CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

You love evil more than good
Lying rather than speaking righteousness

*The Bible*: Psalms 52:3

Evil has been an inseparable part of human nature right from the days of Adam to the present day. Bewitched by Satan, Eve was destined to commit sin by eating the fruit of knowledge and she also induced her husband to do the same against the word of God. Thus was the origin of ‘original sin’. As John Milton points out in his *Paradise Lost*, it was not Satan, who was the sole reason for making Eve commit the terrible sin but it should have been in the natural quality of man when God created man. Evil chased Adam and Eve out of the ‘Paradise’ to the world of suffering where he had to shed his sweat for food. Hence the suffering commenced and thereafter the harmful, wicked, disagreeable qualities of man started to pop out of him. Man is losing his godly qualities when he thinks of doing evil. Man for his smooth existence in this world chooses evil to lead a happy life.

Many writers are preoccupied with the problem of evil in the world. John Milton was deeply influenced by the classics and *The Bible*. He had his own well-established ideas on religion, ethics, and philosophy. He expresses his views on divine law and ‘free-will’ through Adam in *Paradise Lost Book IX*. The things created by God are all of supreme excellence and man’s happy state and the things that cause his happiness are secure from outward influence. The danger lies within man himself. So it lies within his power. God has given man free-will. This ‘free-will’ has to obey reason and this reason
has been made right. Reason has to guard the free-will; otherwise the ‘Will of Man’ may be deceived by outward appearance and then man may try to do evil things. Milton also describes the enormity of evil nature through the soliloquy of Satan in *Paradise Lost*. 

**Book IX**: “For only in destroying I find ease / To my relentless thought” (129-130).

The evil in Satan makes him take delight in bringing about ruin and total disorder in a world of bliss and order. His unyielding desires and feelings can find fulfilment only in devastation. There is yet another side to this evil nature. The devil says that he will try to drag man into misery even at the cost of his own comfort. John Milton says that the positive desire to do evil at any cost is the dominating feature of an evil man. This then is the evil nature of modern war heroes. Milton expresses his views in words which are ruthlessly frank. It is impossible to miss the stern and frank voice of Milton. In *The Bible* Jesus warns people against evil deeds. He says:

> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, pride, an evil eye, licentiousness, blasphemy, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man. (Mark 7: 21-23)

Jesus Christ also expresses his concern about social evils. He rebukes the evil-minded people in the society for their hypocrisy and wickedness. The gospel according to Matthew states:

> How terrible for you, teachers of the law and Pharisees! You are hypocrites! You like white-washed tombs, which look fine on the outside but are full of bones and decaying corpses on the inside. In the same way,
on the outside you appear good to everybody but inside you are full of hypocrisy and evil. (Matt 23: 27-28)

Jesus chides the Sadducees and Pharisees for being misled by social evils such as hypocrisy, betrayal, divisions, discrimination, rigid conventions, rigidity of laws, and judgements and violence. He advocates repentance for their evil deeds. In *Paradise Lost* Book IV Satan cries out “All good to me is lost / Evil be thou my good” (109-10).

Thus Satan’s ‘good’ is evil only and this quality is deep-rooted in human nature. The mystery of evil has been a central concern of theologians, philosophers, and psychologists throughout human history. Evil is no doubt a puzzle and a mystery in the world and it is also a challenge to man. Various theological and psychological explanations of evil have been brought forward but every proposed definition defies solutions to the problem of evil. Evil is defined as a mysterious force in the universe and it is at war with the good, bringing pain and suffering, sin and misery to the world.

According to Christianity, man is endowed with a gift of free-will by God but man chooses evil instead of good due to his innate depravity. Orthodoxy view suggests that people inevitably choose evil because human beings are gripped by original sin. The Marxist view of evil is based on social inequalities. Refuting the materialistic view that the environment moulds the man, the existentialists believe that man makes himself. Man is held responsible for everything that happens in history. Explanation of evil and wickedness in terms of social environment is rejected. Man cannot be isolated from society. Hence man is responsible for social evils also. When our moral values are forsaken it results in evil deeds. All the variant explanations lay stress, in some form or other upon the human agency as the source of evil.
Man in the Twentieth Century is confronted with the problem of evil more than ever before. For man’s struggle is not with the outside world alone but with his inner-self also. Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and other contemporary psychologists have delved deep into the hidden side of human personality. Evil causes both physical pain and spiritual pain. Physical pain can be cured but moral and spiritual pain cannot be easily located and cured. Physical pain and spiritual anguish testify to the existence of evil in the world.

It is an obvious truth that violence cannot be divorced from human life. The two World Wars have resulted in subverting humanity. War mania is an evil. It has brought about bloodshed, tyranny, torture, terrorism, destruction, and death. Hannah Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* notes that without the Second World War “We might never have known the truly radical nature of Evil” (ix). The experience of war has tended to foster negative emotions like hatred, despair, fear, pain, alienation, greed, lust, revenge etc. The World Wars have strained the relationships between the nations of the world and they have also increased tensions and frustrations in the authoritarian-pattern of family relationships. The reaction of the post-war world has been to suspect all manifestations of authority. Political and religious skepticism, general disillusionment, cynicism, irony etc. have become the order of the day. The dictum ‘power corrupts’ is a symbol of the revolt of the post-war generation. War is an evil. Englishmen oppressed the Irish and Welsh peasants in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries respectively and the Germans indulged in mass murder of six million Jews in World War II.

The World Wars were a terrible fracture in the Twentieth Century. Hannah Arendt in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* remarks that: “The problem of evil will be the
fundamental question of postwar intellectual life in Europe” (134). The displacement of the people, unsettled frontiers, the unbelievable facts about the massacre and genocide in the Nazi War crimes, the annihilation of six million Jews in the terrible ‘Holocaust’ and at last, the dropping of the atomic weapons on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 were formidable crimes. The end of war was the beginning of fear.

Friedrich Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil* says: “Fear is again the mother of morals” (113). Paul Roubiczek in *Ethical Values in the Age of Science* comments that: “It is a pattern of behavior based on the absolute value of good” (5) and it brings in faith and hope in the minds of the people. The literature of the late nineteenth to the twentieth century shows the torment of souls torn asunder by the conflict between head and heart. There was less romance and more realism. The spirit of the age demanded of the novelists that they should be learned, profound, thoughtful, philosophical teachers, and guide of the people.

This fondness for violence has kept pace with the growth of human civilization. Violence is a baser instinct in man’s psyche. It is an evil force in man’s soul and it can never be eradicated. Recent history of the devastating wars has borne out this truth. History bears the unpalatable truth that both primitive and civilized people can be barbaric, modernisation is the beginning of all evil artefacts in today’s arena. The principles and doctrines of life, framed for the purpose of living in peace are shattered by man himself. Good deeds have been forgotten, they are ruined, disturbance, and disorientation begins. Evil in this world is the loss of hope, loss of faith, loss of morality which comprises fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder,
debate, deceit, and malignity. There are evils among all things in the world. The hearts of men are filled with all evil and madness.

There are social evils of intolerance, exploitation, corruption, sexuality, class conflicts, religious quarrels, social inequalities, injustice, loss of ethical values etc. Man’s appetite for evil is the root cause for all these evils. Class-conflict is an endemic evil in most societies and this is particularly true of our society in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The rich exploit the poor and the working class violence poses a threat to the middle-class faced with a welter of issues emerging from social stratification. The lower strata are involved in violence and jealousy and the upper class generate fear, hatred and problems related to wealth, power, and status. There is a constant state of conflict between groups and classes. The so called civilized society is disintegrating through this primary hostility of men towards one another. Serious crimes like sexual outrages, murder, and terrorism can be explained as part of the situation of a class-stratified society. There is also a caste-ridden society dividing society into classes based on differences in family origin, rank, wealth, and nature of their work. The caste distinctions lead to hatred and all kinds of clashes, preventing peace and progress of the society. The diseased society is the gravest evil in the modern world.

Religious fundamentalism is another evil in our times. Man’s loss of faith and morality in the modern age has finally led him to the perversion of religion in the world and in turn it has led man to violence and hatred. Violence in religious rituals is evil and it reflects the blinding spiritual darkness all around. Christianity emphasises that moral evil is the root of man’s unhappiness and suffering. In the name of religion, man fights and moves in the vicious circle of evil. In today’s world basic tenets of religion
concerning love, charity, peace, and tolerance are lost sight of. Spiritual ignorance is the most dangerous evil that can destroy humanity. T.S.Eliot’s “Choruses from the Rock” explains the paradoxes in human life in this world:

The world turns and the world changes,
But one thing does not change.
In all of my years, one thing does not change,
However you disguise it, this thing does not change:

The perpetual struggle of Good and Evil. (30-34)

There is always the conflict between spirit and flesh, good, and evil, joy and grief. In the present day world of anarchy, futility, depravity and soullessness, man is prone to sin. Man succumbs to the lure of evil. Evil is a debilitating psychic force and man has to come to terms with evil, which is within his own self. So much so, man cannot escape from evil.

The mystery of evil is a positive challenge to humanity. The world is a wrestling ground for good and evil. Man is confronted with evil in its varied forms physical, moral, social, natural, spiritual etc. It is understood that man is naturally depraved and evils are the outcome of his depraved nature. Sufferings have their source in man’s wickedness. But what is so mysterious is why there should be so much unnecessary and unreasonable misery in the world. The uneven distribution of fortune and misfortune among God’s creatures, the prosperity of the wicked, the misery of the virtuous, the sufferings of the righteous for no fault of their own, the success and happiness of the cruel tyrants – all these point out a state of affairs that becomes enigmatic and puzzling for us. In The Bible during the meeting between Jesus and a blind man, the problem of
evil was brought to the attention of Jesus. The question that was posed before Jesus by his disciples was not why there was evil in general but rather why there was a fellow creature suffering blindness from birth. This is what remains unresolved. As for the existentialists, man is condemned to be free and the problem of evil is part and parcel of the problem of freedom or of moral choice. And finally there is a theological view that evil is not a negative but a positive concept. It is regarded as a chastening and purifying agent, a detergent of the human soul. However, evil continues to be viewed differently by different people but the mystery of evil abides.

The novel was the most important genre of the Nineteenth Century Literature, where the most affective sociological novels came up. The novelists shared common concerns, about the life of the individual in society, marriage and family relationships, social, political, spiritual issues and the yearning of the individual for emotional and spiritual fulfillment in a cruel harsh world. The novels of the era gave way to the depiction of the everyday details of normal life in ordinary middle-class society, impregnated by the effects of theory of evolution and industrial revolution. The novelists of ideas in their novels, depicted not only the real situation as it was in the period in which they lived but also through the use of imaginary situations and characters expressed their own views of what ‘life’ ideally could and probably should be.

The aim and purpose of this thesis is to take under its purview the existence of evil in human life as depicted in the major novels of Thomas Hardy and William Golding. In order to understand what philosophy means in terms of human life and experience, it is imperative to turn to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Soren Kierkegaard. Nietzsche’s frequent statement that ‘God
is Dead’ is an important aspect of Existentialism. The disappearance of fate has left a void at the very heart of civilization. This situation creates a sense of emptiness in man’s world. The loss of faith, the rejection of logic, the awareness of emptiness – these aspects prepare the way for existentialism. In the absence of morality, man creates his own world and when he is confronted by the real power of evil, he rejects the voice of conscience and takes to evil ways.

The powers of reason, religious precepts and scientific truths cannot help to understand human nature. One cannot do justice to his own experience on the basis of determinism. In man’s personal lives it is impossible to accept determinism as the only description of how cause and effect are connected. Human actions are determined not only by intentions and impulses but also by urges and hidden motives. These are embedded in one’s own subconscious mind and cannot be fully known unless they are brought to the surface. Existentialism insists that man has to admit experience as evidence and he cannot deny his freedom of choice, decision, and action. To feel responsibility is one of the basic experiences. To discover the truth by which an individual lives, one must experience and base his ideas on it. This is the central condition for all existentialists who never omit to emphasise the truth that personal is the real thing.

Kierkegaard stresses that it would be wrong to start from the abstract in order to infer existence. It is necessary to start from one’s personal experience of existence. Most of the non-existentialist philosophers start from things, and then include the person but only as an abstract entity, as an abstract thinker and return to the things again, so as to gain objective knowledge. Kierkegaard starts from the person, then includes the things
in order to gain and clarify personal experience and returns to the person again so as to achieve the right hand of subjectivity. He wants to turn man’s attention to inner experiences for his aim is inwardness. Like existentialist philosophers, Thomas Hardy and William Golding try to grasp man as he actually is, as he experiences himself in his specific situation. They deal also with human relationships and see man among men, not in isolation. Their decisions and actions reveal their true nature.

Existentialist philosophy, as a reaction against universal concepts and values, gives importance to the individual element of existence. The suffering of the individual, his anxiety, his anguish, his impulses, his defeat, his jump into nothing, or into life beyond, have become absolute criteria of judgement. Human life in its most enduring meaning becomes drowned in this wave of passion for the individual. For Kierkegaard and for Sartre alike, it is of no use to tell people that something is true; they have to feel that it is so and accept it for themselves. Man’s place in nature is that of a uniquely dynamic creature among all the things and his dynamism springs from the fact that he is able to see everything around him as relative to his needs, desires, his aversions, and his fears. Sartre’s insistence upon the vast and indeed almost limitless extent of human freedom is equally central to existentialism. Essentially man is free to choose his own morality, his attitudes towards life, God and the world and his approach to death and love. This sense of individuality expresses a feeling of existence in which the human finds himself and no one can take the place of this presence. It is therefore understandable that the individual should react in the name of his own existence that is the only good for him which cannot be substituted by any universal value. The novels of Hardy and Golding are interpreted in the light of existentialism.
The two writers Thomas Hardy and William Golding selected for this study tend to focus on the impending evils of the society, in a sociological sense, solely concerned with realism, with a tint of dramatic, sentimental, horrifying, historical in the world of ‘gothic’ literature. The novels of Thomas Hardy and William Golding are realistic representation of life by expressing the facts of actual existence and life hardened by the cruelty of sex instinct, disorder in society which leads to the collapse of humanity.

An artist is influenced by his surroundings and the people around him very sharply. These influences work in him slowly and steadily and ultimately find their expression in his art. Thomas Hardy, the man right from his childhood, was influenced by his parents, his village and country, his wife, his friends by contemporary thought and philosophers. All these influences can be traced in his novels.

To begin with, Thomas Hardy was very much influenced by his mother. She always guided his reading and suggested new books. His mother was greatly attached to the Church of England. She made him familiar with the authorized version of *The Bible*. The influence of *The Bible* is very obvious in his works. There are many Biblical illustrations in his novels. Even the language of *The Bible* became a part of his style. His father too influenced him his own way. Hardy inherited from him the love of music. The love of music finds its expressions in the novels of Hardy. He grows poetic while describing the beautiful scenes that occur in his novels. Hardy was influenced by his wife Emme Lavinia Gifford. She was full of vitality and deeply interested in books. She was fond of social life and London. Something of her pride and waywardness find its expression in Hardy’s heroines like Bathsheba Everdene and Eustasia Vye.
Thomas Hardy was very powerfully influenced by life in Dorchester where he was born. He became familiar with difficulties and rewards of farming life. The life of farmers with their joys and sorrows, their starvation, moral crimes, unsanitary cottages, diseases made a tremendous impression on his mind. And in the presentation of rural life, Hardy is by far the greatest novelist that England has produced. There was plenty of tragedy in the lives of the Wessex labourers with their poverty and their passions. Dependent and ignorant they had to suffer in many ways from the social system and the changing weather. At every moment of their existence, the people realised man’s helplessness in the face of circumstances. His own surroundings made Hardy see the tragedy present in life. He had a tender heart, responsive to the sight of suffering.

One important influence in the life of Thomas Hardy was that of John Hicks, the Dorchester architect. Hardy’s training in architecture helped him in observing things closely and exactly. This habit of mind helped him very much in presenting his scenes in his novels with minute details. Yet another man to enter the life of Hardy and to influence him was Horace Moule, a classical scholar of Queen’s College, Cambridge. He guided some of Hardy’s readings and studies. Inspite of his ability and brilliance, Horace Moule had suffered very much in life. He committed suicide. Hardy was deeply affected. His memory never left Hardy. The character of Jude Fawley in the novel *Jude the Obscure* is created in the manner of Horace Moule’s life. Just as Horace Moule suffered because of his intellectual aspirations and enthusiasm, Jude Fawley suffers in the novel.

Among philosophers and thinkers, Aldous Huxley, John Stuart Mill, Charles Darwin, and Herbert Spencer exercised a very deep influence on Thomas Hardy. It led
him to a definite sense of values and rational enquiry. In Darwin’s writings, he studied the evolutionary processes and found evidence of cruelty and pain present in the struggle for existence. It is one of his deepest points of interest and study.

With regard to literary influences, Thomas Hardy seems to have read deeply George Crabbe, Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Wordsworth, William Shakespeare, and John Keats. Among the novels he read may be mentioned *Tom Jones*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, *Kenilworth*, *Tristram Shandy*, *Vanity Fair*, *Clarnisa Harlow*, and *Pamela*. He also read popular novelists of his time Anthony Trollope and Wilkie Collins. Among the classical writers, he knew Sophocles, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid. He read the *Iliad* with deep interest. It should however be noted that Hardy read more poetry than anything else.

Besides all these influences of men and books, one of the most powerful influences on the life of Thomas Hardy was the changing pattern of life in their nineteenth century in England. Hardy was born in an agricultural society but he lived to see the coming of the Industrial Revolution. His deposition to a melancholic view was due to the age in which he lived. It was a disturbing age for a sensitive mind. It was an age of transition and Hardy was a witness to a clash between the old order and the new. The Industrial Revolution destroyed the old agricultural England. The rural England started to disintegrate before the eyes of Hardy. The simple people in villages felt uprooted and started migrating to towns in search of livelihood. The result was that peaceful family came to an end. Hardy was very much affected by the decadence. All these disturbances in the lives of the innocent village folk is in the agricultural economy are very faithfully recorded by Hardy in his novels.
The rapid advance of science accelerated the breaking up of Victorian traditions and convention. Towards the middle of the century it was still aggravated by Charles Darwin’s theory of Evolution and the criticism of *The Bible*. It shook the very foundation of religion and interpretation of the universe. Man’s faith in orthodox religion was shaken. The celebrated theory of evolution contradicted the account of Man’s origin as given in *The Bible*. Darwin’s theory carried conviction as it was logically developed and maintained by overwhelming evidence. Man could no longer accept without question God’s mercy or Holy Plan.

Similarly, Charles Darwin with his accent on the vicious struggle for existence which is the law of nature blasted the romantic view of her as kindly mother. The created order, customs, faiths, beliefs, and conventions were losing their grip on the minds of the people and the novel order of things had not yet been created. Man found himself in darkness. He felt confused and helpless. He took a dreary view of life for he felt unhappy and crushed with nothing to fall back upon. The Victorian compromise was of great significance in this age. It was an age of social change. Man was trapped between two worlds, with the old one disintegrating down and the new one not yet formed. Doubt, fear, and unrest possessed man’s soul and there was an air of uncertainty in the air. The Industrial Revolution, the rise of democracy, the rise of evolutionary science - all these forces lean towards the breakdown of the surviving order. Hence an effort was made to merge the old and the new, to bring about co-operation between science and religion.

At this juncture, Thomas Hardy emerged as a spectator, witnessing the chaos all around him. Artists with their sharp sensitivity were affected by this atmosphere of
doubt and apprehensions. Pessimism was in the air. The dismal poems of Matthew Arnold, the poetry of Scott Fitzgerald, Augustine Thompson’s *The City of God*, the works of Charles Dickens and the works of Thomas Hardy mirror the social evils of the Victorian era.

Thomas Hardy and his contemporaries present the social evils and its impact on human life in their novels. Charles Dickens was a great novelist of the Victorian age. His novels are marked with the spirit of humanitarianism and social reform. The various evils of Industrial Revolution, specially the employment of child labour and the suffering of such children have been highlighted in his novels. He employs the weapons of ridicule and satire to expose the evils and thereafter suggests for betterment. Dickens takes each one of the social evils and dissects them in one novel after another. In *Oliver Twist*, he takes the problem of poor house and their bad administration. He describes how children are forced into criminal courses and fell a prey to the sinister designs of criminals like Fagin and Sikes. He pleads appealingly through the character of Oliver Twist for the removal of the cruel treatment to children in poor houses. In *Nicholas Nickleby* and *David Copperfield* he examines the prevailing system of education and the harsh and rough treatment to which children were subjected by cruel and tyrannical teachers. In *Little Dorrit* he throws his searchlight on debtor’s prisons and the deplorable state in which prisoners were made to spend their unhappy existence. He suggests prison reforms and makes appeals for humanitarian consideration. In *Bleak House* Dickens attacks the abuses of law courts particularly the proverbial law’s delay and advocates speedy justice. In his novel *Hard Times* he denounces the evils of industrialism and excessive practical mindedness and love for wealth. The plot of Pip in *Great
Expectations is touching and moves the readers to sympathy for him. Thus Dickens exposes the evils of social, political, educational, and industrial life of his times. He joined hands with other Victorian prophets like John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle to work for social reform and regeneration of society.

Another great novelist of Victorian era is William Makepeace Thackeray. Thackeray, quite like Charles Dickens, also draws a picture of the Victorian society. While Dickens talks of the lower middle classes, Thackeray deals with the upper middle classes. Thackeray a realist appeals to our intellect, by exposing the whims, caprices, snobberies, and basic corruptions of the class that he deals with. Besides his early works, he also wrote Vanity Fair, Pendennis, The History of Henry Esmond, The Four Georges, Lovel the Widower, and Adventures of Philip. Through the action of his novel Vanity Fair he portrays the vanities of contemporary society. His novels are all built on a grand scale and they present the sweeping panorama of contemporary life. His view of life is essentially moral and it moves around a central code of conduct that he arranges the disorderly facts of life.

Anthony Trollope is an admirable novelist of the Victorian age. He is a novelist of the middle and upper middle classes. With urban familiarity and shrewd conservation, he presents an accurate detailed picture of their quiet uneventful lives. His main concern is with character rather than plot and his characters are described in great detail. He has made perfect studies of English clerical life. The Warden, Barchester Towers, Doctor Thorne, and The Last Chronicle of Barset are his popular novels. These novels reflect the cathedral world that is peculiarly English. A vein of satire runs through many of his novels and he makes skilful use of pathos.
Elizabeth Gaskell is one of those novelists who have effectively used the novel as an instrument of social reform. Her early novels *Mary Barton* and *North and South* depict industrial life bringing to light the pathetic condition of labourers and workers. She presents them realistically and sympathetically in her two early novels. Gaskell is not merely a social reformer. She has also attempted psychological novels, dealing with the thoughts and wayward modes of children with true insight. She has made an interesting study of female life and psychology in her masterpiece *Cranford*. In her next novel, *Ruth* she deals with an ethical and moral subject. The novel which describes the sufferings and death of a young girl Ruth becomes a study of inner life.

George Eliot is one of the great novelists of the Victorian age. She is an important novelist of rational thinking and her psychological approach into human motives is unfathomable and great. *Adam Bede*, *Silas Marner*, *MiddleMarch*, *Romola*, etc are among her greatest novels. Realism and faithful portrait of life and characters are the hallmarks of these novels. The later novels from *Romola* and up to *Daniel Deronda* she turned to political experiences of other people and problems of racial integration. Eliot is a psychological novelist. In her novels, she represents the inner struggle of a soul and reveals the motives, impulses, and hereditary influences which govern human action. If a person deviates from the track of righteousness she is likely to be swallowed up by the swirling waves of moral turptitude leading to his utter ruin, as in the case with Hetty, in *Adam Bede*. Violation of moral laws brings utter ruin to her characters; she is essentially a novelist symbolising the shadows that darken human existence. George Eliot has acquired an important place in the history of fiction because of her grave concern with the conflicts in human personality and its association with forces outside itself.
Two prominent characteristics of the Victorian novelists are the presentation of the social problems and the presentation of the problems of heredity and environment. This in turn gives place to the psychological study of characters, providing insights into human motives. Thomas Hardy and his contemporaries give a knockout blow to the romantic exaltation of nature and human life and present the harsh realities of existence. Impelled by scientific rationalism, Hardy scoffs at the cause of things and sees a blind power working ceaselessly against man, unmindful of human suffering.

Thomas Hardy’s early novel *Desperate Remedies* (1871) deals with the theme of forgiveness and redemption. Miss. Aldclyffe is a woman with a past. In her middle age, Miss. Aldclyffe meets the beautiful Cytherea Graye the daughter of the man whom she loved earlier. She seeks the companionship of this young girl and later on gets Cytherea Graye married to her illegitimate son Aeneas Manston, a man of dark deeds. Manston has murdered his first wife, but he brings another woman as his wife to prevent himself being prosecuted for the murder. Graye is rescued later by Edward and Manston hangs himself in the end. The lovers Cytherea and Edward are united. Miss. Aldclyffe errs, confesses her guilt and wins forgiveness from Cytherea. There are accidental occurrences in the novel. This is characteristic of Hardy.

*Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) this novel is a tale of romance, Thomas Hardy describes the rural life of Wessex and its rustic characters: Parson Maybold, Dick Dewey, Wealthy Frederic Shinar, and Fancy Day. There are difficulties and suspense in the way of true love. Dick Dewey wins the love of Fancy Day and they are happily married off. There is an element of suspense in the story. Fancy Day is engaged to Dick
yet she accepts sometime the temptation of an offer of marriage by the Vicar. But soon she comes to her senses, realises her mistakes and withdraws. The story ends happily.

*A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) depicts how circumstances and character determine the course of human life. A young architect falls in love with Elfride, the blue-eyed daughter of the Vicar. Stephen Smith, the young architect is disappointed with his love because of her fickleness. In the meantime, Henry Knight makes love to Elfride and they are engaged. But the Knight breaks off the engagement when he comes to know all about Elfride’s affair with Stephen. He leaves Elfride heart broken. After some time, both Stephen and the Knight meet and they rush to see Elfride. But Elfride is dead. Thomas Hardy wants to show the sorry condition of man in this world and there are some irremediable ills that bring about unhappiness.

*Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) is Thomas Hardy’s first attempt to show the various ills of men and women and the role of chance. Gabriel Oak, a shepherd loves Bathsheba Everdene with unselfish devotion. But she does not return his love. Sergeant Troy, the soldier deserts Fanny Robin and wins Bathsheba for his wife and then ill-treats her. Troy is murdered by farmer Boldwood who loves Bathsheba with great passion. Boldwood becomes mad and Oak and Bathsheba are at last united. It is all set among rural surroundings. This is a realistic interpretation of life and Hardy shows the achievement of man through his resistance to the evil in the society.

*The Return of the Native* (1878) deals with the conflict between intellect and desire. This is a major novel by Thomas Hardy. The hero of the novel is Damon Wildeve. He loves first Thomasin Yeobright and then Eustacia Vye. He marries Thomasin who rejects her humble lover Diggory Venn. In the meantime, Clym
Yeobright, a diamond merchant in Paris, returns to Egdon. He falls in love with Eustacia and she marries him in the hope that they would lead a bright life in Paris. Unfortunately his eyesight fails and Eustacia is disappointed. Eustacia runs away with Wildeve but both are drowned. Clym becomes a preacher. Thomasin ultimately marries Diggory Venn. The action of the novel takes place mainly on Egdon Heath. Hardy presents the Heath as a principal character. In his adjustment to Heath, Clym attains his wisdom.

*The Trumpet Major* (1880) is an ironic tale of human foibles and individual responsibilities. This novel may be regarded as a by-product of his research on the Napoleonic wars. Thomas Hardy in this novel ventures into a mild adventure-romance. The roving Bob Loveday returns to marry his boyhood sweetheart and to live happily in his town after a heroic role in the Napoleonic struggle. He is granted the command of a coastal vessel. His kind-hearted beloved Anne Garland forgives and forgets the Vagaries of Bob Loveday. Another salient character is his loyal brother John, the trumpet major, can set aside his own love for Anne in order that Bob may reunite with her. In this novel, the usual Hardiyan tragic is absent.

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) is unique among Thomas Hardy’s novels in its setting, theme and treatment of characters. Michael Henchard, the hay-trusser sells his wife and child to Richard Newson when he is in the state of inebriety. He realises his mistake and takes a vow not to touch liquor. By his hard work he becomes the Mayor of Casterbridge. Eighteen years later his wife Newson being then supposed dead, is reunited with her husband. She brings with her, Elizabeth-Jane, her daughter and Henchard thinks that she is his daughter, whereas she is Newson’s. Trouble brews between Henchard and his able assistant Donald Farfrae. Henchard is ruined and Mrs.
Henchard dies. Newson returns and takes his daughter away. Henchard becomes lonelier and dies in the hut of Egdon Heath. Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane are then married.

The action of the novel *The Woodlanders* (1887) takes place in the wooded-country near Blackmore Vale in Dorset. The hero of the novel is Giles Winterbourne. He is betrothed to Grace Melbury, daughter of a timber merchant. Her exposure in the school to the rich society gives her a superiority complex. The engagement is terminated. Grace marries a young doctor Fitzpiers. Fitzpiers already courts a young village girl, Suke Damson. He is also loved by a wealthy widow, Felice Charmond. When Fitzpiers returns from his travels, Grace flies for shelter to Gile’s cottage in the woods. As a result of exposure to cold Giles dies. Mrs. Charmond also dies. Fitzpiers and Grace are ultimately reconciled and united. The novel is a conflict between reason, ego, and renunciation.

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) is by far the most powerful novel of Thomas Hardy. The characters are presented in such a way as to be true to nature. Hardy illustrates his conviction that there is no providence guiding men and women but there is an evil force which draws them out of the right way into the wrong way. Tess, first seduced by Alec, becomes later engaged to Angel. Angel loves her. Angel is an idealist. Horrified at her confession, he deserts her. Due to misfortune, Tess meets again Alec and accepts his protection. Angel returns from Brazil, repentant of his harshness towards Tess. Tess now murders Alec to liberate herself. After a brief period of concealment with Angel Clare in the New Forest, Tess is arrested, tried, and hanged. This woman paid her debt to the social code. Hence, the novel is a tragic realism.
Jude the Obscure (1896) is the last novel of Thomas Hardy and he has attempted a new kind of novel, portraying the drama of inner conflict. Jude Fawley has intellectual aspirations to become a scholar but they are spoiled by his sensuous temperament. He is entangled in a love affair with Arabella and compelled to marry her. After sometime she deserts him and he resumes his studies to become a priest. But he falls in love with her cousin Sue Bridehead. She marries an elderly schoolmaster, Phillotson. Disgusted with Phillotson, she flies to Jude. Though they become free to marry, society does not permit them to live together. Their children perish. Bitter and unhappy, Sue returns to Phillotson. Jude takes to drinking and dies miserably. Here, Hardy presents a deadly war waged between flesh and spirit. Thomas Hardy’s place as an English novelist is certainly in the forefront. In, quality and quantity, his work challenges comparison with the best of such masters as Dickens Thackeray and George Eliot. But Hardy has achieved something greater still. Hardy is a writer of tragedies. Lascelles Abercrombie says:

A tragic comprehension of the world is a profound characteristic of Hardy’s mind . . . . The obvious quality of Hardy’s tragedy is that it does not begin in the persons who are most concerned in it; it is an invasion into human consciousness of the general tragedy of existence, which thereby puts itself forth in living symbols. (25)

Thomas Hardy considers his characters primarily in their relation to Time and Destiny. His heroes may be simple folk, but he endows them with an intensity of passion that makes them heroic and he makes his tragedy the general tragedy of existence by concentrating his attention upon the play of elemental passions and the timeless problems of life and death. He has elevated the art of the novel to the height of poetry.
Furthermore, he has raised the function of the novel to the philosophical level. Until now the English Novel was a vehicle of social criticism. But Thomas Hardy uses the novel to inquire into the cause of things. His novels are questions about life. He has given to the English Novel a new depth, richness, and significance. Discussing the nature of Hardy’s works Sengupta says: “The classic greatness of Hardy’s writings is in that they are concerned first and last worth the dignity of men, the affirmation of positive values” (191). Hardy is an exceptionally sensitive, sympathetic man, inclined temperamentally toward a dark brooding over the nature of things. But he has enormous interest and sympathy for his characters and his sympathy stems from his deep reverence for human life.

The Twentieth Century Novelists, by and large, follow the Victorian tradition of the novel, though newer trends are also visible. Novelists like H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and John Galsworthy propose propound new ideas and open new vistas to the human mind, but pursue the Victorian custom as far as the method of the novel is concerned. On the other hand there are innovators like Henry James, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf who have revolutioned the technique of the novel with their probing into the sub-conscious. There have been also satirical novels, sea novels, detective novels, and war-novels. The modern novel is realistic and it deals with all the facts of contemporary life, the pleasant as well as ugly. The sufferings of the poor, their unhappiness, and wretchedness, as well as the good in them, their sagacity of social solidarity, their comrade feeling, and sympathy are all realistically presented. The modern novel also presents the doubts, the conflicts of the modern world. It reflects the bitter cynicism and frustration of the post-war generations. Moreover it also reveals the
novelists philosophy of life, his message and his view of the human race. H.G.Wells, John Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett concentrated their attention on the social problems of their times and made the novel an instrument of social propaganda.

H. G. Wells is a great writer and thinker. He considers novel as an instrument of social, political and educational discussion, criticism and reform. His novels such as The Time Machine, The Invisible Man, The First Men in the Moon, The Food of the Gods, and The Island of Dr. Moreau deal with the scientific subjects in an imaginative way. H. G. Wells is also a social critic and he attacks social evils with the vehemence of an inspired social reformer. In the History of Mr. Polly, he exposes educational impostures and in Tono Bungay, he attacks modern commercialism. His method as a social reformer is different from that of Charles Dickens where as Dickens attempts to gain his objects of social reform through persuasion, H. G. Wells adopts a more aggressive attitude. Among the novelists who popularised romance, the most significant were Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, Haggard Weymann, and Maurice Hewlett.

Joseph Conrad is a great romantic and yet a great realist. He is a romantic because he is a narrator of tales of adventure and heroism. At the same time, he is a realist because of his creative genius stabilised by experience. In his novels, he stresses again and again the need for fidelity in human relationships. Self-betrayal of the community and its terrible consequences is an ever-recurring theme in Conrad’s books. Conrad is much concerned with the problem of evil and he sees evil within man as well as in the environment in which he lives. In his philosophy, it is only fidelity, the sense of solidarity with the human race which can enable him to wage a successful war against evil and to overcome it. Conrad is the laureate of the sea. He had personal contact with
it. It has influenced him because life on the sea stresses the virtue of fidelity and solidarity. *Lord Jim* and *The Secret Agent* are his important novels. His main concern is not with plot but with the effect of events on the persons involved. He adopts the impressionistic technique and his aim is to render the human soul. His novels, even the best of them are built up of impressive scenes. His sea novels are embodiments of his personal experiences of the sea. Conrad has given a beautiful description of sea in his novel *Lord Jim*. His other novels are *Almayer’s Folly*, *Nostromo*, *An Outcast of the Islands*, *The Rover*, *The Shadow Line*, *The Duel*, and *Heart of Darkness*. His stories and novels with a nautical setting portray tribunals of the human spirit by the claims of duty and honour. While some of his works have twist of romanticism, he is observed as a pioneer of modernist literature. Even films have been adapted from his novels. A new tendency began to be perceptible in English novel and it centered round the glorification of sex and primal human emotions and passions. D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, and James Joyce present sex-relationship in their novels.

D. H. Lawrence is an original and powerful genius who has made significant contribution to the development of the English novel. His works reflect the richest tradition of the English novel but at the same time, his work modifies that tradition by adding something new. He altered the dimensions of the English novel and revealed its hidden possibilities. And this makes him a pioneer of psycho-analytical fiction in England. There is an analysis of the psychological states of particular characters. He is the most modern in his treatment of sex. Sex assumes great significance in all its biological, psychological, and metaphysical relations. In *The Rainbow* and *The Women in Love* Lawrence deals with disagreement and soul outburst of sex. Each one of his
novels is remarkable for its free and frank treatment of sex, so much so his *The Rainbow*, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, and *Sons and Lovers* are criticised on grounds of obscenity. He is not a sensualist but an honest man who treats the subject with greater freedom than has hitherto been done and examines both the physical and spiritual aspects of the matter. Lawrence represents the revolt against reason and materialism. A vein of mysticism runs through his novels. His characters are vividly visualised externally but the chief interest of the novel lies in rendering of the tangle of emotions and sensations in which the characters are involved. The novelist is concerned with the rendering of soul or psyche. Hence there is no logical course of action. Instead of continuity of action, there is discontinuity and a continual passing from one series of events, one group of characters, one centre of consciousness, to another. Symbolism is another important feature of his novels. It is the style of a poet that he uses. Poetic similes and metaphors abound and some of them are quite new and startling. When the ordinary resources of language fail him, he makes extensive use of suggestive symbols to render the inexpressible. Thus he plays an important role in the history of the English novel.

A new technique was developed in the psychological fiction and the new trend found its best exposition in the stream of consciousness which was cultivated in all its complexity by Henry James, Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. Science has considerably influenced the work of modern novelists. Science has revealed to the modern novelists innumerable aspects of life and nature and has opened new vistas of thought and imagination.
Aldous Huxley is a novelist with a mission and a message. His works present satirically the disillusionment and frustration with contemporary social life. *Chrome Yellow* is his first novel. *Point Counter Point* is a serious novel, representing satirically the conflict between passion and reason. This novel is rich in witty and satirical epigrams. In *The Brave New World* Huxley satirises a scientific utopia in which everything is controlled and conditioned by consideration of scientific uniformity. The severe critic of this scientifically organised world is the savage John who pleads for greater freedom of the individual and for spiritual life. The satire lies in the fact that he fails to persuade the inhabitants of the scientific world to live upto his ideal of a free, spiritual life. In *Point Counter Point* he lays emphasis on synthesis and harmony between sense and reason. In *Eyeless in Gaza* the writer proclaims the message of non-attachment. He does not mortify the flesh. He lays emphasis on the fact that spirit is determined by the body. He says that sooner or later every soul is stifled by the sick body. The spirit has no significance and there is only the body. Huxley is one of the most subtle and intellectual of modern writers.

The modern novel has travelled on diverse paths, leading to different directions. Human beings are confronted by different schools of fiction, different types of novels, different techniques and different angles of approaching the problems of modern life. The field covered by modern novelists is vast and variegated and the currents and cross currents sweeping through modern fiction are so forceful and powerful that one is struck with awe and wonder.

Solidly anchored in a social world, the novels of the Twentieth Century, are presented in a prolific form as an argumentative or an illustrative fable. This provides a
vividness to envisage a dimension with a view to exposing some evil or abuse highlighting individual eccentricities and the complexities of human passion. Each of the writers has adopted a standard significant way of presentation of trivial matters in character’s fictional life, from retrospection into anticipation where psychological ideas and the themes like gothic elements, romance, social justice, and supernatural themes are expanded and moved beyond those facets of ideas that evolved with a motivation from the Victorian Age. The twentieth century novelists have reflected the problems of the day as they saw, with great creative and imaginative powers armed with an apparatus for observing life.

The publication of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* has rendered an extremely remarkable achievement that has given a new outspiring concern with a radical emphasis on psychological perception that has been something new in the genre in English. D.H.Lawrence has created a striking achievement in his novel by giving vibrant discussion over protectiveness and self-realisation. His Lawrentian preoccupations is charted with excellent itemisation on the pressures of the distorting mechanised world which he visualised in the modern industrial society, clearly resembles his indebtedness to Thomas Hardy, Virginia Woolf, Laurence Sterne, T.S. Eliot, Joseph Concord, and E.M.Foster are skeptical and outspoken on the construction of the old Victorian commercial values with science and technology that has become peripheral in shaking the faith of existence where man has lost his reverie for his own pleasure. To make it more clear the statement of Joseph Conrad as quoted by George Bluestone visualises the affective relationship of man with reality: “My task which I am trying to achieve is, by
the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is, before all, to make you see” (83).

War epitomises the dire social evil of the Twentieth Century, bringing unemployment, misery, poverty, and redundancy to the working class in the society. This is stunningly revealed by the Nobel Laureate William Golding in his novel *Lord of the Flies* (1954) which is an indispensable historical assessment trying to pinpoint ‘social disturbance’ caused by the World War I and II. The war has created enormous havoc and unleashed deaths and suffering with an unprecedented speed that proves the fragility of the modern civilized world. Having flare for writing at a very young age Golding abandoned science and grabbed his interest in reading literature from H. G. Wells, Jules Verne and Edger Rice Burroughs. Golding inherited his inspiration from his father Alex, schoolmaster and went into teaching as a terrifying ordeal, and made the students think for themselves and drew out to be a true educator. Golding served the Royal Navy in command of a rocket ship and participated in the sinking of battleship Bismark in 1940. The war horrified him and he wondered how man slayed his own humanity when he was pushed into extreme situations. The tortures inflicted on the innocent people at Nazi and refugee camp buzzed out the horrifying voice. Through Piggy in *Lord of the Flies* Golding to his dismay made it very distinct that the course of action with an emergence of alien power ultimately leads to an unknown demonic possession in man which produced evil and it resulted in universal suffering and recession. Ape-minded man with a conflict motif unceasingly tampers with the golden chance given to him by bringing forth a chronic misery more horrible than itself.
With a view of war, William Golding was able to project potential barbarism in man and the war between the civilized self and the hidden savage nature was forced to show up under worst conditions. The anxieties about wars were a turning point to him. Acquiring concepts from the Greek Literature, Golding poignantly points out the darkness of man, exploring the depths of human depravity which forms the baseness in human beings. He was disturbed when cultured people were trying to perform beyond their reach, committed atrocities which eventually destroyed the essence of the understanding of the reality in life failing to recognise the role of ultimate choice in life. Without the freedom of taking decisions, man is not responsible for producing evil, and hence his thirst for existence accumulates his evil passions.

William Golding is a moralist, a realist and he does not like himself to be called as a pessimist. In his Nobel Lecture he confesses that,

Twenty five years ago I accepted the label ‘pessimist’ thoughtlessly without realising that it was going to be tied to my tail, as it were, in something the way that, to take an example from another art, Rachmaninoff’s famous Prelude in C sharp minor was tied to him. No audience would allow him off the concert platform until he played it. Similarly critics have dug into my books until they could come up with something that looked hopeless. I can’t think why. I don’t feel hopeless myself. (n.pag)

William Golding does not differentiate between good and evil for he believes in the fall of man. He mingles life and death with a spiritual aroma and uses novel as its canvas employing with the myth of a fall. Being very spiritual he condemns man who fails to
understand that evil resides as a monster within himself. The thirst for power and self-assertion brings with it all social evils, carrying out destruction against his own equal race. Evil should be avoided not by the fear of punishment but by the inner sense of conscience, if accepted it would lead to the threatening of converting man to be fit only for animal existence. War, the ubiquitous evil has essentially taught man savagery, lust, and destruction where it is far more difficult for him to control instead he is controlled by the external forces for it becomes a predominant fact in the realm of nature. The total innocence of mankind is lost, which is beautifully cited in Golding’s first work *Lord of the Flies*. Edenic island is turned into a Hell after a group of English school boys get trapped in the island due to the effect of the nuclear war. The children get divided into two, try to be grown ups, but the hidden dark nature uproots their basic human concern and become like savages killing their fellow students. Golding points out that the children have inherited this quality from the adult world and it remains in their core unknown. When kept under pressure they remain good and when no rules are imposed they turn to be barbarians. Golding gives a sigh of relief when a troop of soldiers come for rescue to save Jack and hence innocence is retained, but the children weep for the end of innocence, darkness of man’s heart. The children manifest the falsity of confidence in the outside world, when tried to attempt it, the entire island turns out to be an abattoir.

To the reversal of *Lord of the Flies*, *The Inheritors* (1955) his second novel begins with innocence, which H. G. Well’s *Outline of History* (1920) warns the readers of the Neanderthal man being bumped off by the Homo sapiens. The Neanderthal tribe noted for compassion and communal harmony is doomed after they met the civilized
Cro-Magons, Golding himself considers this novel to be his finest masterpiece because it deals with the theory of evolution where the fallible human inherit the Neanderthal peaceful environment and leads the inheritors to commit genocide giving a picture of the end of innocence with the New people inheriting the place with darkness within and around them. This visualises the extermination of the Jewish race that Hitler propounded for the survival of the fittest.

*Pincher Martin* (1956) like that of *Robinson Crusoe* concentrates on the individual realisation of the past during his last hour facing death after his ship is torpedoed. Clung on to a rock, out of his sheer desire to survive, he realises his power of will and self-assertion fails to rescue him, as evil has been manifested within himself. He is a dominant person on the world of eating and killing where his selfish inferno shadows metaphorically the absence of innocence. Golding again highlights the conflict of sinful life and realises that there are really challenging powers in the world. Golding being a spiritual man brings in the idea that ‘God’ is our everything and he is our refuge. Indu Kulkarni quotes Golding’s idea and gives a solution “God is the thing we turn away from into life, and therefore we hate and fear him and make a darkness there” (152).

*The Free Fall* (1959) set in the contemporary society is nothing but a novel of the act of will and Sammy submitting his life to lust. Given a dramatic form of guiltiness and like John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* it hints at the ‘original sin’. William Golding’s view towards Christian life is lured in all his novels. He believes in the removal of egoistical notion in life. Golding through Sammy gives a vision of a descending nature of man who victimises the weaker sex, no matter how true and valuable they are. Beatrice is exploited sexually though she remains sincere and devoted. He cries for his
end of innocence and tortures himself in the cell. Golding gives his characters a sense of resurrection in all of his novels which is also given to Sammy at the end when he is fit to face his final ordeal at the last minute of his life.

A novel that shares some of the ideas of Iris Murdoch’s novel *The Bell* (1958) is William Golding’s *The Spire* (1964). With corruption and egoistic will, Dean Jocelin is ready to sacrifice his fellow members on his sole decision to build the spire. He does not give penance for humility nor does he give up his unconquering faith to build the spire against all the laws of nature. Blind and deaf to reality Jocelin accumulates evil where utmost forgiveness is rejected. He is guilty of his sins at the end with his refracting consciousness at the end.

The historical triology *Rites of Passage* (1980), *Close Quarters* (1987), and *Fire Down Below* (1983) portrays the life of Napoleonic Wars. It reached the height of success where it won the Booker prize. It gives a destination of concern over the nature of good and evil. Golding’s *The Paper Men* (1984) again narrates the life of Wilfred Barclay who refuses to have Tucker as his biographer. The entire novel gives a precarious picture of Barclay’s damnation and salvation. His mysterious life, the filthy truth in his past life pushed Barclay to be isolated from the light of the world. Golding’s *The Paper Men*, may be called as an autobiographical novel where he is caught between his sinful life and his self where he is called as a poorly defined individual.

*The Double Tongue* (1995) which was published two years after his death, tells the story of an old woman Arieka, the protagonist who surveys her life in terms of the utmost equivocation. She was chosen to become a Pythia, the voice of Apollo’s oracle at Delphi and becomes involved in fraud and high politics along with Ionides who is gay,
cynical and charming. This novel concentrates on the darkness of man and how arbitrarily power is wielded through skepticism and how always women are instruments to be played on by God or men. Golding seems to pose the question, Golding adapts the myth into the modern concept and examines the diseased human nature. Throughout the novel, Golding’s delightful description of the ancient landscape and culture continues to fascinate the readers. The novel’s reflections on the traps and trappings of high politics are enhanced through the conversations which Arieka and Ionides have with the Roman Proprietor, Lucia Galba. Golding’s handling of Ionides end and Arieka’s final revelation cleverly combines abstract philosophical ideas with a fast-moving narrative.

William Golding is different from his contemporaries not only in handling the form of the genre but content too. Philip Redpath comments on the art of Golding and says:

Golding’s art is an art of discovery but not an art that seeks to explain. The discovery it makes is that the universe is inexplicable and cannot be wholly described in words and yet words are all the novelist has with which to describe the universe. (13)

William Golding visualises the universe as ‘Cosmic Chaos’. He seems to suggest that the universal order defies all rational efforts to fully grasp its complexity and to resolve its seeming contradictions. In Golding’s universe, the fall of man is a destined event as he moves from innocence to experience. While he is akin to the Greek tragedians in his preoccupation with the human tragedy he also resembles Melville and Conrad in his emphasis on the natural chaos of existence. In Golding’s world chaos manifests itself in various forms and Golding’s fiction focuses on the significant aspect of man struggling for order and encountering in the process, chaos within and without.
The vision of William Golding can be characterised as apocalyptic vision. Northrop Frye in his *The Great Code* defines the apocalyptic vision: “The panoramic apocalypse is the vision of staggering marvels placed in a near future and just before the end of time . . . This in turn means that it is essentially a projection of the subjective knowledge of good and evil acquired at the fall” (136).

It seems that the end of an individual’s life as well as the end of the world is anticipated and visualised with a sense of horror. His novels are revelation of the historical processes of human blunders and crimes resulting in sorrow and suffering which has cast an ominous shadow over the future of man. From the publication of his first novel itself, Golding seems to be preoccupied with the theme of innate nature of man on this planet. The disintegration of human entity and disruption of the moral fabric of life are visualised in terms of apocalyptic structures which form the basic pattern of Golding’s major novels.

Both Thomas Hardy and William Golding are intensely preoccupied with the fundamental problems of human existence. Their novels communicate a tragic sense of humanity. Hardy and Golding are very sensitive and keen observers of life. Pain, suffering and disappointment are outstanding characteristics of human existence. The World Wars made them realise what one man could do to another and man’s inhumanity to man. Fishing in the deep and treacherous river of life they have found more evil than good. Golding considers man as morally diseased creature and Hardy looks upon man as an impulsive creature. Both the novelists are concerned with the darkness that exists in the heart of human beings. They explore this darkness in their novels. They penetrate
deep into the human psyche. Furthermore, their novels are an examination of human
to a universal level.

Thomas Hardy and William Golding probe deeper into man’s nature, not only in
relation with man but also in relation with his society and universe. Golding has
visualised the universe as ‘Cosmic Chaos’. Man must learn to live with the natural chaos
of existence. Hardy is conscious of the ‘Immutability of Nature’ and the struggles of
human personalities in the universe. The predicament of the modern man is their theme
and they explore tragedies in personal as well as universal aspects. In fact their novels
are detailed and developed pictures of what the world is like and how the human beings
are placed in it and how by consequence they ought to live. It is true that a vein of
melancholy runs through their novels. But they are not downright pessimists. They have
faith in humanity. Hardy and Golding believe in human values and virtues. Though they
have given a tragic vision of life, they have faith in the spirit of man and that human life
could be better if man would care for it in the right spirit. They share a common concern
for the betterment of humanity.

To put it in a nutshell of the following chapters, the Second Chapter **The Dark
Cast and the Destructive Drives** deals with the analysis of Hardy’s major novels.
Hardy considers how individuals stand in relation to their environment and the
relationship between individual and individual. His novels reflect the problems of love,
sex and marriage. He dramatises the conflict between man’s physical nature and his
spirit and shows how what emerges within the characters, work as dark forces and drive
them to their doom.
In the Third Chapter, **Aspirations and Impulses: Foul Descent** William Golding’s five novels are examined. His firm belief that man is infected with evil and evil exists in his every action is analysed in this chapter. Golding exposes violence and lust inherent in man’s nature and examines the terrible disease of modern man. Golding also shows how the inner depravity of man leads him to evil and sin.

In the Fourth Chapter, **Evil and Choices** the characters in the major novels of Thomas Hardy and William Golding are scrutinised in the light of the precepts of Existentialist philosophy. Existentialism proposes that man is a lonely creature of anxiety and anguish living in a meaningless world and that he merely exists until he makes a critical choice about his own future. The protagonists in the novels experience a sense of “void” through alienation from the bonds of the Universe.

The Fifth Chapter, **Conclusion** brings together the different facets of human nature, touched in the preceding chapters. The different thoughts on human life have been analysed with a focus on the essential elements of Existentialism. To discover the truth of life, one must start from personal experience and base his ideas on it. Truths in human life emerge from experience. Experimental truths are definitive rather than scientific truths- Man driven by forces which lurk in him is forced to act by certain choices. These choices invariably result only in evil. These results are so compulsively evil that they go to prove how man’s actions are born of choices which are nothing but evil.