CHAPTER-I

Consciousness of Death-Definition and Characteristics
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(Perception of Death : Meaning and Sense)

1.1 Death: an approach to unravel its mystery

Death or the end has been an object of curiosity and awe for man. One who is born must need ones earth end. Death follows life as the evening follows a day. This is why death has been the most decisive event in human life after birth and marriage. Man takes birth, leads life and sets out for his eternal journey called death. All long to understand what death is, even the philosophers and thinkers are no exceptions.

1.2 Etymology of the word ‘death’ world, its meaning and its sense

Mrityu is the synonym for death in Sanskrit. The word Mrityu is derived from Sanskrit root 'ṛ'. The other synonyms for the word Mrityu are (1) Maran, Nidhan, Ant (2) Yamaraj (3) Vishnu (4) Adharmaputra (5) Kansa (6) Daiva and (7) Saptadashyog. In order to make the sense of the word clear, the Purana has an allegory “Adharma has a wife named Hinsa, she has a sense Arnat and a daughter Nikarti. Bhaya (fear), Narak (Hell), Maya (illusion) and Vedana (suffering) are born to her. Mrityu is the son of non other than Maya.

Indian thought on death illucidates the prevailing sense of fear, misconception and curiosity in man. Man wishes to keep as long distance as he can keep from death. If an old man is reminded of his death, he, too,
looses his composure. All our action are aimed at warding off our inevi-
table death. Satyabrata Siddhantalankar has endorsed the view. He says, "we eat and drink for the sole purpose to sustain our life. If we stop eating and drinking there will be an end to our life. We make family, rear children for the fear of our old age. They are like our guards. If they are not there in old age we shall die early in absence of a caretaker."3 Fear of death is looming large. It is distressful for individual and society as well. It has been and object of great fear since time immemorial. The powerful are eliminating the weak and the rich one obliterating the poor. Innumerable wars have been fought sometimes in the name of religion sometime for women and sometimes for conquering the world. All these activities ultimately result to mass destruction causing loss of numerous lives.

1.3 Meaning of death in English diction

The Sanskrit word Mrityu is Death in English. The literal meaning of death is (1) end of life (2) reaching the end of life (3) the man met to death (4) reason of death and (5) Mass destruction.

Freedom from the fear of death

It's a matter of serious consideration. The destruction caused by the world wars have shook the general conscience of man. Different parts of the world reel under unprecedented famine, deluge, epidemic, earthquake and like. The cruelty and destruction unleashed by the world wars have compelled the world conscience to give a serious thought on related matters. Disappointment, sufferings and pity has cast death-like effect on mankind. This has, in modern life, raised its ugly head in a deadly manner. The disbelief in god and concern for self has given birth to a
new ‘ism’ called ‘existentialism’ while accepting this reality, Veenu Bhalla writes, “Because of the widespread atheism, materialism and artificialism ideas concerning god and related things disappeared from human life in a fast mode. Resultantly, the man of Europe fell into the holocaust of loneliness, self centerism and crisis of existence... Then whether existentialism is a product of decline of religious believe?” On the other hand Indian scriptures like the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Puranas have different view on death. These scriptures teach us to accept death as it comes, since there was no way out. Scriptures like the Vedas have Chaturashram Dharma. The last of the Ashramas referred to there is Sanyasa (renunciation). In this ashrama the follower accepted death naturally, voluntarily. Personalities like Balram, Krishna and Dadhichi embraced death with the help of their excellence in the yoga. Modern time is far removed from the ancient one, but there is no change in the perception of death so far. Man of today is frightened from death as he was in olden days. He is helpless and failed. Dr. Tribhuvan Singh has expressed his helplessness in the following lines, “Death is linked in necessarily with birth. They are two such stages of human life where no earthly power works. One who has taken a birth must die.... When death shall come is beyond our speculation. Therefore, the little span of time between the two extremes of life-birth and death-can only be considered the span of life. In such a situation man has to make his life purposeful.” In such a situation man has no alternative but to surrender himself before death naturally.

Man is the noble animal. Knowing very well that death is sure, he tries to do something that shall make him immortal. The people having abil-
ity to do something, wish to do something for which people may remem-
ber him for long. The longingness for eternal name and fame is the rea-
son behind mans pursuit in literature, arts, culture, education, et al. The
inevitability of death disappoints man, nevertheless it motivates him,
too. It appears as if death gives a call to accomplish something unique to
be immortal in his work.

A long life, as long as it can be, is the innate impulse of man. Each and
every effort of a human being is directed at warding death off. Pointing
to this fact Dr. Satyabrat Siddhantulankar has written that a child begins
crying just after getting birth as if he is asserting himself and letting that
unless he is given something to consume he may die. He does not want
to die, he wants to live. That is why he cries. We have two types of
actions to ward off death. One, we collect material things and two, we
acquire inner qualities. We attain wisdom, make ourself useful and able
so that we can earn our livelihood."No one wants to die. All want to life
as long as he can. We build strong houses, get married, consult a doctor
in case fall ill, make friends and get insured. All these activities are indi-
rect attempt to keep death at bay. Ravindranath Tagore gives voice to
immortality wishing humanity of the world in following lines - I do not
want to die in this beautiful world/I want to live amongst my people.”
Thus we find that warding off death as long as may be possible in the
innate human impulse.

1.4 Death : In the opinion of medical science
The medical science deals with treating human beings for health, mental
and physical. Service to the physically and mentally ill persons is con-
sidered a noble work. This is the reason doctors are regarded as second
to god. There are many pathies in practice today. Some notable pathies are Allopathy, homoeopathy, unani, ayurveda etc. Allopathy is a global pathy. All the pathies believe that amongst all the human organs mind is the most important one. Mind exercises control over the body through nervous system. Even the psyche (Mana) is also controlled by mind. Mind controls and balances all the parts and organs. For any reason including illness if the mind is affected it leads to imbalance of human organ system. It may lead to lunacy.

High blood pressure and other related things may cause heart attacks or hemorrhage. Mind consists of numerous micro cells. If even for a moment blood supply to these cells is disrupted death of mind may occur. If an accident damages head that can also cause death of mind. Death of mind brings a halt to the functions of a body. In such a state doctors declare the body dead. Thus in medical science death starts for ceasing the mind and other organs to work. Medical science does not entertain subjects like atma and its existence.

1.5 Connotation of the word ‘Death’

After making a due consideration of Eastern and Western concept of death, we can summarize that:

(a) Death is an end of life.

(b) Gods like Vishnu, Shiva etc. are the presiding deities of death. Kansa has also been recognised, for his dreaded nature, as a synonym to death.

(c) In Indian yoga system reference of ‘Saptadashayog’ is made. It helps attaining death voluntarily.
Medical science believes that death occurs to the cells of the body. Mind has an important role in making the body function. If mind ceases to work other organs of the body also ceases to work.

Spiritual thinkers believe that it is the body that meets to its end and not the Atma. After death Atma simply changes its body form.

Death has an inseparable and essential nexus with birth. According to the spiritual thinkers atma takes birth out of Paramatma and after death goes back to 'Paramatma'. This process is caused by 'Paramatma' only.

Life and death are complementary to each other. As one cannot have an idea of happiness if there were no sorrow or for that matter cannot conceive the concept of light if there were no darkness. So death cannot be comprehended without the perception of birth.

1.6 The Consciousness of death (Mrityubodh)

The word Mrityubodh is of Sanskrit origin. It has two components - Mrityu (death) and Bodh (perception). The term Bodh has following meaning in dictionaries: (1) Knowledge (2) Confirmation (3) Patience (4) Contentment (5) In another place 'Bodh' has been defined as follows: (1) experience, attainment (2) Knowledge deep insight. After examining these different commutations of the word bodh, we can summarise that the word stands for experience and attainment. Thus we can give a definition of the term - Mrityu Bodh in the following way. **What a man experience when he is faced with death or death like situation is Mrityubodh.** This experience is different to different individuals.

Man, when face to fall with contemporary dreadful situations, experience fear from death. It appears that in such an odd times we are not
safe. We may meet our end any moment to come. What is then in life, after all, in such a gloomy situation? What is there in taking birth as a man when there is no dignity of life? War time situations, tumultuous political environment, financial crisis, food scarcity, problem of unemployment, perverted value system are such things that force us to ponder over certain basic issues involved with us. Because of the negative impact of these situations man is destined to live in the state of sutriness, frustration, disappointment, pain and obliviousness. To be physically and mentally traumalized is another form of death. It can be identified with Mrityu Bodha. There can be a great difference between a normal man and a man suffering from Mrityu Bodha. A normal man if gets to know that his end is approaching, his total behaviour gets changed completely. For him this world may become instantly meaningless and he may get complete salvation from worldly attachment. Contrary to that his passion for this world may also increase and sense of attachment may get stronger. For example, if a rich man suffering from cancer comes to know that his end is near and he is not going to live beyond a month, his behaviour may change. Wealth for accumulation of which he had been striving hard throughout his life may appear meaningless to him. It may so happen that he may distribute his hard earned property amongst the destitutes and take a sigh of relief. On the contrary, he may not do so. Thus we may consider feelings of frustration, disappointment, obliviousness, revolt, mistrust, sufferings as the symptoms of Mrityu Bodha.

1.7 Mrityubodh: An Indian approach

Life of man has a history of nearly a complete of crore years. Man is fearful from death perhaps from that very day. The primitive man had to
do a lot to make himself out of danger from wild animals. Intense search for food and precautions from attempts on life are nothing but our urge to live and remain safe from the claws of death. This is certainly some sorts of Mrityu Bodha. This very Mrityu Bodha inspires human beings to gather food and invent weapons for self defence. Species that could not make self defence had lost their existence.

The Vedas are known to be the first Indian literary works. They have been regarded as the ‘Nigams’. The Vedas have been very important to the scholars pursuing their studies on Indian culture and civilization. The Vedas are the authentic source of information on their age. Study of prevedic age is not that easy. The archeologists have unearthed the story of prevedic civilization.

The Vedas are the gift of the Aryan culture. The Aryan race has been regarded as a conquering race. This race that had its origin in the Central Asia could spread over a vast land because of their intellectual supremacy. They occupied the Indogangetic plain by driving the aborigines from there. With all their persists, the Mrityu Bodha continued to persist. They were almost free from worries after occupying the Gangetic plains. It appeared as if they had ward off the fear of death. They were more successful in introducing death penalty to the wrong doers.

The Vedas teach us the system of supporting life. They teach us to accept death as real as the birth was. The Sanyas one of the four Ashramas is nothing but a spiritual preparation to embrace death. In the four vedas the policy considered useful for mankind aimed to empower the human race itself. Polity, religious rites, religious performances, animal husbandry, hunting, physical make-up, agriculture, business etc. are activities that support human life.
In ancient scriptures it was taught how to live with honour as a human being. There were methods to adopt for a purposeful life. But they could not prescribe any method to defeat death. It was, in fact not possible at all. That is why the Geeta teaches us to lead a life with Karma unattached so that the fear of death may not bother — "You have your right on the actions results are not in your hand." The Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Upanishads, the Aranyakas, the Sutra and Epics and the Puranas, all deal with subject 'how to attract mankind towards religious matters. But it appears that in spite of all teaching the fear from death remained rested in human psyche. The people of the Vedic period, wished to ward off death. There are 33 devatas in the Rig veda. Those 33 devatas became 33 crores in the Puranas and the Brahmanas. The hymns of the rigveda are addressed to those 33 devatas and request has been made for granting crop, children, wealth, valore and rain so that there could be perfect welfare of mankind and death could be ward off. A Rigvedic hymn is given below in which Indra is prayed for foodgrain, cows, houses and gold.

(O, Indra! if you long for my offerings and hymns, then bestow on me with foodgrains. We are your bhaktas, please delight us. O, Indra! please give us the food grain that never go out of stock. Be our protector and nourisher.)
There are numerous such examples in the Rigveda the Puranas and the Aranyakas, too, primarily deal with the hymns of the Rigveda.

The Vedic literature has a story of Savitri and Satyavan. Savitri meets the god of death - Yamaraj. The princess Savitri falls in love ignoring the fact that Satyavan’s days were numbered. She decides to marry Satyavan. Her father, Ashvapati, finding no option consents.

After lapse of a year the last date of Satyavan’s life came. Anticipating the difficult situation the god of death Yamaraj himself came to take Satyavan’s life. When Yamaraj was returning with the life of Satyavan, Savitri said ‘When a couple is in love it is against propriety to separate them. If Satyavan’s death is inevitable please take me with him. Yamaraj moved and wanted to grant a boon to Savitri with considerable wisdom Savitri asked for uninterrupted family line of his father-in-law. When Yamaraj acceded to his request, Savitri said how the family line of her father in law can remain uninterrupted if Satyawan is not alive? Finding no alternative Yamaraj had to set Satyawan’s life free. This is a story how love could win death battle.

What after death? Its an eternal question. The Nachiketa episode of the Upanishad relates to this question. The Nachiketa Yamaraj dialogue gives us an idea about the then prevailing concept of death and life thereafter. When the mystery of death is solved one becomes free from the fear of death. It changes approach towards life as well. In the Kathopanishada there is a detailed description of Nachiketa’s encounter with Yamaraj the god of death. On asking what is death and thereafter by Nachiketa, the god of death replies:

श्रेयश्च प्रेयस्य मनुष्यमेतः तौ सम्प्रति स्वविनिवलिते धीरः ।
श्रेयोति धीरोभि प्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्नो योगश्रेमादु वृणीते ॥
(There are two types of human being on the earth — Preya Margis who consider the body as an embodiment of Atma. They lead a life of luxury and are materialistic. With the end of their body the Preyavadis also came to their end. On the contrary there are Shreya Margis having believe that the body is mortal and the self is immortal. They search for the supreme reality. They consider their quest purposeful only when realise the supreme reality.)

After the Upanishads, we can take the Mahabharata. The theory of the Upanishads by expounding the concept of rebirth help us to accept death as a natural phenomena. In this state when mind accepts death as an inevitable and the self is immortal man can concentrate on other Karmas. He realises that death is not total destruction it is only an transformation.

Satyabrata Shiddhantalankar has compared life with a journey by train. He writes, "Life is a travel by train. Stations after stations come. Passengers disembark on their destination and the train moves on. The passenger who disembarks doesn’t die. His journey comes to an end there after another journey."12

The Mahabharata is known as the Pancham Veda (the fifth veda). Several chapters of the Mahabharata deal with problem of death and philosophy of death. Characters like Bhisma and Arjun have encounters with death Hono, the Mahabharata is one of the main sources of India’s perception of death and its study becomes essential to understand the oriented concept of death.

The Mahabharat has authentic concept of political, social, cultural and religious life of the people of that age. It is, therefore, the Mahabharata is not only as scripture of the Hindu, rather it is an encyclopedia of life of its people.
The Mrityubodha or the encounter with death by different characters are found in the Mahabharata. In this respect Bhishma and Arjuna are two important characters. Bhishma had Iccha Mrityu (death at his wish). This concept of Iccha Mrityu is also an important hypothesis. Death is inevitable in this position, too. According to the Mahabharata on the ninth day of the great war Arjun called on Bhishma with his companion, Shri Krishna. When Arjun asks Bhishma “O! grandfather who can one defeat you in this great war?” The illustrious warrior, that was Bhishma instantly realised that the time had come to take a decision. With a sense of unattachment he told Arjun that if Shikhandi was brought in his chariot before him, he would discard his arms. On in such a situation his killing was possible. Thus Bhishma disclosed the way he could be killed. In the same way when Arjuna got disgusted with war, Shri Krishna taught the former the secret of death and illuminated Arjun. Shri Krishna said that the Atma is not body rather it was different from the body. The Atma is eternal. The body is only a wrap. In the Geeta Shri Krishna says –

बासांसि जीर्णानि यथा बिहान ननानि गृणाति नरोपराणिं।
तथा शरीरपाणि बिहाय जीर्णानि अन्यायानि संयाति ननानि देहि॥

Indian perception of death is found in the philosophy propounded by Gautam Buddha. Since his childhood Siddhartha was thoughtful on death. He was deeply distressed to have encounter with stages of sickness, old age and death. To remove these fears, he put on attire of a mendicant. After long and deep meditation, he attained Buddhatwa. The Buddhist philosophy teaches us to accept death as an eternal phenomena in a natural way. The followers of the Buddha believed in rebirth and tried to escape from rebirth for which they observed meditation. Rebirth is nothing but a cycle of happiness and sorrow. How helpless are we before death is evident in stories related to Buddha. An
illustration shall speak for itself. At one point of time Buddha was retiring in the Jetvana. A woman who had lost her son came to him. She had heard about the superhuman powers of the Buddha. She was deeply distress and restless. He prayed for the life of her son. The Buddha tried to console her. But was not successful. The Buddha tried a measure. He asked the woman to bring a bowl of milk for the house where none have met death so far. But the woman could not find a house where not a single death had occurred. Then the Buddha said that death was eternal and we all are subject to that. Hence, it is wise to forget the sorrow.

With the discussion made above it is clear that besides other factors, the factor called Mrityu Bodha has been a dominant one. The Buddhist philosophy has profound impact on subsequent Siddha Sahitya and thereafter on the Math Sahitya. But the Siddha and Math Sahitya are dominant with Sadhana. Attaining salvation on realising the world as unreal had been their main objective. They used to define their thought with help of different allegories. Under cover of all diversities, what the general observation has been made into certain communities is the emphasis on Sadhana rather than Tatva Chintan. Considering one God or power as the prime element of this creation, presenting cohaustic details of rituals, importance of the Mantras, symbolism of gods, arrangement of key letters (Bijakshars) Bhuta Siddhi, Kundalini yoga, mystic meditation, apparently objectionable Yamachars, Diksha and importance of the Guru are some common elements. There are such a close resemblance that if the Saivaits gave them a Saiva definition or the Buddhist, a Buddhist, there shall be no difference. There is fundamental unity in them.\textsuperscript{14}

In short, it can be said that even the Siddhas and the Math Munis wish for union with the ultimate reality i.e. God so that they can overcome the fear
from death. These elements are called 'Agamas'. The Atharva Veda deals with such occult practices. It is estimated that the discarded Brahmas have created these systems and incorporated them in the Atharva Veda. This is a reason why the Atharva Veda is not counted in the ‘Trayi’ (three books of sacred knowledge).

It is believed that fear from death is the factor that compels a person to become Sadhu Sant or Bhakta. Bhakti and Shraddha are described in the Vedas. The word “Shraddha’ has been used in the sense of truth and faith....”

In the Bhagvatgita Bhakti has been defined as - the attitude that selflessly leads a human being’s sense organs to the godhead is Bhakti.

The resultant movement of the Bhagawat Dharma is known as ‘Bhakti Movement’ in Hindi literature. Bhakti Movement has been reinforced by not only the Vaishnowa faith but other faiths like the Sakta, Shaiva and Buddhist had also contributed to that. During the Vedic period religious activities were inseparably linked with sacrifice and rituals. All the elements of nature were accepted as a god and offerings were made to please that specific god. They were mere interested in material pleasure. They, in a sense, take refuge in god only to make themselves safe from the claws of death. In later ages different gods were incorporated in one more powerful one. In order to attract people gods were personified and concept of Awatar (incarnation) came into being. The masses got attracted towards these Awataras and wished for freedom from death.

The post vedic period witnessed prolonged war of ideas amongst the different groups of the Aryans on the concept of Bhakti. Scriptures like the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishada were come into existence because of difference of opinion on the part of different groups on common
ideas. Highlighting the same fact Acharya Parashuram Chaturvedi has written - “Perhaps, in this same period the concept of the jiwatma and the Avakta Prakriti was put forward. On the basis of Karmafal and rebirth remedy to get the jiwatma freedom from the bondage of Karma were conteplated”.

In our opinion, the concept of liberating jiwatma from the bondage of his Karma (action) is inspired by his Mrityu Bodha.

The worship of Nature as prevalent in the civilizations of Aryan, Indus, Sumeria and like have “their root in escaptism, appeal and curiosity and related impulses like fear, distress and wonder.” With this statement of Dr. Nahar at least one thing gets obvious that fear from death is one of the primitive impulse, attempt to find an escape from that is still being made. When an individual suffers from fear or sufferings it becomes quite natural that he will find recourse to the gods and goddess.

Bhakti is the process of union of Atma with Paramatma. Whether it may be a Sagun or a Nirgam Bhakti, union with the supreme reality is aspired in both of the systems. Bhakti is an attempt to get liberty from Mrityu Bhay. It is, therefore, the Bhakta Kavis asks from their Bhagawan his blessings and compassion. Surdas have, in his initial writings (Padas) wished for compassion from his Bhagawan – “With those kindness a lame traverse a mountain, a blind looks everything”, the poet says. Tulasidas, had worshiped Rama with Dasya Bhawa so that he could be able to get the compassion of Shri Ram. Poets like Jayasi, Kabir have longed for their union with the Paramatma. Whether they are a Sagun, Nirgun, Dualist or non dualist all wish to become a Bhakta - for getting fearlessness from the awe from death. Almost all Bhakta poets have made description of happiness and misery. A pada of Kabirdas illustrates the fact:

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(All remember of God in distress. No one bothers while in pleasure. It is pleasure, God is remembered there shall not be distress in life)

After the age of Bhakti, in the modern tradition of Hindi Chhayavadi poetry come the Neo Adhyatmavad. This tradition, though different from Bhakti age tradition, has elements like Atma-Paramatma, creator, mystery of creation in abundance. The definition of Chhayavad, as has been given by the critics if analysed the statement made above is sufficiently supported. Some noteworthy definitions of Chhayavad are as below:

a) The general meaning of Chhayavad is disturbing what is not present with the help of the shadow of something that is present.

b) In Chhayavadi there is a tendency - Acharya Shukla of escapism from external reality. The Chhayavadi poets do not concern with description of outward appearances. They are however more concerned with their internal experiences.

—Dr Kesari Narayan Sukla

c) Chhayavad was a rebellion of modern material consciousness against the modern Puranik religious consciousness.

—Dr. Devraj

Sorrow, disappointment and compassion are some elements that are generally found in Chhayawadi poets. They have tried their best to make themselves free from effect of Mrityu Bodha. Let us consider Prasad first. Prasad has talked about attaining eternal bliss so that there may be a permanent freedom from sorrow. Since Prasad was a Saivaite, he has stressed knowledge of
'Tripura' and attainment of ‘Samarasata’ (harmony) in his immortal work the Kamayani. Nirala, too, have found the world distressful and wished to get rid of that distress. He has observed —

दुःख है जीवन की कथा रही, क्या कहूँ आज जो नहीं कही।

—राम की शब्दित पूजा

(My life has been a story of sorrowful incidents. What should I say that I had not said so far).

Mahadevi Verma is deeply influenced from the teachings of Indian spiritual traditions, philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Thakur, Buddhist philosophy and like. She says — मैं नीर भरी दुःख की बदली

(I am a cloud of sorrow having waters of sorrow)

It is evident from the examples cited above that there is obvious attempts to have escape from Mrityu Bodha in the Chhayavadi poetry.

The situations that led to the evolution of the theory of existentialism in Europe were evident in India during World War I years between 1935-1947. The reason being, the Europe has witnessed their ruin themselves. Words like melancholy, disappointment, distress and strangeness are expressions of that life full of disappointment. Despite, India was not like Europe. The words were being used in India but the situation was not as grave as it was in Europe. Underlining the state of that period Shivaprasad Singh has written — In Indian thought you cannot find such directionlessness, in coherence, detachment, fear and dreadfulness as the existentialist had presented before us.20 Whatever may be the ground reality, it is certain that the pre-independence formidable state of affairs compelled Indian psyche to ponder over the things before them. Broadly, when, after Premchand, the individualistic and psychoanalyst fiction
writers appeared with their description of personal experience, tension and situation based tragedies and self torment, Mrityu Bodha got more distinct expression. Jainendra Kumar, Ilachandra Joshi, Agneya, Devraj and other individualistic writers give us similar description.

Let us take, for example, Jainendra Kumar first. For the first time, individualistic literature is powerfully present in the works of Jainendra Kumar. Especially the women characters of the novels like ‘Sunita’, ‘Parakh’, ‘Kalyani’, ‘Tyagpatra’ and others of Jainendra Kumar have been depicted under gross sense of stress. All are subject to contemporary social perversion. Such characters are always found fearful from death. Characters of Ilachandra Joshi in his novels like ‘Parde Ki Rani’, ‘Pret our chaya’, ‘Jahaj ka Panchi’ and others are found under stress. How a heart breaks after a breach of trust and faith is described in Parde Ki Rani. In the ‘Pret our Chaya’ when Parasnath comes to know about the illicit relation of his mother with a Vaidya (Ayurvedic practitioner), he lost his mental peace and balance. This loss of mental peace and reeling under stress is nothing but Mrityu Bodha.

Death has a special reference and presence in all the three novels etc. of Agneya ‘Nadi Ke Dweep’ is no exception. In ‘Apne Apne Ajnabi’ death comes are an artform. (Jainendra, Joshi and Agneya shall be discoursed elsewhere.). The post Independence age has been the most notable age in Indian history. This is an age of shattering dreams - in political, social and cultural context - especially. After independence when the Indian people came across the fearsome situations, their dreams shattered, suddenly. There was almost absence of ancient tradition and values. The different situation that was prevalent in Aryan society shook their conscience. Even the coexistence of God was questioned. During the Bhakti age people tried to get rid of Mrityu Bhaya by mak-
ing surrender before God. But the modern man was quite alone when pervading corruption and misrule engulfed the nation and society, people lost all hope and realised that this was not something called life. Dreams of all sections of people, particularly of the middle class completely broke down by the onslaught of the evils of the modern age. The dissolution of family, selfishness, frustration and fear characterised a middle class family. Resultantly, the modern man had to live a dual life. The writers of new generations, only, are influenced with this situation. These difficult situations were recorded by the new generation writers in their poetry, fictions and dramas. A majority of poets and writers came from the middle class alone.

The First World War gave birth to existentialism in Europe. The mass destruction of life and property and post war difficult situation compelled the Europeans to think they rejected traditional values, gave new dimension to intellectualism and individualism. But their ongoing search for new values did not provide them philosophical stability. The Indian context is different from that. The period between 1935 and 1947 was the period of acute despair. The policy of repression and untold oppression by the British, unprecedented famine and earthquake, tyranny of landlords and capitalists shook the public conscience. But the first World War did not affect India as it affected Europe. The reason of this different effect was not circumstantial but cultural. The culture and politics of India and Europe were different from each other. In this context thought of Veena Bhatta is worth mentioning — “Role of politics was different in India than it was in Europe. The notable thinkers, there, believed that the destiny of man can be understood in light of poetries alone. Indian psyche tried to understand the problem of politics through the help of religion. Mahatma Gandhi put politics with moral values and touched the Indian
heart. Nietzsche, the Western philosopher, has, in his book “Beyond God and Evil” declared that untruth is a condition of life and Gandhiji, in his autobiography, “My Experiments with Truth” accepted truth a synonym to the word God. Because of the thinkers like Nietzsche, the western man is a man without moral value who thinks that untruth is a means of getting political authority. But such situation did not come in India.”21 It is a fact that the difference in politics and culture draws a line of separation between thoughts European and Indian. No incident or difficult situation can inspire Indian mind to have distrust in social values. The odds of material world, too, could not obliterate difference between European and Indian mind. Indians have their own philosophy and way of life. “Thus, the unbridled inhumanity of mechanical world could not influence our country that lead the people to the sense of insecurity of existence.”22

Europe is an industrialised continent. Hence, it had to bear the burn of centralisation of industries there. On the contrary, being an agriculture economy, India had been free from the fatal effects of industrialisation. This is a reason why European people are not free from fear of death even for a moment, where at people at our country are always ready to accept death as a natural phenomena. According to Veena Bhalla it is the positive impact of the theory of rebirth on Indian mind that they are ready to accept death in a spontaneous way. In her words, “the Indians theory of rebirth does not allow death to take form of a dreadful imagination as the case is with Western world. A common man from India says — as a worn out cloth is discarded and replaced with a new one so on a body getting old and frail a new one is replaced with. In this thought death is not a total destruction, it is a phenomena.23 Indian thought in this respect is a optimistic one. Perhaps this is the reason behind crisis of
existence that prevails in European thought and is absent in India.

Difficult situations that arose in pre-independence and after independence gave birth to sense of incoherence in Indian mind. Frightening disorganisation and disappointment prevailed. People preferred to be selfish and careerist. It developed crack in human relationship. A sense of disregard to the traditional values surfaced. The thought of existentialism filled this vacuum. In the free India fearless, unattached and objective thoughts appeared. Is it not the effect of Mrityu Bodha or Mrityu Chintan? Yes, it is a true that in the land of spiritual thought i.e. India, at last, the voice of faith prevailed. This compromising and assimilating morality is the attribute of Indian religion and culture. The horrifying political, social, economic and cultural realities have been nicely depicted by the contemporary writers. In the field of poetry Dharmavir Bharati has described this age with the help of Puranik reference in his Andhayug. Dr. Ramswaroop Chaturvedi has declared ‘Andhayug to be a work dealing with the problems of modern age and its difficult situations — "The fundamentals of Andhayug is disorganisation of faith in modern times. The perverted values of modern war culture and dilapidated faiths have deeply influenced the receptivity of the poet. In this age of crisis the faith of the poet lies not on religion but on belief. Shri Krishna of Andhayug is an icon of propriety and responsibility and upholder of fearlessness and freedom of will."24

A serious reading of Andhayug gives us an insight and you consider no destruction between the Brahmastra of the Puranik age and atomic arsenal of modern age. The problems of the Dwapar age appears before us in their original form. With the help of post Mahabharat images Andhayug has dealt with problems of post independence period of India. The beginning of Andhayug gives an unique idea of the story of the post independence India —
But in spite of mistrust and disappointment Andhayug concludes with faith and trust. This book makes a fine distinction between the Indian and western thought on death. The depiction of frustration, disappointment, fear, strangerness etc. are, though, not absent in Indian literature and the western influence on this is, though, examined but Indian view cannot be completely classified as pessimistic and faithless.

On the other hand, the post independence adverse situations deeply influenced the authors/writers. It is a fact that the post independence adverse situations mostly had its effect on the middle class. Because of the disorganisation of family people began to experience hopelessness, frustration and suffocation in life. They even wished for death and incident of suicide was on rise. Authors and writers like Mohan Rakesh, Markandeya, Kamaleswar, Nirmal Varma, Jnanranjan, Shiva Prasad Singh, Renu, Ajneya, Rangeya Raghav presented picture of these realities in their works. Characters of their works are found suffering from Mrityu bodha. Three representative works of these writers can be critically examined to establish the fact stated above. The three works can be (1) We Din (1964) of Nirmal Verma, (2) Andhere Band Kamare (1961) of Mohan Rakesh and (3) Murdaghar (1974) of Jagadamba Prasad Dixit. We Din deals with situation of loneliness, terror and strangerness. These feelings are the bye product of war-created havoc.
The novel is replete with descriptions of horrifying warfare. These odd situations horrify the main characters like Rachana. In the novel you will, all through, find descriptions of fear, suspicion and tyranny. The novel ‘Andhere Band Kamara’ presents paradox of city life. Life of a big city involves feeling of bitterness. Man finds no meaning in life, hence, the tendency of live long disappears. At last one character of ‘Band Kamare’, Harbansh loses hope and one day ends his life by taking excess doze of sleeping pills. How mechanised and paradoxical has become human can be understood by reading this novel.

The novel “Murdaghar” of Jagadamba Prasad Dixit is also based on Mrityu Chintan. Circumstances makes a life completely pessimist. Life becomes a burden. Man is, as if, destined to lead a life in a suffocating and unhealthy environment. Besides these novels, there are many more such novels of this age that deal with feelings of Mrityu Bhaya, disappointment, frustration and like. Not only in novels but in poetry, fiction and dramas Mrityu Bodha is adopted as a theme.

1.8 Mrityu Bodha: A Western Approach

Death related thought is available in the Western philosophy as it is available in India. This thought had deeply influenced the Western literature, culture and folk life in particular and European, in general. The history of gradual development of thought on death subscribe this view.

The ancient Western thought was theist, indeed. They believed in the existence of Atma as Indian did. They, too, believed that the body was subject to death and the Atma was immortal. The Atma is eternal, unperishable.

In respect of Socrates we get the first recorded description of occurrence of death. Socrates lived between 469 BC and 395 BC. He was one of the great
philosophers of ancient Greece. Socrates did not write something at his own. But he had a disciple Plato. Plato made a detailed account of the life and teaching of his mentor, Socrates. Through Plato’s writings the world could know about the begendry life and immortal teachings of Socrates. Thought of Socrates has many similarity with Indian thought. At the time of Socrates North India was in contact with Greece. Hence, his thought on death has many things common with Indian thought on death. Before taking Hemloc and embracing death like a hero what Socrates said to his disciples can be summarised in following lines:

“Death is like separation of Atma from body. It is desirable that the Atma separates from the body.” Socrates’ thought has much similarity with that of the Geeta here.

We find reference of a philosopher named Sicro (106-143 BC) who lived nearly a decade BC. His thought is also something like the thought of India. In his words:

“The last day does not bring extinction,
But a change of place”

Semuel Butler (1612-1682) was a philosopher and poet. He, too, professed that the body meets its end and not the Atma. Hence, end of a body is a natural phenomena. Semmel Butler’s thought, too, has similarity with Indian thought:

To himself everybody is immortal,
He may know that he is going to die,
But he can never know that he is death.

Death has been a mystery that cannot be cracked by everyone. William
Shakespeare is a great English dramatist. His character Julius Caesar is also suffering from Mrityu Bodha. Caesar also believes that when death is inevitable then why not embracing bravely? According to Caesar they should be like

\begin{quote}
Cowards die many times before death
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
The valiant never taste of death but once.\textsuperscript{30}
\end{quote}

Impact of Indian spiritualism has been found on European mind as well. Buddhist and other religious thought believe in rebirth. Europe has also witnessed great intellectual debate on rebirth. In 553 at Constantinople one thirds of the Bishops have voted in favour of rebirth and the rest were against.\textsuperscript{31} Whatever may be the support base, it is clear that the theory of rebirth has appeared to the Europeans, too.

According to George Fost Bhoor (1851-1931) of History department of Harvard University, theory of rebirth cannot be ignored. His view on rebirth is something like this :

\begin{quote}
"A theory (metampsychosis) which has been embraced so large a part of mankind of many races and religions, as has commented itself to some of the most profound thinkers of all times, cannot be rightly dismissed.
\end{quote}

One of the stalwart thinkers is John Miller (1814-1913) who considered death as a milestone. He believed that only body gets its end and not the Atma. According to him death is a pause :

\begin{quote}
Death is but a name, a date
A milestone by the stormy rood
What you may, lay aside your load
And how your face and rest and waist
Defying fear, defying fear.
\end{quote}
On endorsing Indian view on death John Middbeton Mone (1889-1957) wrote, “The doctrine of reincarnation is one of the great historical solutions to the problem of life which life sets to human imagination. It is an answer to the deep desire of the spiritually awakened soul for divine justice.32

After Mare, Aldus Huxley, in his book ‘Pnemial Philosophy’ put forward his perception of death. Thoughts of Mare and Huxley represent the thought of European scientists, psychologists, poets and philosophers. Jung

Famous psychologist Karl G. Jung (1875-1961) has also taken up the concept of rebirth. He has observed, “One speaks of rebirth; one professes rebirth, one is filled with rebirth. This we accept as sufficiently real. I am of the opinion that the psyche is the most tremendous fact of human life.33

Another notable personality accepted the existence of Atma and believed in rebirth is Victor Hugo (1802-1885). He has elaborately dealt with the subject relating to the existence of Atma and theory of rebirth in his book “Intellectual’s Autobiography”.

John Masifield the English poet has described his thought regarding rebirth in his poetry “A Creed” in the following lines:

“I hold that when a person dies.

His soul returns to Earth;

Arrayed in some new flesh - disguise

Another mother gives him birth.”

Joseph Edision (1672-1719) in first scene of fifth act of his play ‘Cats’ has described that the Atma was immortal. M.V. Kamath in his book “Philosophy of Life and Death” has quoted some lines from that play:
I shall never die
The soul, secure in her existence smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years,
But thou shall flourish in immortal youth
Unheart amidst the war of elements.

There are more than hundred European poets and critics who have accepted the existence of Atma and believed in rebirth. All names may not be mentioned here. Hence, a few thinkers are being referred to here:

While living, man, sometimes imagines how his life shall be after his death. Benjamin Franklin was such a man. He made a furore at the age of 22 only. He wrote:

The body of B. Franklin
Painter,
Like the cover of an old book
Its contents born out.

But the work shall not be lost
For it will be believed
Appear once more.34

Thomas Baily Adrio (1837-1907) has expressed his ideal on rebirth in his poem "Metempsychosis". A reference can be given here:
To walk the earth and wear the form of man
To suffer bravely as becomes my state.
One step, one grade, one cycle nearer God.

Rebirth is not a new beginning it is a transformation. Thus man can be described as immortal. In his poetry “Song of Myself” Walt Whiteman, therefore, termed himself as deathless. His thought has some similarity with Indian thought:

I know I am deathless
I know this orbit of mine
Cannot be swept by a carpenter’s compass

Ryd Rudgard Kipling (1865-1936) was an English poet. He had spent quite a long time in India. Thus some of his poems reflect Indian folk culture and philosophy. Both of his poetry and prose have references of Indian concepts. His thought on death is described in his poetry “When Earth’s lost picture is pained”. A few lines from that poem are as below:

“When earth’s lost picture was pained
And the tubes are twisted and dried
When the oldest colours are faded
And the youngest critic has died;
We shall rest and faith, we shall need it.
Lie down for an aeon or two
Till the master of all God workman
Shall put us to work a new.”
Many poets have accepted death as a natural phenomena and wished they could embrace death with calmness. John Keats, who met a premature death wish for painless death. In his poem ‘Ode to a Nightingale’ he writes:

‘Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful death;
Call’d him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quite breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die
To ease upon the midnight with no pain
While thou are pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!’

1.8 Mrityu Bodha: Some other views

Besides Indian and Europe, other countries of the world, too, have thinkers on subjects related to death. Some prominent names are Tibetan thought and the Buddhist Philosophy, the Zorastrian theory, the Judaism, the Islam, the Sufi and the Christian faith. Some of the views are very old and some are relatively new.

‘Bares Thodd’, a book in Tibetan, deals with the concept of death. The Buddhist thought believe in rebirth. Attainment of salvation is the aim of life there. The Bardo Thodai says that how a body and man discards his old gets a new one. This regain is called ‘Bardo’. Bardo has three stages - Chikhai, Chonyid and Sidpa. Chikhai Bards is the initial stage when the body is lost by the Atma. It can be cord discarnation. Atma, gradually experiences the light of the divine (Paramatma). He, therefore, gets acquaintance of his existence. In the Buddhist philosophy this state of Atma is called Dharmakaya.
Chongid Bardo is the second state. By virtue of one’s past actions the Atma finds two paths free. The path of Nirvana for those whose actions had been noble and for others the path of worldly life. For the worldly people there are six lokas - Dwa, Asura, Nava, Preta, Pashu and Narak.

Sidpa is the final stage of Bardo. This state is attained by the soul on 15th day of his body’s death. At this stage old memoirs fade away. The dead has to bear the fruit of his actions. Atma has to travel through different lokas, according to the action it had already performed. The Buddhist concept of rebirth is similar to that of European and Indian on many counts.

The faith developed in Persia i.e. the Zostrianism has also their view on death. The founder of this faith Zarathrustra lived before the Buddha. He was born in 628BC. IN this faith Ahur Mazda represents for good and Arhiman represents for evil. According to this faith, after death, devil overpowers the body. If the soul is pure it shall move through Sitar-Payak (star world), Mah-Payak (the moon world) and Khurshid-Payak (the sun world) and experience bliss. The impure Atma, too, has to suffer for his actions. Whether it is a good or evil Atma it has to cross through the awesome bridge called Chinewad. The good Atma gets success here, whereas the evil Atma does not and reaches to Dojakh. This thought has some similarity with the Indian thought. The later version of the Zorastrianism is Zudaism. The Zoroastrianism believes constant state of war between light and darkness. But in the Zudaism, the Paramatma has been depicted as the controller of good as well as evil. This thought is closed to the thought of the Geeta.35

In 3000 BC pyramids came into existence in Egypt, thousands of years before the advent of Zorastrianism and Zudaism. Generous rulers like Sumer and Aakeda ruled there. They were concerned with their afterworld. Attempt
to preserve the dead bodies with special smear thereon and lying it to rest is one of the signs of the Egyptians concern for death. In the state of Assam there had been a tradition to lay the dead bodies of their Ahom rulers in the graveyard called Maidam. Like the practice prevalent in Egypt, the graves of the Ahom rulers were covered with the dead bodies accompanied by articles of daily use and live servants. The Mughals were no different. More than one Mughal Emperors built their masolums while still alive. Aurangzeb was one of such emperor. The last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was arrested and departed to Rangoon and he died there. His wish to die at his motherland remained unfulfilled. He gave words to his helplessness in following lines:

कितना है बदनसीब ‘जाफर’ दफन के लिए
dो गज जमीन भी न मिली कुए-यार में।

(How ill fated is Zafar for he could not get a piece of land for his burial at his place)

Islam, too, believes in the concept of hell and heaven. This is a result of the thought on death. According to the Islamic philosophy, man has to get fruit of his actions. For that man cannot blame the Almighty. The Almighty is forgiving and kind. Allah is the all powerful in the Islam. To get his compassion man has to adhere to five principles. They are Iman (faith), صلح (prayer), Jakat (charity), Sam (fasting) and Haz (the pilgrimage to Mecca). Simple living is highly recommended for purity and achieving piousness. Islam preaches to shun passion and dedicate oneself to public good. Islam has a concept of after world. This concept is an indicator to that Islam is also influenced with Mrityu Bodha.

The mystics of the Islamic cult is known as Sufis. Sufi philosophy is better known as ‘Tasavuf’. Abul Hussain Al Nuri has presented a good and in-
depth details of Sufi philosophy. He says that “the Sufis have detaste for the world and love for God.” According to the Sufi thought God is the beloved and the soul is lover. It is essential for a Sufi to forgo all their passions and depend on God’s will.

Indian Sufis, though, derived inspiration from Persian love poetry, they are found immensely affected with Indian poetry and its tradition. Sufi though has essentially been influenced by Indian monism. Like Indian Bhakta poets, the Sufi poets, too, attached paramount importance to the blessings of the Almighty. Attaining union with the Almighty is the only objective of Sufi Sadhana. The Pir (teacher) is the guide. It is said:

Prem vibhala panch lakhana
Aapu chhun mohi bouda chhawal.

The blessing of the guru removes all bondages — dhokha khay pati sir melal.

Thus the Sufi saints got freedom from sin generated fear from death and they claim to have union with the Almighty.

One of the global religion is Christianity. Christianity has an exhaustive description of Atma and Paramatma, death etc. the Bible says that it is God who creates a man by appropriate use of breath and when He withdraws that breath, death occurs. Thus man leads his life on the wish of the Almighty.

Now, the question is — why do the Almighty withdraw the breath. The reason has been thus assigned — Man has to die for his sins. Then the related question arises, what is sin all about? According to the Bible mistrust is sin. Not obeying the Almighty is a sin. In such a situation, compassion of the kind God is becomes the only support.

By unbelief, man brings death unto himself. The only hope for man,
then is the grace of a forgiving God, he can be saved only by being raised from the dead.  

Man’s curiosity does not cease here alone. Since he find that not only the sinnus but the pious, too, die. Why, indeed, a good man should die? The missionaries of Christianity have tried to respond to this problem. Bishop Agaustine (354-430 AD) is notable amongst those who tried to respond to it. According to him the reason behind Gods displeasure is the first man’s disobedience. The sin that Adam committed by eating the forbidden fruit made the subsequent generation disqualified for his kindness. Thus the helpless mankind had no alternative to his death.

But it is heartening that Jesus has made our death less painful by bearing all sorts of pain on him before his death. He accepted death for each and ever human being on this earth and thereby has made death less painful. This is the reason why the Christian Carol describe that death is liberation from sin and a means to have union with the Almighty.

Death related queries are found in all religions of the world. All the religions have taught to accept death as a natural process. All the religions have basic unity of thought.

Death is inevitable. It is wise that we complete our task before death strike. The success of endeavours attach meaning to our life. All religious subscribe to this thought. In Jaffer’s poetry this thought is expressed as below:

उम्र-ए-दराज मांग कर लाए थे चार दिन।

दो आरजू में कट गए दो इतजार में।

(I had only four days in my life. Two days spent in making wishes and two days in waiting for the wished to be granted).
1.10 **Question of Suicide**: There are differences between the opinions of Indian and European philosophers. In India, the philosophers do not support suicide. According to Indian Philosophy, suicide is a sin. But the European's opinion are different from Indian. The idea of suicide conforted the German philosopher Nietzsche (1844-1900), who wrote 'The Thought of suicide is a great source of comfort. With it a calm passage is to be made across many a bad night.

Even Shakespeare did not oppose the idea of suicide in his 'Hamlet'. A Canadian song-writer Neil Young wrote —

> It is better to burn out

> Than to fade away.

According to Alfred Lord Tennyson :- ‘Not at all can tell whether I mean this day to end myself or lend an ear to Plato where he says. That men like soldiers may not quite the post alloted by the Gods’.

1.11 **Existentialism or thought on death — Philosophy in psychology**

Existentialism is one of the dominant ism of the 20th century. It is a way of philosophical or literary thought. It was developed in Europe. Concern for existence has been the core of this thought. The concern for one’s existence can be regarded as the synonym to Mrityu Bodha. Death is the cardinal point of the philosophy of existentialism. It was, mainly, realised after the World War-I. The outcome of great wars caused a fundamental change of approach towards life. The war caused sense of disappointment, pain and compassion prevailed on the thought process of the suffering people. This was, no doubt, a sign of Mrityu Bodh. Such type of grave concern for life and death was not noticed before the 20th century. Because of this thought of existentialism the modern man started thinking to keep himself dettached from his society. The
unorganised thought process was put to a system by Jean-Paul Sartre.

As a matter of fact, existentialism was a reaction to idealism and fatalism of Hegel. The fatalism believed that the animate or inanimate world, for that matter, work under a set of rules. Every action has some cause. Idealism is contradicts fatalism. Idealism is primarily has spiritual orientation. Not inanimate, but it is animate that tries to realise its objective. According to existentialism fatalism and idealism both the philosophies disfigure individual personality. In existentialism individual liberty is paramount. This is not acceptable to fatalism and idealism.

Existentialism has more particularly, influenced the realm of literature and art. It is regarded as an important modern system of thought. It is not in agreement with traditional systems of thought.

Idealism does not accept death as a reality. But in existentialism, it is regarded as the reality and is dealt with in right perspective.

The difference of opinion led to evolution of two different schools - theist or religious minded and atheist or non religious minded. The former school include, prominently, philosophers like Kierkegard, Juspers and Gabriel Marshal: The later school was prominently represented by Hedefer, Kufka, Sar Sartre and Kamu.

Kierkegard is regarded as the propounder of religion-centric existentialism. He believed that existing before the Almighty is existentialism. To assert oneself as an existing body is acknowledging that one is sinful. An individual is conscious of his existence. And thought that consciousness he tries to have an interface with the Almighty. Kierkegard do not believe in man's free will. Though he believed that an individual had genius, virtue and wisdom, despite he has limited scope of freedom. He has to depend on God's support. The post
Kierkegard thinkers believe that human life is full of pain and suffering. Man suffers from the fear of death. The Kierkegard thought is supported by Marshall. He believes that the Almighty is our best refuge.

On the other hand Sartre is regarded as the propounder of aesthetic existentialism. Freedom is cardinal point of his thought. He believed that after birth man is free to act at his own. He is the architect of his destiny. Thus there is no need for an Almighty. With regard to the freedom, Sartre believes that after all, man has to opt for one from a set of options available to him. He is not at liberty to escape. He says, “Freedom is freedom to choose, but not freedom not to choose. Not to choose, in fact, is to choose not to choose. I can choose this or that but I cannot dispense with choosing.” A distinguished critic on matters of psychology, Dr. Mafat Patel has referred to the thought on existentialism as propounded by Prof. Pincheart in his book in following heads:

1) Human reality and truth 2) Meaninglessness 3) Void 4) Perterbation 5) Existence of non self 6) Circumstances 7) Subjectivity to time 8) Death and 9) God. These are the features of artistic existentialism. If closely analysed, it appears that all the features mentioned above have their root in man’s concern for discovering the mystery of death.

Psychology deals with human mind. Man’s reflection on death is, perhaps, the most potent force effecting human mind. The outcome of the studies made by Freud amply support this supposition. Freud believed that man has two innate traits Eros and Thanatos. Man wishes to regain his past experiences. He does so with two intentions in mind. One, for eros-passion. Second, for Thanatos - death. The nature of death is bringing back a life to its initial stage - void. But the fact remains that death occurs due to the external reasons,
never due to internal reasons. That is why Freud has said "The aim of all lives is death".42

At another place Freud has said “Thanatos is the first instinct that came into being”.43

If, exteriorly, Eros and Thanatos appear contrary to each other. But intrinsically they are too two aspects of a same coin. Indian thought has perceived life and death as complementary to each other. The scriptures like the Geeta have seen death as a form of life itself. Hindi poets like Surdas, Kabirdas and Tulasidas have said that man was a manifestation of the Almighty. The death of the body has been regarded as the union of Atma with Paramatma. Such thoughts removes the gap between birth and death.44 Freud has, too, expressed his opinion on life and death. If man wishes to go back to his initial stage in that situation, too, it is not possible to make a choice out of the two Eros and Thanatos.45 Thus life and death appear complementing each other.

Existentialistic psychology is primarily pessimistic in nature. It is a factual analysis of modern crises. Existentialism is such a philosophy of life and existence, that preaches our limitations and arouses sense of disappointment. Highlighting this feature, Dr. Tribhuvan Singh writes, "The salient feature of coexistentialism is taking life meaningless, discarding reason on considering it insufficient, having no faith in popular image of God, imaging human being as a secular lot, realising the value of every precious moment and trying to put value to it and supporting the individual liberty."46 An analysis of opinion of Sartre give us an idea of his concept of death. According to Prabha Khetan, Sartre believed that death was unreal and absurd occurrence that takes away all meaning of life. Elementarily, for him it is a journey through non existence. Life is untouched with transcendent fact, death that is why Sartre says
"Expecting death to come shall be self destructing, because that would negate all expectations."  

1.12 European existentialism and Hindi literature

The existentialists born in Europe and dead against the traditional view. It has been stated how the concept of existentialism evolved in protest against idealism and fatalism. Existentialism neither accepts the traditional values as eternal nor consider it universal. Thus men must not be forced to accept the traditional values. The existentialists like Sartre say that man by birth is free to act. Thus “a man can be held accountable only for the values that he upholds and action he undertakes accordingly and not for any other thing.”

Existentialism that evolved under the shadow of the first world war stands against social incoherence, hypocrisy, exploitation etc. and does not hesitate to faces the struggle of the individual by discarding bond of traditions. That is why Veenu Bhalla identifies the thought as a reactionary one and writes, “According to this thought existence stands for realisation of one’s individuality that may understand commitment to freedom as an essential thing and believe the freedom to choose as the benchmark of all values. This thought supports the value of individual’s understanding, his freedom, responsibility, self-reliance, sanctity of selection and virtues. IN a subbed way, it can be stated that this thought is a revolution of specials against the commons. Existentialism that evolved in the 20th century was badly criticized and was stated to the futile attempts of the intellectuals to change the society. But we cannot deny the fact that existentialism is a real type system of thought that is helpful in depicting human feelings.

Ostensibly, European existentialism is a genuine thought system and there is a tendency to depict the human feeling. But literature of existentialists
like Sartre, Kafka, Kamu cannot be helpful for society. Their literature is replete with references of pessimism, suffocation, fear and impulses like that. Sartre ‘The Wall’, Kamu’s ‘The Myth of Sisiphas’, Kafka’s ‘The Castle’, ‘The Trial’ are some of the dramas/novels that present fear from death, pessimism and suffocation. We do not come across even a character that could have enthralled us with his/her enthusiasm. Underlining this very feature of the European existentialism Dr Bhagirath Mishra writes, “They have tried to portray the absolutely free man. But the existentialist literature that is available to us do not have any reference of longing for life. Their characters do not possess tenacity of life, enthusiasm to lead life, courage and diligence since they consider their duty as a burden. Thus the existentialistic literature has nothing inspiring and motivating with it.”

In spite of what has been stated against existentialism, he will have to concede that existentialism is one of the new philosophies of the modern world. It is a fact that this philosophy could not curve a niche for it in the history of philosophy but it has immense effect on contemporary literature. Existentialisms represents the thought of the modern age man in spite of its tone of pessimism in European existentialistic in European existentialist thought.

The struggle for freedom and the situation that prevailed after that caused a great deal of upheaval in Indian society. The young writers only were deeply influenced lot. But as the European and Indian have fundamental difference in their philosophy and ideal so do they received the influence of difficult situations differently. Scientific development, industrial advancement, capitalism, world war etc. had negative impact on the European people. There was a tendency of objective thinking. Great thinkers like Sartre, Kafka, Kamu had suffered from the holocaust of world war. They realised the hollowness of the
establishments. This has been depicted in their literature. India was different from Europe. Indian mind was perturbed with the shocks she received from a long drawn out struggle for independence, oppressive rule of the British and the Jalianwala Bag massacre followed by post independence turbulence on religious grounds and Gandhis assassination. This has led some words like fear, death, strangeness, alien feeling to creep into the baxicon of post independence Hindi literature. These words are from the existentialist dictionary. They are new to Indian context. A section of critics believe that such words are the result of India’s interface with western literature. Kamaleswar thinks in similar line - “In Indian philosophy we do not find such type of directionlessness, incoherence, separation, fear and awe that was presented before us by the existentialists.”

We are not against this opinion. But, at the same time, post independence Indian literature has been using this lexicon indiscriminately. In such a situation we can simply say that the existentialist thought that emerged in Europe has definite influence on Indian literature. But there is a distinguishing difference between the two. Existentialism and Mrityu-Chintan are two aspects of the same coin. Fear, freedom, disappointment, strangeness etc. are the result of Mrityu Chintan. The materialistic European thought describes death as a matter of fear and awe. It is not easily accepted there. Resultantly, the European thought on existentialist literature describe pessimism, helplessness, fear et. al. On the contrary, Indian literature proposes to accept death as a very normal occurrence in life. In adverse situations an Indian may develop sense of disappointment, but at the end he emerges with belief and faith. A common Indian cannot stay aloof from his tradition. Some thinkers in the west give emphasis on individual freedom. But the Indian thought do not recognise freedom as an exterior quality rather in Indian
context freedom is an internal value. Renowned thinker and critic Jainendra Kumar holds similar opinion. Freedom for me is a value. He became unreal if is considered as an independent ideal. Freedom is a right of human being - does not appeal me.” ‘Andha Yug’ (Bharati), ‘Tyagpatra (Jainendra), ‘Apne Apne Ajnabi’ (Ajneya) are some works where we find description of loneliness, fear etc. but do not get any idea of faithlessness therein. Thus we can assume that the European thought of existentialism, though, has influenced Indian literature but it has no sign of pessimism and faithlessness as it is there in European literature. Indian spiritual thought has essentially been a theist thought. Modern writers have not been able to free themselves completely from this impact of spirituality. Ajneya has a distinctive attraction towards Indian spiritualism.

1.13 Mrityu Bodh - Abstract and its features

Death is an eternal reality. Man has been curious towards it from the time immemorial. When people could not get success in warding death off, they tried to reconcile with that. Ancient Indian, Egyptian, Greek and other civilizations accepted death as a reality and preached their people to accept as it came. But an attempt to keep death at bay was also made. Ways and means were adopted to prolong life and delay death. All our endeavours are aimed to embellion life and deny death. In order to live in the memory of their people and pages of history, people tried to attain excellence in different walks of life like music, public service, spiritual pursuit. After the first world war Europe engaged itself in Mrityu Chintan. People felt concern for their life. Concern for life is Mrityu Bodh. Other parts of the world too, were found influenced by the thought of existentialism that was developed in Europe.
1.14 Mrityu Bodh - features

1. Mrityu Bodh is an individual realisation. Man’s thought and functions are influenced by this realisation.

2. Mrityu Bodh makes a basic change in individual. An evil being turns into a noble being.

3. Freud has referred to three traits of individuals - igo, fear and sex. Amongst the three fear or Mrityu Bodh is more dominant than igo or sex and lasts longer than the two.

4. Man’s imagination or concept of hell or heaven is largely possible because of Mrityu Bodh itself.

5. The Mrityu Bodh teaches that the result of a wrong action is always unwelcome one. Hence man refrains from adopting a wrong path.

6. It is the Mrityu Bodh that inspire an individual to attain intellectual or material height. These heights are attained to make them worth remembering even after their death.

7. Mrityu Bodh is, in fact, in other words Jivan Bodh itself. According to Indian philosophy life and death are complementary. One is meaningless without the other.

1.14 Important characteristic of Mrityu Bodh

Although all the actions of a human being are driven by Mrityu Bodh. Man is endlessly working only to word of his/her death. Whatever a man experiences when faced against death is Mrityu Bodh. Following are the important characteristic of Mrityu Bodh.

1. **Fright** (संत्रास). A man fearing from death experiences fright. There are three forms of fright. They are 1) Boredom 2) Melancholy and 3) Pessimism.
2. **Thinking on death** adverse situations compels an individual to think about his death. In Indian philosophy death is only a refuge. In the west death makes a life encouraging.

3. **Moment** (स्वर्ग). Moment has special reference in Indian as well as western philosophy. An emotional man wishes to live life in a meaningful manner.

4. **Strangeness** (परायायन). It is a separative attitude. In such a condition an individual considers himself detached from his folk.

5. **Melancholy** (अकेलापन) : When is faced with death man thinks so.

6. **Incongruousness** (विसंगति). Man finds his life and environment incongruous to him.

7. **Strangeness** (अजनबीपन). Man at the same time while living in society finds him strange.

8. **Individual freedom** (व्यक्ति स्वतंत्र्य). Man thinks himself free. He maintains his freedom even in front of his death. This feeling even make ones life a incoherent set of actions. Though each action of human being is influenced by the thought of death. But in literary genre the above characteristics denote Mrityu Bodha inherent in that particular genre.
Index of Reference Books

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2. Agnipuran
3. Satyabrata Siddhantalankara, Vaidik Vichardhara ka Vaijnanik Adhar, P. 375
   (1) Dying, end of life, (2) being dead, (3) Person killed, (4) Cause of death, (5) Destruction
5. Veenu Bhalla, Hindi Upanyas aur Astwitwavad, P. 15
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7. Vaidik Vichardhara ka Vaijnanik Adhar, P. 375
8. Pt. Ramchandra Verma, Sankshipt Hindi Sabda-Saar
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15. Ratibhanu Singh ‘Nahar’, Bhakti Andolan ka Adhyayan, P. 17
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17. Dr. Nagendra (Ed.) Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas, P. 72
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22. Ibid. P. 27
23. Ibid. P. 27
24. Ramswarup Chaturvedi, Samkalin Hindi Sahitya Vivid Paridrishya P. 74
27. M.V. Kamath, ‘Philosophy of life and Death’ P. 75
28. Satyabrata Siddhantlankar, ‘Vaidik Vichardhara ka Vaijnanik Adhar’
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Philosophy of life and death, P. 60
32. Aryan Path : June, 1938
33. The meaning of death, fung, PP. 3 -15
34. Philosophy of life and Death, P. 67
35. Ibid. P. 68
36. Ibid. P. 66
38. Philosophy of life and Death, P. 68
39. Ibid. P. 69
40. Mafat Patel, ‘Hindike Monovaijnanik Upanyas, P. 287
41. Ibid. PP. 256-257.
“Freud now believed that there were two sets of drives: The libidinal drives, called Eros (after the Greek God of love), and the death instinct, which readers soon called Thanatos (after the Greek god of death). The death instinct is the tendency for life to return to an inanimate state. The instinct for self-preservation, formerly the reality principle, is a part of the death instinct, for it resists death as the result of external causes. It opposes change, so that the organism will die from internal causes instead. Freud wrote ‘The aim of all life is death’ even more daring was Freud’s declaration that Thanatos included an aggressive drive....”  

Freud wrote, “The attributes of life were at sometime evoked in animate matter by the action of a force of whose nature we can form no conception. It may perhaps have been a process similar in type to that which later caused the development of consciousness in a particular stratum of living matter. The tension which then arose in what had hitherto been an inanimate substance endeavoured to cancel itself out. In this way the first instinct came into being. The instinct to return to the inanimate state.” (Beyond The pleasure principle, included in The Essentials of Psycho-Analysis, Sigmund Freud, edited by Anna Freud, Penguin Books. London 1991, (reprint) p. 246)

Here Freud states that the death instinct or Thanatos is the first instinct that came into being.

In his book Civilization and its Discotents Freud wrote, ”Starting from speculations on the beginnings of life and from biological paralells, I drew the
conclusion that, besides the instinct to preserve living substance and to join it into ever larger units, there must exist another, contrary instinct seeking to dissolve those units and to bring them back to their primaeval, inorganic state. That is to say, as well as Eros, there was an instinct of death. The phenomena of life could be explained from the concurrent or mutually opposing action of these two instincts.” (The Freud Reader, edited by Peter Gay, p. 754)