarly Scobie doesn't find his position in such a condition in the society. He is always aware of his sin. So he commits suicide believing that God is merciful and that he would be redeemed by divine grace. It is not his spiritual pride that causes his downfall rather his faith in God grace that ends his life.

Another side of critics believes that *The Heart of the Matter* raises both religious and political issues simultaneously. The religious issue is that the religious institutions fail to solve human problems. Similarly it also examines the process involved in the total collapse of Scobie, a police officer, whose warped sense of Christian pity drives him to self destruction. Scobie is a police chief and also a Catholic. He is a good and honest man

who is corrupted not by money or power but by sentiment and a sense of responsibility for the happiness of others which leads him to the extreme of wishing to damn himself.

As a man, Scobie, the protagonist, is conscious about his responsibilities. He considers himself to be responsible for the happiness of others around him. But his relation with the society doesn't allow his identity in the society as 'Scobie the just'. He wants to assert his existence by shouldering all the burdens around him. He doesn't prevent himself from doing the things that he likes to do. He focuses more attention on his sense of responsibility, duty and pity. He listens to the call of his soul, rather than the society. He cares not what other people say. He only cares what he has at heart. He takes bribe and lies for Louise's happiness. Similarly he commits adultery hoping to get Helen happy.

But he faces problem when his choices tussle with the society. He doesn't find any places to flourish his personality in such condition. On the one hand he has to shoulder all the burdens of people around him and on the other hand he has strong faith in God. For his independence, he has to give up either of the options. But he is not ready to leave any of them. He doesn't take part in the Mass since for this he has to confess. And for confession he has to give up Helen whom he has promised to love and protect. Scobie's love of God is intense but his love for human beings is more intense as he is prepared to violate God's rule, damn himself instead of making any of the two women unhappy. This contradictory situation constrains on his way to Scobie- the just. Then he chooses suicide as an easy way to assert his identity.

The Heart of the Matter is a novel which presents a tragic hero, Scobie, having spiritual pride to exercise his own imperfect judgment. To analyze his motif, the research depends on the theoretical background from existentialism.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter as presented discusses an introductory outline of the study, which includes the clarification of the title, hypothesis elaboration and the critics' views on the particular text.

The second chapter is meant to develop theoretical modality- Existentialism- that is to be applied in this research work. It provides short introduction to existentialism and major existential philosophers. This part introduces existential philosophers and their main concept regarding existentialism. The present chapter attempts to discuss the existentialism with reference to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus and others, and bring out the issues that are relevant for the study.

The third chapter of the research analyses the text at a considerable length on the basis of theoretical modality. It will sort out some extracts and lines to support the hypothesis of the study.

The fourth chapter is the conclusion of the entire study. On the basis of the analysis of the text done in chapter three, it will conclude the explanation and arguments put forwarded in the earlier chapters and shows suicidal act of Scobie as the existential problem.

Chapter II

Existentialism

Existentialism is a school of thought devoted to the interpretation of human existence. It takes human being as an isolated existent into an alien universe. As a mode of thought, it became prominent especially after the great world wars. World wars gave rise to the feelings of despair and separation from the established order. These feelings led to the idea that people have to create their own values in the world in which the traditional values do not work. One has to make choices and create oneself. One exists up to the extent one makes choices. People are free to make choices. Then existentialism lays stress on concrete individual existence, freedom and the choice. Ryan gives an explanation of existentialism:

"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)

Existentialism opposes the traditional philosophy which seeks to find out the truth which is objective and universal. According to this philosophy, the truths are subjective. What is true to one may be false to another. Whether the thing is true or false, that depends on the decisions the individual makes. For making decisions, one is free. This philosophy, then, emphasizes freedom. The focus on freedom is not new with the existentialists. Renaissance humanists were also the supporters of human freedom. They took freedom very positively. Due to the freedom, man can expose unlimited potentiality.

But the existentialists take freedom as a curse. Sartre says "we are condemned to be free" (56). Due to this freedom, there is no one to dictate to us what to do and what not to. We have to do ourselves.

Existentialists oppose the existence of God. Nietzsche's expression "God is dead" has a lasting impact on existential philosophy. There is no God to determine our existence. First we exist, and then create essence ourselves. We are what we make ourselves to be. In that sense we are in the state of becoming, not in the state of being. We don't know what we become after all because we are constantly choosing and creating ourselves. It is not possible for us to be without choice. Even when we are not choosing, we are still choosing. In this context, Macintyre says "Even if I do not choose, I have chosen not to choose" (149). Since we make choices, we create meaning ourselves. Then, there is no transcendent absolute to govern our existence.

It is to be remembered that all the existentialists do not refuse the existence of God. And there are some existentialists who even believe in the existence of God. In that sense, there are two kinds of existentialists: theistic and atheistic. Kierkegaard represents the former kind while Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus and Heidegger represent the latter.

Despite its prominence in the post-war years, the elements of existentialism can be found in the classical philosophy, especially in the philosophy of Socrates. Though not termed as existentialist, he gave the philosophy, which supports existentialism. Before Socrates, philosophers were concerned with the issue of cosmos. They tried to understand the functioning of the universe. But Socrates shifted from nature to man. His philosophy is concerned with the issue of human existence. He laid stress on human existence. Like modern existentialists, Socrates laid stress on individuality. For him, self is prior to every

thing. The real joy springs from the heart, not from external circumstances, that is reputation, power and wealth. Socrates asked people to understand the need of the self. He made people responsible towards the self. In this context, Richard Tarnas in *The Passion of the Western Mind* Comments:

In Socrates' view, any attempt to foster true success and excellence in human life had to take account of the innermost reality of a human being, his soul and psyche. Perhaps on the basis of his own highly developed sense of individual self-hood and self-control, Socrates brought to the Greek mind a new awareness of the central significance of the soul, establishing it for the first time as the seat of the individual waking consciousness and of the moral and intellectual character. He affirmed the Delphic motto "know thyself" for he believed that it was only through self-knowledge, through an understanding of one's own psyche and its proper condition, that one could find genuine happiness. (33)

The main ideas of existentialist theory were already common to the religious thought during medieval age. Medieval age was characterized by the belief in God. Everything was seen through the eyes of God. Man was expected to surrender before God for salvation. Yet during such period too, existential elements can be seen, especially in the philosophy of Saint Augustine. St. Augustine asked man not to go outside in the quest of truth. He affirmed the existence of human ego in the soul. He assigned importance to the individual self. Richard Tarnas' remarks in *The Passion of the Western Mind* supports this fact:

Augustine was the most modern of the ancients: he possessed an existentialist's self-awareness with his highly developed capacity for introspection and self-confrontation, his concern with memory, consciousness and time his psychological perspicacity, his doubt and remorse, his sense of solitary alienation of human self without God, his intensity of inner conflict, his intellectual skepticism and sophistication. It was Augustine who first wrote that he could doubt every thing, but not the fact of soul's own experience of doubting of knowing, willing, and existing-thereby affirming certain existence of human ego in the soul.

(144)

The end of Medieval age was the birth of Renaissance. Since Renaissance was the revival of classicism, it laid stress on individual like the classical philosophers.

Renaissance artists tended to believe that anything is, as the viewer views it. For the first time, they gave importance to the perspective, that is, subjectivity. The existential trace can be found in the works of Montaigne as well. Montaigne in his *Essays* reveals what he thinks and what he feels. He doesn't hide any thing. He makes the exploration of his self.

Why does Montaigne write about himself, rather than handling any other issues? The answer is: he assigns importance to the self. In this reference, Charles Van Doren in *A History of Knowledge* remarks:

Montaigne's main aim is to reveal with utter honesty and frankness the author's mind and heart. Montaigne makes no attempt to conceal his faults, but he does not beat his breast, either, and demand forgiveness. He is content to report what he is, what he thinks, what he feels..... (144)

Having seen the line of development up to Montaigne, we can conclude that the development of existentialism begins right from the classical time, though it did not get the same title or name. It began as a distinct philosophy with Danish Christian thinker Kierkegaard in the first half of the nineteenth century. He criticized Hegel's philosophical system as being abstract and having nothing to do with human existence. By criticizing Hegel, he gave importance to individual existence, freedom and choice.

The development of modern existentialism was preceded by the works of German Phenomenologist Frenz Brento and Edmund Husserl. They were immediately followed by modern existentialists. Phenomenology does the study of human consciousness. The world is as it appears to us. It means, Phenomenology gives stress on subjectivism. Defining phenomenology Raman Selden states: "A modern philosophical tendency which stresses the perceiver's central role in determining meaning is known as phenomenology" (48). Likewise Skirbekk and Nils Gilje define phenomenology in this way:

Phenomenology aims to describe the every day items that we use, as they appear to us; the pencil with, which I am now writing is described as it is in this context. Phenomenology attacks the view that the pencil is only a collection of atoms. In this sense, we can say that this school aims to reconstruct the universe in all of its diversity and fullness, with all of its qualities, as opposed to a one-dimensional standardization based on scientific philosophy. (440)

Having observed them, we come to the conclusion that phenomenology gives emphasis to the individuality. Things are as they make appearances to our consciousness.

So all understandings and perceptions are subjective. And individual plays a central role in perception.

This idea of individuality influenced the existentialists. Existentialism developed at the hand of Martin Heidegger, Sartre, Camus and many others, stressing on the human existence. At present, it has become an established theory and is implemented in interpreting literary texts.

The present chapter attempts to discuss the existentialism with reference to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus and others, and bring out the issues that are relevant for the study.

It is necessary to make separate discussion on some of the existential philosophers. No doubt, they share many things in common. But they have come up with significant differences as well. Here follows the discussion on some prominent existential philosophers.

Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55)

Kierkegaard was the first thinker to call himself existentialist. He reacted against the idealism of Hegelian philosophy, which, for him, had obscured the responsibility of individual towards the self. In other words, this philosophy could not make the people responsible towards their actions. Kierkegaard advocates that individual existence is prior to everything. Supporting this concept, Jostein Gaarder in *Sophie's World* remarks: "Kierkegaard had a sharp eye for the significance of the individual. We are more than the children of our time. And moreover every single one of us is a unique individual who only lives once" (377).

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" (380 qtd. in *Sophie's World*).

Kierkegaard is different from other existential philosophers in the sense that he believes in the existence of the God. But he takes it as the matter of faith. Through faith only, we feel the presence of god. But to/not to keep the faith is the matter of choice. Kierkegaard does not dictate anything. For him, religious life is characterized by faith.

Similarly, Kierkegaard believes that truth is subjective. There can't be any truth which is objective and universal. Instead of one single truth, there are many truths which are personal. The concept of "subjective truth" has influenced the twentieth century existentialists. Now, they emphasize on individuality means they emphasize on subjectivity. What is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong, that depends on the individual's decision and thought. Then for him, traditional values do not work. They can't govern the individual. If the values attempt to govern the individual, it is necessary that one should protest. Commenting on this, Jostein Gaarder remarks "He thus sets the individual, or each and every man, up against the system" (379). For Kierkegaard, one should protest against the prevailing system and affirm existence by making one's own choice.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Nietzsche, a German philosopher, is known as the critique of western philosophical tradition and Christianity. For him, western philosophical tradition and Christianity were both corrupt, since they taught abstraction. Western education system is

corrupt, since it attempts to prepare historically educated man. Knowledge does not do anything except making him live in abstraction. The historical knowledge does not serve life. For him life should be the center of everything. In an essay, *On the Use and Abuse of History* Nietzsche states that we need education "for life and action, not for a comfortable turning away from life and action or merely for glossing over the egoistical life and the cowardly bad act. We wish to use history only so far as it serves living" (152).

Nietzsche places life at the center. He denounces Christianity, on the ground that it discourages life. Christianity keeps reminding us that we are the product of sin. Man can not naturally be active when this fact is told. Christianity does not serve life.

Likewise, Nietzsche does not believe in the existence of God. There is no authority or God to determine our existence. For him, God is not there. Even if he was there, he is dead. He proclaimed the death of God and went on to reject the entire Judeo-Christian moral tradition in favour of a heroic pagan ideal. He called Christianity "a slave morality" and held that religion provides no truth because God is dead and Christianity has become the shelter of weak and disables people. In his famous essay *The death of God and the antichrist*, he writes:

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 ever attained on earth. It may even represent the low-water mark in the descending development of divine types. God degenerated into the contradiction of life, instead of being its transfiguration and eternal yes/God as the declaration of war against life, against nature and against the will to life! (912)

Nietzsche is quite positive towards suicide. He seems aware of the fact that suicide can be one of the choices that a person makes. For him, suicide can also be solution somewhere. So in his "Beyond Good and Evil" he states: "The thought of suicide is a great comfort: it is a good way of getting through many a bad night" (348, qtd. in the dictionary of quotation by; Reginald Hill). Suicide is not surrender; it is a means to achieve some goal. Suicide also brings fulfillment. So Nietzsche doesn't take suicide negatively. An individual may use it as a weapon to win something.

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)

Despite Heidegger's claim that he was not an existentialist, his influence on Sartre and the whole existentialist movement was unavoidable. He is known as a leading existentialist, despite denying having anything to do with existentialism.

Heidegger was the critique of Western metaphysics. For him, western philosophy was obsessed with the problem of knowledge. And it was less concerned with the issue of being. But Heidegger fulfilled that gap, since he was concerned with the issue of existence. Like any other existentialist, existence is his point of departure. He was interested in the study of 'Dasien'. Likewise, Heidegger believes that we have been living in an incomprehensible, indifferent world. The universe is alien to us. We have to choose a goal, with the awareness of certainty of death and meaninglessness of one's life. For Heidegger, being is not realized in normal situation. It doesn't occur all the time. It is realized in the state of boredom, anxiety or ill-at-ease. So he states in *What Is Metaphysics?*" It irrupts when one is bored, profound bored on drifting here and there in the abysses of our existence like a muffling fog, removes all things and men and oneself along with it into a remarkable indifference. This boredom reveals being as a whole" (4).

For Heidegger, our obsession should be more with existence than with knowledge. The principal object of investigation is the search for the being (Sein) and more particularly man's being (Dasein). Thomas Maunter further explains: Dasein, this particular way of existing, is different from the ordinary existence of things in the world around us. The thing is that things are determinate and have their distinctive properties. That is their kind of being. But the sort of being that I manifest is not that of a thing with properties. It is a range of possible ways to be. (183)

In sum, Heideggerian existentialism stresses on existence, boredom, goal and choice.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80)

Sartre was the 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 humanistic 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). Then existentialism gives dignity to man. It encourages human action. In that sense, it is quite an optimistic philosophy.

For Sartre "existence precedes the essence" is the central idea of existentialism. According to Sartre, we first exist, appear on the scene, make choices and create

ourselves. Means 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. But human case is quite opposite. We first exist and plan what to do. So with us existence governs the essence.

Like Macintyre, Sartre believes that one can not be without choice. Even when we do not choose anything, we choose not to choose. Then choice is something, which an individual keeps making. And this choice may reach even up to suicide. He doesn't take suicide negatively. He believes that, to make oneself "passive in the world, to refuse to act upon things and upon others is still to choose, and suicide is one mode among others of being in the world" (57).

Sartre treats suicide positively. For him, it is like any other choices. By committing suicide, people can protect their choice. They can win something and bring fulfillment. In that sense, it is a mode of fulfillment.

Albert Camus (1913-60)

Albert Camus was a Journalist, novelist-and philosopher. Absurdity of life is his major concept. His famous novel *The Stranger* (1960) concentrates on the alienation of the human being in the midst of silent universe. Camus believes that human being is an isolated existent in an alien universe. The universe doesn't 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. So he states in *The Myth of Sisyphus* "In a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. His is an irremediable exile . . . This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of absurdity" (68).

Like Sartre, Albert Camus supports choices. Choices may lead to repetition and repetition leads us to a sense of absurdity. But there exists man then. Sisyphus is given the choices. He doesn't surrender to God and makes a choice, though he chooses the tough work, yet he exists through this choice. He chooses to face punishment, rather than bow before God. Camus' essay is the meditation on suicide. He doesn't take suicide as the solution. He believes that one has to take the challenge, but not commit suicide. Camus believes that choice leads us to absurdity but joy comes out of that absurdity.

I leave the 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. He too concludes that all is well. The universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a master's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy. (70)

To sum up, Camus advocates freedom, individuality, choices and consequently the human existence. But he doesn't support suicide as the mode of existence. Suicide is not a solution. It's a cowardly act. We should become bold, face the challenge and assert existence like Sisyphus. Camus never advocates surrender. Sisyphus doesn't surrender. He undergoes a challenging task and upholds heroism.

Having viewed the ideas given by the philosophers, we can still discuss basic existentialist standpoint. Here an attempt has been made to summarize the views that existentialists generally share in common.

Alienation is the major theme of existentialism. We are the beings into this alien universe. Man is basically alone. An individual may find oneself alone even among the relatives. Therefore, the sense of alienation is common phenomenon to man. This sense of alienation poisons the human relationship, that is, the relationship between the parents and children, husband and wife, friends and relatives. Alienation occurs especially when an individual can't integrate into the social structures and customs.

Likewise, 'existence' is the basic theme of existentialism. But all the things and beings do not exist. 'Being alive' does not mean to be in existence. Human beings exist while the animals and plants live. One exists only when one is conscious of one's existence. We are conscious of our existence. But the animals are not conscious of their existence. And this existence is prior to the essence. We are what we make ourselves to be. So we should not seek meaning, we should rather create meaning through our actions.

Protest is another theme of existentialism. One protests against the social system to affirm one's existence. The social mechanism always imposes the burden. It expects human being to act within social norms. Man is stereotyped and doesn't do any thing new, if he continues the traditions of society. The existential man is not governed by the laws that the society has formulated. Rather one governs himself with the laws that one has made. In that sense, S/he is a law maker who sets the example for the whole of humanity.

Boredom/anxiety is another phenomenon that existentialism talks about. When one becomes conscious of one's existence, he shows the radical dissatisfaction with the prevailing systems and norms of society. Due to this dissatisfaction, one feels boredom.

One becomes tragic only when one is conscious. Consciousness makes the people tragic. Being bored means we are conscious of our existence. But the same consciousness is a block on the way to human happiness. In this context, Albert Camus says that *The Myth of Sisyphus* is "tragic, that is because its hero is conscious. Where would his torture be, indeed, if at every step the hope succeeding upheld him? The workman of today works everyday in his life at the same task and his fate is no less absurd. But it is tragic only at the rare moments when it becomes conscious" (68).

Likewise, suicide is another theme of existentialism. Suicide is human - specific phenomenon. Only those commit suicide who is conscious of existence. Animals or non-human things do not commit suicide. Human beings tend to feel that they can use their life in the way they like. If they can't win anything through the choice they make in life then they can do it through death. When the people deliberately choose death that takes the form of suicide. People can use it as a means of existence. Existentialism takes even suicide as the mode of existence. Suicide is not surrender. It is the means to avoid the surrender needing situation.

Chapter-III

Story in Brief

Set in west Africa during the Second World War, it describes how the deputy commissioner of police, Scobie, a just and honourable man, is led to make various false moves, initially by pity for his wife unhappy, hysterical, literary wife Louise, then through a mixture of pity and love for a nineteen year old widow, Helen, with whom he has an affair. After fifteen years of service, this unromantic hero, Scobie, has come to love the people and the place, despite widespread corruption, unhealthy climate and pervasive sordidness. He is a practicing Catholic with a genuine love of God and a natural, deep seated goodness for humanity. His peaceful life in the colony is threatened by his relationship with his wife, Louise, for whom he feels pity rather than love. He has determined to protect her happiness at all costs. To protect her from unhappiness, he sacrifices his integrity and becomes a corrupt officer. To pay her intended trip to South Africa, he borrows money from Yusef, the unscrupulous Syrian trader.

In the absence of his wife, and again motivated more by pity than by love, he has an affair with one of the survivors of a torpedoed ship Helen. When his wife returns, earlier than expected, he is thus caught between two women, neither of whom he wants to hurt. In this way, his easily awakened pity and his persistent sense of responsibility lead to his own moral decline and to the unhappiness of the two women.

His situation is further complicated by the spying activities of Wilson, a secret agent sent out to keep an eye on the diamond smuggling. His moral problems are heightened by his oblige actions as a Catholic. Through his fault, his faithful servant, Ali,

is murdered. Seeing no other solution to his plight, he commits a carefully camouflaged suicide, which is unmarked as such after his death.

Scobie is a complex character and he generates the ambiguities of the novel. He is tormented by his love of human beings. The only alternative for him is to kill himself, but as a Catholic, he cannot put an end to his life without wounding God. Scobie's love of God is intense but his love for human beings is more intense as he is prepared to violate God's rule, 'damn' himself instead of making any of the two women unhappy. He takes up all the burdens as his responsibility to make both women's happy. He is not prepared to shift it to anyone not even to God rather chooses to extinguish himself with the encumbrance to responsibility.

Belief and Faith

By belief we mean the opinion that we can voluntarily accept or reject. In other words, in belief the mind necessarily affirms and that to which it voluntarily gives its assent. While we talk about faith it denotes the state of belief in which we have strong conviction about the matter. We believe in the set tradition without reasoning it. It is the blind support to the religious thought.

The Heart of the Matter is the story of a loyal servant of God. Scobie, the protagonist has strong faith in Catholicism. However, he focuses as much or more attention on his sense of responsibility, duty and pity, that is, his own actions, as he does on his religion, that is, his own faith. Every action taken by Scobie is guided by his Catholic conscience. His sense of pity and responsibility towards humanity and his awareness of sins are the result of his faith and belief in God. Had he not been a believing Catholic there would not have been internal anguish on part of the protagonist.

Scobie's marital relation with his wife is based on merely of his belief in Catholicism. According to Catholic view, marriage is characterized by mutual respect. Despite Louise's, wife of Scobie, physical unattractiveness, he feels responsible for her happiness. He loves her, for Scobie feels that "in human relations kindness and lies are worth a thousand truths"(69). And Christian theology and ethics, too, insist that it is far more important to save one creature life than an abstract. Not only the protagonist, Scobie, has faith in Catholicism, but Louise is also the victim of Catholicism. She feels bounded by her faith in Catholicism. She doesn't leave her husband so that she can enjoy her freedom due to her Catholicism. Her disappointed is revealed when she says bitterly about Helen "But she is not a Catholic. She is lucky. She is free" (261).

The concept of adultery as a mortal sin persists with the same intensity in the novel. Scobie, being a devout Catholic, is tormented by his consciousness of sin after committing adultery, and his conscience forbids him attending mass and confession in the state of mortal sin. He thinks that "if one was a Catholic, one had all the answers; no prayer was effective in a state of mortal sin..." (315). Had he not been a believing Catholic, he would have live like common human beings. He would have attended in mass, even though he had been indulged in different mortal sins. Reduced to Catholic terms, his problem is that Confession is impossible without giving up Helen, whom he has promised to love and protect.

Scobie being a Catholic can be understood on his affair with Helen. He can't give up his Catholicism merely for a widow. He rejects her marriage proposal and says, "I can't. You know that I'm a Catholic. I can't have two wives "(213). According to Catholicism, a man can't possess two wives at the same time. Helen hates Scobie being

Catholicism. It is revealed through Helen's blamed that "If there is one thing I hate it's your Catholicism ..." (281).

Scobie has innate love for God. He thinks that faith is the only means to uplift the position of human being. That faith makes him the follower of the Catholicism but not in the rigid Christian way. He follows his personal moral code, even though it does not coincide with that of the orthodox Catholicism. As Paul Tillich says, "... a moral act is not an act in obedience to an external law, human or divine. It is the inner law of our true being, or our essential or created nature..."(Tillich 20; *Morality and Beyond*). It is this inner law which Scobie accepts over the institutionalized law. Guided by inner law he has a desire to do well. He is willing to be damned himself for the good of the others. He prays, "God, I offer up my damnation to you. Take it for them" (272). While other characters like Louise and other colonials are guided by societal laws. As Miami has said:

Louise and other colonials there are governed by societal norms and ethics, Scobie alone is truly religious in his inner freedom. When Dicky Pemberton commits suicide, it is he who argues with the priest that he is sure that God pities the young, and that Pemberton will be blessed with God's Grace. (Maini57)

Scobie's dying words are of God "Dear God I love..."(290) also reinforces his faith in god. Therefore, faith of Scobie in Catholicism arouses internal anguish to lead his life smoothly. It restricts his external freedom.

Scobie attempts to follow both the laws: Institutional and inner laws. He can't ignore one for other. Like own created law or belief, he has strong support for Church laws. Had his belief in Church is less, he would have taken part in the Mass and Confess

his sin of adultery in the state of mortal sin. It is that societal laws which doesn't allow him to entertain his inner laws. He can't choose either of them. For Church law, he has to give up Helen, whom he has promised to live and protect. On the other hand, he has to violate Catholicism merely for the sake of a widow. His sense of pity and responsibility deviate him from the God's grace.

It causes an internal struggle on part of the Protagonist. In such a condition Scobie finds easy way to land his burdens and get God's Grace. So he chooses suicide, as only one means to achieve God's grace. He kills himself without interfering the laws made by society as well as himself. For his eternal freedom, he commits suicide, his only solution to difficulties which had become more than he could bear. Despite the voice of conscience and the Church's view of suicide, he takes the necessary overdose, thus conclusively ending his life as husband and lover and policeman, and jeopardizing his spiritual future.

Pity and Responsibility

Responsibility is not an act of obedience to an external law, human or divine. It is the inner feeling on part of the others. Responsible man always cares for others pains and pleasures and always ready to shoulder the burden of others. The protagonist, Scobie, spends his time assuming responsibility for the happiness of others, no matter what the price. Although Scobie does not really love his wife, Louise, he feels responsible for her happiness. When Scobie is passed over for promotion, his wife feels highly insulted. She is afraid to show her face at he club and in order to escape criticism and gossip. she plans to go away on a long holiday to South Africa. Scobie knows that he can't afford the passage, but at the same time he cannot bear to see her unhappy. So, Scobie who is

known for his honesty borrows money from the Syrian traders, Yusuf and thus puts himself into the hands of the villain.

Scobie's relationship with his wife is one of unilateral responsibility. He has no illusions about her; Louise is neurotic, unattractive, pathetically literary patronizing when she can afford to be, and entirely dependent on pride and social acceptance. Her inability to cope with life, her pathetic unattractiveness and her social failure, arouse his pity and responsibility to her "intensity of a passion" (22). When it seems to Scobie that Louise cannot carry her own burden, he undertakes to relieve her of it. "She was like a tired carrier who has slipped his load she was asleep before he had finished his sentence, clutching one of his fingers breathing as easily. The load lay beside him now and he prepared to lift it" (44). This image of a load taken from another's shoulders recurs throughout the novel in reference of Scobie's relationship with other people. Scobie is always ready to shoulder the burden of other people, to relieve them of responsibility for their own lives and to look after them.

Scobie's desire to help all the suffering and needy people causes the moral decline. He commits his first professional delinquency when he borrows money from Yusuf, for Louise's holiday, knowing that he has incurred a debt to a man who is suspected of criminal activities. While Scobie paves the way for his moral degradation material success comes to him. His pity and responsibility for the people around him attracts him to material world. Material values, for him, become great importance to fulfill his responsibilities. Not only he has been degraded in terms of material value by his pity and responsibility but he has equally been deteriorated in terms of spiritual value. His sense of pity towards a young widow Helen Rolt leads to adultery. At first, Scobie

feels responsible for Helen's happiness as if she were his own child. He thought: "If my child had lived, she too would have been conscriptable.... It was impossible to think of her being saved from the sea and then flung back...." (186-187).

Scobie is bound to Louise by his pity and sense of responsibility for her pathetic unattractiveness. Helen is young but equally pitiful to him. "... She looked ugly, with the temporary ugliness of a child. The ugliness was like handcuffs on his wrists" (188).

Scobie's sense of responsibility to his wife, Louise and his mistress, Helen drives him from sin to sin. Scobie finds no way to absolve him from the sin, as he has no intention to desert his wife as well as his mistress. In this state of predicament he prefers to damn himself by committing suicide: "the worst crime a Catholic could commit...." (314).

Scobie's love of God is intense but his love for human beings is more intense as he is prepared to violate God's rule, 'damn' himself instead of making any of the two women unhappy. He takes it up as his responsibility to make the women, his wife and mistress, happy. The sense of responsibility is categorical, he is not prepared to shift it to anyone, not even to God rather his predilection is to extinguish himself with the encumbrance of responsibility. He declares: "I can't shift my responsibility. I can't make one of them suffer so as to save myself" (317). He is conscious of his predicament and does not beg mercy from God but death and damnation" O God, I'm only the guilty one because I've known the answers all the time... I know what I'm doing. I am not pleading for mercy. I am going damn myself" (316).

The most remarkable quality in Scobie's religiosity is his human love. His predilection is to suffer for his sin than to make others suffer; his decision to let God

suffer than his wife and mistress. In his monologue addressing to God he says "I've preferred to give you pain rather than to give pain to Helen or my wife because I can't observe your suffering" (258). He is so responsible for the happiness of his wife and mistress that he is ready to hurt God- deprive God of himself, as he will deprive himself of God - rather than bring unhappiness to Helen or Louise. He says, "O God I offer my damnation to you. Take it, use it for them" (272). Scobie believes that his peace is gone forever and that he has no way left of regaining it; but he feels he has the power to give peace to others by taking himself out of the way, by buying it at the cost of his life. And so he ultimately decides to commit suicide. He plans it in such a way that it should appear to a natural death, because he knows Louise, being an orthodox Christian, would never be able to accept it. Irma Maini argues that:

All his life and even in his death Scobie's first thought is for the people whose happiness assumes the force of moral responsibility for him that responsibility which springs from his strong sense of pity. (Maini55)

All his life and even in his death Scobie's first thought is for the people whose happiness assumes the force of moral responsibility, for that responsibility which springs from his strong sense of pity. He assumes himself as responsible man and says "...I am the responsible man. It is my job to look after the others. I am conditioned to serve"(270). Scobie's problem is undoubtedly a human problem. As a husband, police officer as well as a lover, there are every where duty and responsibility but no way to shift them and get released from them and therefore, there is no rest in life. It is only in death that man gets rest and solution to all riddles of life. While he was alive he had been divided into

different identity. He didn't have his own personal identity. Sometime he would have been a good husband and sometime he would have been a lover or a police officer. In such situations he doesn't find personal freedom. His multidimensional personality causes internal crisis. Responsibility to the people around him and his faith in God do not go smoothly at the same time for it he has to give up either of them. But he is not ready to leave one for other. He doesn't surrender himself for his faith and responsibility. Rather to assert his position he chooses suicide as alternative.

The most remarkable quality in Scobie's religiosity is his human love. The situation has impelled him to ignore God but he has no intention to continue it. Therefore, he prefers death as the only solution to all riddles. According to D.P. Jones the riddles in Scobie's life lies in the conflict between his love of a woman and for God. He sees conflict "between the love of a woman and the reluctance to give Him pain by breaking His laws, lies his knot which Greene spends so much energy unraveling"(110).

Self - Centrism

Self-centrism refers to the state in which a person gives priority to oneself at each and every decision. When we talk about self-centrism, we are referring to that sort of behavior which is oriented towards the self. Self-centrism man doesn't care for others' pains and pleasures and only thinks of what pleases and pains him/her. The protagonist, Scobie, gives priority to his own conscience, rather than to others' feelings and emotions. Therefore he is a self centered man. Scobie is obsessed with pity and responsibility for those who depend on him for their happiness. His relation with his wife is not based on the mutual relation rather on his pity and responsibility. By showing pity he always wants to dominate her. In Scobie and Louise relationship, there is no intensity of love. He

considers it is the wife's duty to fulfill every demands of the husband. Louise, in a moment of painful lucidity, tells Wilson that Scobie does not love her, but he will do anything for her because "he has a terrible sense of responsibility" (79). Louise feels lonely with Scobie. In a moment she says "Ticki" I'm so lonely. I haven't a friend, Ticki "(63). Living with her husband neither she gets love and affection nor his companionship from her husband. Their marital relationship merely based on Scobie's terrible sense of pity towers her. He doesn't consider Louise's feelings and emotion, rather he is responsible for his self imposed duty. It is clear when Louise says "I've known it for years. You don't love me" (64). Their relation is based on lies and pity. Scobie declares "In human relations kindness and lies are worth a thousand truths "(64). It is generally supposed that both husband and wife are equally responsible for each other's happiness. But Scobie, not expecting anything on part of his wife, puts himself as a protective figure. Putting assertions to his own self he assumes himself as a responsible man. He says "I'm the responsible man "(270). But as a responsible man, he is not interested in Louise's liking. He criticizes the social gatherings his wife enjoys and he makes no attempt to develop an interest in literature. He considers himself responsible only to assert himself in the superior position. He repeatedly feels responsibility for any person who arouses pity in him and particularly for the women in his life.

Scobie's warped associations of responsibility, love, and pity render him incapable of having relationships based on mutual respect. Because he feels he must assume responsibility for those around him, he cannot view them as equals. Scobie has false illusion that he is somehow superior to the people in the society. Critic D.S. Savage,

in his article, *Graham Greene and Belief* has suggested that this acceptance of responsibility for others gives "Scobie an imagined sense of spiritual superiority" (210).

Scobie is a man who is corrupted by spiritual pride. There are times in the novel when Scobie visualizes himself as an equal to God. In confessions, shortly before his suicide he states "O God ...if instead I should abandon you, punish me but let the others get some happiness" (220). Scobie is quite sure that he has "known the answers all the time" (315). Scobie's self confidence is a form of spiritual pride. He falsely convicts himself of being "the only guilty one" (315) instead of submitting himself to God's judgment. Holding a dialogue with God, Scobie dismisses the consolation of God's words "If you live you will come back to me sooner or later" (316); he can only answer:

I love you, but I've never trusted you. If you made me, you made this feeling of responsibility that give always carried about like a sack of bricks. I'm not a policeman for nothing - responsible for order, for seeing justice is done. There was no other profession for a man of my kind. I can't shift my responsibility to you. (316-317)

Wrongly, Scobie assumes that he is responsible for maintaining happiness in those he loves. He believes himself unique, the only one who recognizes the weight of misery at the temporary hospital, for instance. As Gwenn R. Boardman says,

...repeatedly he is overwhelmed by a terrible impotent feeling of pity and responsibility; but his pity is an automatic response to the supposed immaturity of those he encounters. He does not really see people- individual human beings- but humanity. Scobie almost seems to betray

false and sentimental responses; his automatic pity is lacking in discrimination. (Boardman 84)

Again Scobie's error comes from his original fault the substitution of man's flawed compassion for God's divine mercy. He presumes to know God's will to evaluate, in terms of his world, the application of God's justice. He is convinced that "there must be mercy for someone so unformed" (98) as Pemberton, or that "against all the teaching of the Church, one has the conviction that love any kind of love does deserve a bit of mercy" (252). In this substitution of his own false reasons for true faith, Scobie is not sharing the views of the priests coming the ultimate mystery of God's will. He is merely forcing God's infinite goodness into the confining mold of his own desire to do good. He makes similar errors in claiming "even God is a failure" (309). Gwenn R. Boardman argues:

A Catholic seeing God as a "failure" or identifying the beloved servant Ali with God is hopelessly ensnared by his own dialectic of pride. Perverting the Catholic view of Christ as victim, Scobie forgets the reasons for Christ's sacrifice. (Boardman 86)

Instead he pities upon the God as if he is superior to look after the God. He declares: "I made you with love. I've wept your tears. I've saved you from more than you will ever know; I planted in you this longing for peace only so that one day I could satisfy your longing and watch your happiness"(316).

Scobie not only ignores the grandeur of God but put himself equal to the position of God. He thinks that "there are no capital letters of separate us when we talk together" (316). Scobie loves God but doesn't trust him. Scobie continually dwells on the injury

that he does to God. In his false pride, Scobie turns away from the mercy of Christ by turning "his back on the altar and went out" (317). He clearly declares that "I love you but I've never trusted you" (317).

Similarly Scobie's affair with Helen is not based upon the mutual understanding. Scobie is bound to Helen by his pity and sense of responsibility for her pathetic unattractiveness. Helen is young but equally pitiful to him "... she looked ugly with the temporary ugliness of a child. The ugliness was like handcuffs on his wrists" (159). There is no sensual pleasure or lust in their affair. When Helen lies in bed she seems to him like "a bundle of cannon fodder" (161).

Scobie, in the novel, is meant to be a portrait of a man corrupted by pity. His pity is selfish by which he protects himself from the pain of others. He tries to do what is right as he has faith in his own puny intelligence. He finds his freedom flourish in his own invented knowledge. He assumes man is not free if God stands to him in the relation of a creator, rather in such a condition man are merely a server. So he violates the societal and Church law in order to flourish his freedom. Bedyayev in his *The Destiny of Man* says "freedom is an aspect not of individuality, but of personality"(55). He argues "Individuality is a naturalistic and biological category, while personality is a religious and spiritual one" (55). So, personality is always in conflict with the power of the law. Law, which is societal law, Church Law, necessarily curbs personality and inflicts injuries upon it. Scobie's misery in the novel is related to societal and Church Law. The price is pain and suffering in order to fully realize his freedom. He chooses suicide to violate the laws imposed by society and the church so as to flourish his freedom. He is ready to bow down himself, rather give up his convictions. By suicide, Scobie asserts himself as a free

and independent. Scobie could have left Helen to recover from her ship wreck and love wreck returned to Louise, confess his sin and live a life that would have been normal. But he rejects this suggestion, since as a Catholic he has knowledge of his action and is damned by his knowledge.

All the activities done by Scobie show that the method adopted by Scobie for attaining happiness for others and peace for himself are the very means that result in suffering for himself and ultimately destroy him. Scobie's life is marked by suffering. This suffering is a result of his obsession, but more so is because of a fatality that intrudes upon his life. He blames none for his agony but himself. He is conscious of his doing and does not beg for mercy from God but death and damnation: "O God, I'm only guilty one because I've known the answer all the time... I know what I'm doing. I am not pleading for mercy. I am going to damn myself"(315). It makes clear that the protagonist is ready to destroy himself rather surrender to God. Like Sisyphus, Scobie suffers but is not ready to surrender. He is fixed in his character. He is not capable of resisting what he happens to be or what he is turning out. Lamba argues "...it is agonizing suffering, deep soul searching and ultimate recognition of the self that mark Scobie as a tragic hero"(30).

Despite Scobie's suffering he does have strong conviction that God is failure. This sense of failure, Scobie loses his Paradise because he commits the sin of the rebellious angels: Pride and Disobedience. For Scobie it is right to suffer damnation alone for the people around him rather than to suffer with them. He assumes his suffering as great achievement on his way to freedom. He believes one day God will bow down on his suffering. He says " If you live you will come back to me sooner or later. One of them will suffer, but can't you trust me to see that the suffering isn't too great"(315). For him

suffering is too great. Suffering, for Scobie, is meant to assert existence. He chooses suffering for his inner freedom; rather surrender himself against his ideology.

Human Love vs Devine Love

Human love refers the act of human attachment among the people either by responsibility or by biological and material success. It is mostly related to worldly activities. Human love exists when one feels responsible for the happiness of others. To maintain happiness, human being involves in love. When we talk about 'Divine Love', we are referring to the human attachment to religion. It is mostly related towards spiritual values. In the condition of 'Divine Love' man is guided by the unseen power. In this state, man is not attracted towards material success. For a man having divine love, God and secular power are prior to worldly activities. Scobie's suffering can be analyzed on the basis of human and divine love.

Scobie has a desire to do good and has innate love for God. He is willing to be damned himself for the good of the others. He is obsessed with pity and responsibility for those who depend on him for their happiness. His deep sense of responsibility has urged him to make a terrible vow on the eve of his wedding with Louise that he would always make her happy. Since then he is prepared to undertake any risk for the sake of her happiness. He assumes himself responsible persons for her happiness and does his best to maintain her happiness. He is ready to do everything to secure and ensure the happiness of his wife. When she asked him "You will do something"(44) for her intended visit to South Africa, he promptly responded " Yes dear, I'll manage somehow"(44). He assures

her to keep her happiness that "I'll try and work something out. You know if it's possible I'd do anything for you – anything"(44).

Louise has artistic taste for books which is looked down and mocked by the colons. Scobie does his best to boost up her morale in this regard. When a new colon, Wilson, shows his interest in Louise's artistic propensity, Scobie prays to God: "Don't let her patronize him too far: don't let her be absurd: let her keep this friend at least" (30).

He helps to promote Louise - Wilson liaison with the sole motive to make her happy. Scobie borrows unwillingly from a notorious smuggler, Yusef, in order to fulfill Louise's desire to visit South Africa for a change of climate. By borrowing from Yusef, Scobie falls in his trap who blackmails him for diamond smuggling. Thus Scobie has been forced to deviate from his honesty in his attempt to make his wife happy. His concept of love is tied invariably to his sense of duty and responsibility.

During Louise's visit to South Africa, Scobie's sense of pity draws him closer to a seasick and ugly woman, Helen. He is attracted by her ugliness because "The ugliness was like handcuffs on his wrist "(188). This attraction leads his affair with Helen and then to adultery. Now his sense of responsibility entails to make a vow to Helen similar to the vow he made earlier to Louise "I'm sorry about everything. I'd do anything -almost anything - to make you happy. I'd stop coming here. I'd go right away - retire ..." (214).

Since he accepts the double responsibility to make two women happy, there occurs contradiction and insoluble tension in his life. As a devoted Catholic he could not stand aloof from Church services: Mass and confession. He is tormented by his love of God because he can not reconcile it with his love of human beings. As a good husband he feels responsible for the happiness of his wife and Helen with whom he has an illegal

relationship. His sense of sin after adultery and his sense of religiosity further complicate his life. As a conscious Catholic he is aware: "...no prayer was effective in a state of mortal sin..."(315). The only alternative for him is to kill himself but as a Catholic, he cannot put an end to his life without wounding God.

Thus Scobie is left alone to find his faith and beliefs for himself. His brand of integrity is illustrated in his tragic meditation "I am cheating human beings every day I live, I am not going to try to cheat myself or God" (266). As father Rank refuses absolution, Scobie has no alternative than to pass through the territory of despair. He discovers a smell of decay in his own living body. Caught between belief and pity, Scobie has to give up his future. He tells Helen, who taunts him about his Roman Catholicism:

I believe, I tell you. I believe that I'm damned for all eternity - unless a miracle happens. I'm a policeman I know what I'm saying. What I've done is for worse than murder - that's an act, a blow a stab, a shot: it's over and done, but I'm carrying my corruption around with me. It's the coating of stomach. (282)

Scobie is being exposed as a man who has confused his own sense of pity with God's love and mercy: "The word 'pity' is used as loosely as the word 'love': the terrible promiscuous passion which so few experience" (189). In his wish to ensure the happiness of those he pities or loves, Scobie finds his own moral decline. He indulges into corruption. He is corrupted not by money but by sentiment. If the customs police had been corrupted by money, Scobie "had been corrupted by sentiment. Sentiment was the more dangerous, because it couldn't name its price. A man open to bribes was to be relied

upon below a certain figure, but sentiment might uncoil in the heart at a name, a photograph, even a smell remembered"(55). It is his sentiment of pity that not only makes him indulge in professional indiscretion, but also become a party to the shady deals.

At the time of search for smuggled diamonds on the ship, the Portuguese captain of the *Esperance* was full of admiration for Scobie. Like a careful housewife, Scobie moved things in the ship replacing it exactly. He was acting on the information that the Captain had letters concealed in his bathroom. Ultimately Scobie discovered a letter concealed in the cap of the cistern in the lavatory of the ship. Scobie intended to take away the letter and report the matter. But Scobie, affected by the pathos of the Captain's story and remembering his own only daughter, latter opens the letter in defiance of all regulations and, convinced of its innocence and sincerity, tears it up and burns the pieces.

While Scobie realizes that he is of the devil's party material success comes to him as he accepts the proposal of Yusef – the smuggler, and as such, paves the way for his moral degradation. Louise rejoices in his material success, but he is not at all elated. He is apprehensive that Ali, his faithful servant, has been spying on him and could ruin him. He disclosed the matter to Yusef. This led to the murder of Ali. He took the responsibility for the murder of Ali in his heart. When Helen questions him about Ali's murder, Scobie replied: "I didn't cut his throat myself. But he died because I am existed"(248). To fulfill Louise's wishes, Scobie deteriorates himself from the honesty and morality. Krishna Chandra Sharma in *Social Vision in the Novels of Graham Greene* views:

If she had not insisted on her visit to South Africa, he would not have borrowed from Yusef and thereby could not have transgressed from his honesty. If Louise had not left him for South Africa, Scobie would not

have been involved in adultery with Helen and would not have alienated himself from God. It is Louise who paves the way for Scobie's inevitable damnation and unforgivable sin of suicide. (Sharma 166)

Scobie's life is marked by suffering. This suffering is a result of his obsessions, but more so is because of a fatality that intrudes upon his life. He loves God and yet cannot help feel outraged at the God who permits so much misery and pain in this world. He loves human beings as nearly as God might have loved them. He is indifferent to success, for work without any undue hope of reward is his way of life and thus when he is superseded in his job, he does not suffer, any other persons might have done. B.P. Lamba in his *Graham Greene: His Mind and Art* argues, "At the very bare unpretentious level of life, he is a contented human being having no pretension" (28). He again says "In a certain sense he might even be termed as ascetic, but his asceticism is corrupted by the inevitable interaction of man and woman. He is reconciled to every thing but to the pain he causes to his wife Louise" (28). Similarly, he has strong belief in Catholicism. But the religion he practices may not be recognized in ordinary life. He invents his own version of Catholicism, and in his imagined world his actions are not limited by traditional Catholic values. He believes in God, but this God is apparently "not human enough to be a father to his creature" (121).

Scobie is tormented by the spectacle of Suffering in the God created world, and his overwhelming sense of pity for the suffering mankind makes him question the very existence of God. His sense of pity and the desire to be a partaker of others' burden distort his own faith in God and lead him to material prosperity, adultery and corruption. Lamba argues "had he been a less good a bit less pitiful, he is famous a Scobie - the just"

(Lamba 28). Scobie's judgment is at fault. Trying always to do what is right, as befits the just man, Scobie continually chooses wrong routes because he suffers from a false pride on his own puny intellect, because his love of God is as distorted as his pity for men. This dual mentality is clearly expressed in his final cry: "Dear God, I love..."(290). It is purposely ambiguous because Scobie himself is uncertain. At the moment of death even an expression of sexual love comes within the border of charity. It is love pure and simple. This very uncertainty is surely the real tragedy of Scobie's existence. At the moment of death he is still unable to distinguish between divine and human love. Earlier, he had written to Helen, "I love you... more than God I think" (215). He had been unable to yield his own theories to the discipline of his Church. Instead of turning to God for love and mercy, he continually tried to assume that role for himself, feeling the responsibility of a father and mistaking his own puny sense of pity for the Mercy of God's love.

Scobie has lost all hope, since he cannot escape from the sin. This is sin against hope and according to Catholic doctrine, this sin is related to the loss of faith. His sense of reasoning replaces the absolute faith that is demanded of the faithful. He does everything wrong, but always for the very right reason. According to Lamba:

The sin of presumption is also closely allied to the sin of pride. This interplay of sins makes the novel a highly intriguing story of continuing corruption and evil: Yusef aiding and abetting Scobie in his evil deeds' and Wilson adding to the atmosphere of suffocation corruption and hypocrisy. (Lamba 46)

Scobie aggravates all his sins by deciding to commit suicide, the ultimate sin in terms of Catholicism. He is always aware of his sin and in his heart of hearts he possibly believes that God is merciful and he would be redeemed by divine grace. The only hope for redemption lies in Father Rank's reassurance to Louise that no one can really understand the scope of God's mercy, and that the Church "doesn't know what goes on in a single human heart" (333).

Due to the sense of pity and responsibility to the people around him, Scobie is uncertain in his relation to God. He thinks he is responsible man to look after the others. He says "I am the responsible man. It is my job to look after the others "(270). Scobie spends his time planning for others and assuming responsibility for their happiness. The sense of false pride of pity distorts Scobie from his Catholic creed. There are times in the novel when Scobie visualizes himself as an equal to God. In confession shortly before his suicide, he states, "O God ... if instead I should abandon you, punish me but let the others get some happiness" (265). Later he wonders, "How was he to hate this God who of His own accord was surrendering Himself into his power?" (270). The pronoun use alone makes the sentence ambiguous, but the author supplies capitalization to make it clear. Scobie perceives God submitting himself to Scobie.

By placing himself on the same level as God, Scobie removes all possibility of hope for himself, and institutes a world that is devoid of compassionate love, peace and meaning. As he tells himself, "This isn't a climate for emotion. It's a climate for meanness, malice, snobbery but anything like hate or love drives a man off his head" (28). It is the virtue that tempts him to ignore the power of God. B.P.Lamba argues, "Had his trust been sincere, he would not have hesitated in transferring to God his burden of

self assumed responsibility" (46; "*His Mind and Art*"). He considers God a failure. If his trust been sincere he would have transferred his self assumed responsibilities to God and live a normal life. As a normal human being, he is famous as Scobie the just. But he is not ready to surrender himself rather he destroys himself. He has the conviction that "love any king of love does deserve a bit of mercy "(252). He feels that love is the foundation of God's mercy and grace. That is why he has immense love for God as well as for human beings.

Scobie is- like his God- offering love to anyone who may need it, to the whole world. He cannot avoid his own moral code. He is impelled by his moral commitment to defy the conventions of his Church and to challenge its sacred doctrines. Scobie's relationship with his God becomes more direct and immediate- almost intimate- when it is stripped of the conventional formulas of religion. A dialogue develops between them. Scobie is beginning to see Christ as a direct victim of his own sins. He believes that going to Mass in a state of mortal sin would be like "striking God when he's down"(253), or "thrusting the child face into the filth of the stable"(289). Following the spirit of his faith, he has reached a point where his God is no longer a transcendental omnipotent divinity. God has become a suffering child for him, a child who has to be protected. He doesn't find any father figure in the heaven to support him. His very religiousness turns his life into Hell, which is "a permanent sense of loss"(234) for him. There are two options remain before him. Either he has to torture God forever by lying or confess on his sins in front of God. But he can't confess since he has to make his mistress unhappy. In this condition, he sees despair everywhere. There is no alternative for him to exist. He feels

guilt since he could not fulfill his responsibilities. The sense of guilt and despair lead him to the ultimate sin, the sin of committing suicide.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

The study presents itself as a case study of Scobie's motif behind the act of suicide. Therefore it is centered on Scobie's twofold dilemma: how to reconcile his feelings for two women and how to honour his Catholic belief. Scobie's uncertainty of existence is the central issue in the novel. The research work examines the different incidences in which Scobie feels internal anguish and why he feels what he does is the central question that moves the research forward.

Graham Greene in most cases deals with the religious theme in his literary works but in the context of *The Heart of the Matter* he remarked "Scobie's salvation or damnation not being an issue in the novel"(revised 1971 edition, xiv, xv). Most of the time, for his wide and broad social sensitivity, he couldn't confine him only in the precepts of dogmatic Catholic Church. In the context of his regular meeting to the Church, he wrote, " I had not been emotionally moved but only intellectually convinced"(*Ways of Escape* 75). An analysis of his religious faith in the novel discloses that he is skeptic of religion and its formal practice that disregards human life and human problems. His religious understanding and assertions imply that religion should uplift the attempts for human justice and equality against discrimination, oppression and exploitation. Here, Greene seems to stress on the conflict between humanity and religion in which the person is. The sense of humanity arouses pity and responsibility on the part of the protagonist that constrains him to carry on his Catholic dogma. The religion, in which Scobie grew up, is not humane. He has strong belief that the creator of human beings must himself be humane and loving. The problem lies between his belief and his

deep rooted faith in Christianity. Scobie wants to carry on these contradictory opinions at the same time. His abounding love for mankind and love for God justify his mistake. But the laws made by the society as well as the Church forbid him to practice such religion. This is the situation where the spiritual conflict begins in Scobie.

Scobie is obsessed with pity and responsibility for those who depend on him. This sense of responsibility to make his wife happy has forced him of borrowing loan from a smuggler, Yusef, who starts blackmailing him for selfish motif. Similarly his sense of pity towards a young widow Helen Rolt leads to adultery. In both cases, he helps them as he is guided by sense of humanity. But this motif drives him from sin to sin. Since he accepts the double responsibility to make two women happy, there occurs contradiction and insoluble tension in his life. As a responsible man he couldn't leave two women unhappy. Similarly as a devoted Catholic he could not stand aloof from Church services: Mass and Confession. His sense of sin after adultery and sense of religiosity further complicated his life. To get rid of this critical moment of his responsibility to two women and his duty to God, he could have left one of the women and confessed. But his awareness of responsibility does not permit him to desert one of them for saving himself. He foresees the only solution to this situation is to damn himself by committing suicide, despite his knowledge that suicide is mortal sin means damnation. He damns himself with the motive to keep others happy.

A careful study of the novel reveals that the motif for material success in Louise is the primarily responsible for Scobie's ultimate ruin. When Scobie is passed over for promotion, Louise feels highly insulted. She plans to go away on a long holiday in order to escape criticism and gossip. Scobie knows that he can't afford the passage, but at the

same time he cannot bear to see her unhappy. So, Scobie, who is known for his honesty, borrows money from the Syrian, Yusef, putting himself into the hands of the villain. If she had not insisted on her visit to South Africa, he would not have borrowed from Yusef and thereby could not have transgressed from his honesty. If Louise had not left him for South Africa, Scobie would not have been involved in adultery with Helen and would not have alienated himself from God. It is Louise's affinity towards material success that paves the way for Scobie's inevitable damnation.

Thus Scobie was left alone to find his faith and beliefs for himself. He has no choices than to pass through the territory of despair. He discovers a smell of decay in his own living body. Caught between faith and pity, Scobie has to give up his future. However, a detailed examination of the work reveals that Scobie has tailored and customized his adopted religion to fit into his own generally skewed view of the world, in which his primarily goal is to preserve the happiness of those around him. In the end, he does not turn to God for assistance in resolving his problems. He, instead, takes matter into his own hands.

Scobie is ready to hurt God-rather than bring unhappiness to Helen or Louise. He believes that his peace is gone forever, and that he has no way left of regaining it. But he feels he has the power to give peace to others by taking himself out of the way. And so he, ultimately, decides to commit suicide. He plans it in such a way that it should appear to be natural death because he knows Louise, being an orthodox Christian, would never be able to accept it. All his life and even in his death, Scobie's first thought is for the people whose happiness assumes the force of moral responsibility for him. That responsibility springs from his strong sense of pity.

Suicide refers to an act of killing oneself at one's own choice. Normally, it is believed that everything ends through suicide. Instead of faith in Catholicism that gives him pain and suffering, Scobie chooses suicide as the best way to assert his existence. The faith of Scobie doesn't free him from his spiritual dilemma. It is only in death that Scobie gets rest and solution to all riddles of life. Through suicide he finds his eternal freedom. If Scobie had followed the prescriptions for living essential to his Catholic faith, he could have repented and been forgiven.

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