CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

If, however, it is true that existence is prior to essence, man is responsible for what he is. Thus, the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders. And when we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all men. (Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism* 29)

Existentialism, the dominating philosophy of the West in the mid-twentieth century, focuses on the problems of man in the post-war era. Denouncing the ultimate validity of both the material and the transcendental worlds, existentialist philosophers have made an attempt to remove all illusions of man about the universe by depicting the predicament of man's being-in-the-world which places an individual in a situation with the terrible freedom of choice. Though existentialism is a philosophy of European origin, it has become an international phenomenon, shaping the ideas of creative writers all over the world. The basic problems analysed by the existentialists have existed in all ages.

In *The Bible* Adam experiences an existential dilemma before tasting the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. In *Paradise Lost* Milton
describes the existential situation in which Adam has to make a choice and accept responsibility. Adam has to live with Eve because she is flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone or he has to transgress God's command. He decides to be with her, "bliss or woe" (PL 9.916). In The Mahabharatha, Arjuna finds himself in an existential situation when he stays his chariot between the two armies. Krishna, the existential philosopher, provides the answer to Arjuna, emphasizing the duty of the soldier, who should renounce not the action but its fruits. In Hamlet, there is the Prince of Denmark, experiencing the dilemma of choice: "To be, or not to be—that is the question..." (3.1. 1047). This archetypal search for meaning in human existence is found in Waiting for Godot when the blind Pozzo says: "... one day like any other day, one day he went dumb, one day I went blind, one day we'll go deaf, one day we were born, one day we shall die, the same day the same second" (Beckett 89).

The aim of the thesis is to study the novels of both Saul Bellow and Indira Parthasarathy from a thematic point of view so as to prove that these two writers, in spite of their cultural and linguistic differences, show an affinity in describing the existential alienation of modern man from a humanistic perspective, reinforcing the point of view of Wellek and Warren that "... literature is one, as art and humanity are one" (50). The existentialist ethics presented by Bellow and Parthasarathy in their novels is humanistic and is closely related to the view of man and the world that Jean-Paul Sartre sets forth in Being and Nothingness.
The French and German equivalents of the term, "Existentialism," are *L'Existentialisme* and *Existentializmus* respectively. "Existentialism in the Western intellectual world," says Paul Tillich, "starts with Pascal in the 17th century, has an underground history in the 18th century, a revolutionary history in the 19th century and an astonishing victory in the 20th century. Existentialism has become the style of our period in all realms of life" ("Existential Analysis and Religious Symbols" 5). Modern Existentialism gains momentum in the 19th century with the theories of Soren Kierkegaard and Frederich Nietzsche. Kierkegaard favours a theistic position and the same idea is reflected by Gabriel Marcel and Karl Jaspers. While Nietzsche pronounces the death of God and assumes a non-theistic outlook, Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre hold a humanistic perspective. Martin Heidegger is neither a theist nor an atheist. Simone de Beauvoir, Louis Lavelle, Leo Sheshtov, Nikolai Berdyaev and Karl Berth are some of the lesser known existentialists. The religious thinkers who explicitly acknowledge the impact of existentialism are Paul Tillich and Rudolf Bultmann (Protestant), Gabriel Marcel (Roman Catholic), Nikolai Berdyaev (Eastern Orthodox), and Martin Buber (Jewish).

Kierkegaard's ideas reflect his obsession with the concept of the Original Sin and man's redemption. According to him, man's redemption is proportionate to his unfailing faith or belief in God. Only this belief helps man to understand his own immense power as an individual. Stressing the importance of choice and freedom, Kierkegaard states that a
successful individual is one who chooses confidently whatsoever the consequences might be. To Kierkegaard, the horizontal relationship between man and man is always problematic. So he prefers solitariness to social community.

Kierkegaard divides human activity into three spheres: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious. In the aesthetic sphere, man remains a shapeless individual, refusing to commit himself. Kierkegaard states that at the aesthetic stage, all men are bores, confronted with meaninglessness and anxiety:

Adam was bored alone; then Adam and Eve were bored together; then Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel were bored en famille; then the population of the world increased and the peoples were bored en masse. (Either/ Or 282)

Refusing to accept this condition, man tries to find novel methods of recreation like King Nero.

The ethical sphere indicates commitment and obligation. Here lies the importance of choice which should lead man to moral behaviour and integrity. The religious sphere focuses on faith in God. The complete realization of self in relation to God can be attained only through faith. Like Job, one can find self-fulfilment in God through suffering. In Kierkegaard’s view, it is not easy to pass from one sphere to another because it demands an act of commitment and great care in making the choice.
Gabriel Marcel, the French existentialist and Catholic thinker, has immense faith in God and hopes that a spiritual inclination and fulfilling human relationships will help man overcome the meaninglessness in his life. According to him, man is always in a condition of passing from one concrete situation to another. Man is not at "home," but on the "road."

_Homo Viator_, a collection of essays written by Marcel during the Second World War, means "Man, the Wayfarer." Marcel states:

Perhaps a stable order can only be established if a man is acutely aware of his condition as a traveller, that is to say, if he perpetually reminds himself that he is required to cut himself a dangerous path across the unsteady blocks of a universe which has collapsed and seems to be crumbling in every direction. This path leads to a world more firmly established in Being, a world whose changing and uncertain gleams are all that we can discern here below. (153)

According to Marcel, to be is to be in relation to others. The alienated person has to shed his ego-centrism to identify the existence of the other selves. Marcel lays great emphasis on hope: "Hope is essentially the availability of a soul which has entered intimately enough into the experience of communion to accomplish in the teeth of will whereas knowledge is the transcendent act—the act of establishing the vital regeneration of which this experience affords both the pledge and the first fruit" (_Homo Viator_ 31). He advocates the philosophy of participation and sharing rather than encounter with fellow human beings.
Karl Jaspers views that the materialistic perspective in the modern world has terribly affected the individual's moral sensibility. The advancement of science and technology has resulted in moral instability. Only through reason, man can get out of the meaninglessness pervading the universe. According to Jaspers, reason and existence "are not two opposed powers which struggle with one another for victory. Each exists only through the other. They mutually develop one another and find through one another clarity and reality" (225). Jaspers lays emphasis on man's free decision and authenticity: "Man can seek the path of his truth in unfanatical absoluteness, in a decisiveness which remains open" (232). Man is a product of his choice and creates himself stage by stage as he chooses. Jaspers' philosophy is based on the concept of man's free decision.

Heidegger, a metaphysician, avers that man is thrown into the world. He considers the experience of death a very important factor because it individualizes man. His main argument is that the "Being" of the human being lies in his movement through the world. His Being and Time has become one of the major works of existentialist literature.

Nietzsche is confident that man can live without God or religious beliefs. He dreamt of man becoming as powerful as God. He states that man is placed against Nature and man's intellectual calibre is the prime reason for all our confrontations with Nature. To him, man's will should be influenced by his "instinct" and not by "intellect." Nietzsche is very much convinced that man is capable of creating his own values.
Albert Camus, the French existentialist, is determined that the universe is meaningless and is waiting to crush man. Man's life in this world is absurd. Man feels alienated and withdrawn. There is no plan for man's life. Camus believes that neither religion nor any philosophy can offer a helping hand to man. Man has to feel the horror of the meaninglessness. This feeling helps men realize their responsibility in shaping their own characters. It facilitates men to engage themselves in meaningful activities and lead a committed life.

Camus' retelling of the myth of Sisyphus manifests existentialist affirmation. Sisyphus was condemned to roll a heavy stone to the top of a mountain, only to see it fall down again. Camus comments on the fate of Sisyphus and demonstrates his existential affirmation:

It is during that return, that pause, that Sisyphus interests me. A face that toils so close to stones is already stone itself! I see that man going back down with a heavy yet measured step toward the torment of which he will never know the end. That hour like a breathing space which returns as surely as his suffering, that is the hour of consciousness. At each of those moments when he leaves the heights and gradually sinks toward the lairs of the gods, he is superior to his fate. He is stronger than his rock. I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well.... The struggle
itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. (The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays 99)

Camus is against the laws of nature and society and considers them an infringement on his freedom. Camus, in his later years, has moved from radical existentialism to a tragic humanism.

Sartre's existentialism is humanistic. His idea of man has a wider range and it encompasses the society as well. Like the other existentialists, he discusses the absurdity of existence from birth to death. Freedom, for Sartre, is making our choice from the limited choices available. When a person makes a choice, he is responsible not only for himself but also for the whole humanity.

According to Sartre, existence precedes essence. Every individual is born free without any given human nature. His acts constitute his whole existence. Placed in a world of possibilities, man has to make a choice and be responsible for it. His choice decides whatever meaning he finds in his life. In Being and Nothingness, Sartre comments on Adam's choice of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge:

... Adam is not defined by an essence since for human reality essence comes after existence. Adam is defined by the choice of his ends; that is, by the upsurge of an ecstatic temporalization which has nothing in common with the logical order. Thus Adam's contingency expresses the finite choice which he has made of himself... For us, indeed, the problem
of freedom is placed on the level of Adam’s choice of himself...
that is, on the determination of essence by existence. (573)

Sartre views that the past does not determine the course of action. Every individual stands perennially and inescapably in a position of choosing something. Man cannot avoid responsibility because even passivity or neutrality involves decision. So freedom is man’s triumph as well as tragedy.

Sartre distinguishes the “being-in-itself” and the “being-for-itself.” “Being-in-itself” is a material object. It is identified with itself. According to him, “being-for-itself” refers to human beings as our beings are to be realized. Sartre does not consider man the end because man is always to be determined. He gives importance to the human universe, the universe of human subjectivity. This idea lies at the core of Sartre’s existential humanism. In *Existentialism and Humanism*, Sartre states: “This is humanism, because we remind man that there is no legislator but himself; that he himself, thus abandoned, must decide for himself” (55-56). Sartre believes that man’s fate is not determined by a prior super-imposed essence. Man has to create his own values and has the freedom to shape his destiny. Man makes his choice consciously and is responsible for his choice. In 1964, in an act of existentialist independence, Sartre refused to accept the Nobel Prize for literature.

Though the existentialists differ in their views, they share certain points which form the basic tenets of existentialism. They state that man is the creator of all values and that man is free to make his choices and
thereby accept the responsibility. Man cannot remain without making a choice. In the present world, man is alienated from his authentic form of existence and is in constant search for rediscovering his authenticity. Thrown into nothingness and caught in a dilemma of despair and self-decision, man finds that authenticity is the price promised to him if he overcomes alienation and existential estrangement. According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, there are four important points shared by the existentialists:

Existence is always particular and individual; Existence is primarily the problem of existence... it is therefore, also the investigation of the meaning of Being; this investigation is continually faced with diverse possibilities, from among which the existence, that is, man must make a selection, to which he must then commit himself; because these possibilities are constituted by man's relationships with things and with other men, existence is always a being-in-the-world, that is, in a concrete and historically determinate situation that limits or conditions choice. (7.72)

Thus, man is the creator of all values and is free to accept or reject them. The world is not pre-ordained and so man has to define himself repeatedly in the course of his life.

Existentialist literature emphasizes certain recurring themes — the individual's sense of alienation from the other members of society; the meaninglessness experienced by man in an absurd world; his feelings of
anxiety and nausea; his difficulty in facing the responsibility arising out of his choice; his anguish resulting from his guilt; his struggle to differentiate between authentic and non-authentic selves.

As the thesis examines the major themes of the novels of both Bellow and Parthasarathy, following the American School of Comparative Literature, a note on thematology is necessary here.

Comparative Literature, transcending the boundaries of languages and countries, started gaining ground in the twentieth century. Henry Remak, one of the well-known comparatists, gives a definition of comparative literature focusing on the relationship between literature and other fields of knowledge:

Comparative Literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts (e.g., painting, sculpture, architecture, music), philosophy, history, the social sciences (e.g., politics, economics, sociology), the sciences, religion, etc., on the other. In brief, it is the comparison of one literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression. (1)

The main aspect of Comparative Literature is its cosmopolitan outlook. A study of Comparative Literature helps us in analyzing why certain literary genres developed in certain periods and not in other ages.
It would be apt to point out here the minute differences between the inter-related terms of Comparative Literature such as "National Literature," "Comparative Literature," "World Literature," and "General Literature." While National Literature deals with the issues limited to a country, Comparative Literature concentrates on the relationships between two authors of different countries. Sisir Kumar Das rightly states that a comparatist "is concerned mainly with the relationships, the resemblances and differences between national literatures; with their convergences and divergences" (96). Hence a comparative study differs from the study of single literatures in attitude and matter but not in method.

The term, "World Literature," had its origin from Goethe's use of the German equivalent, **Weltliteratur**. It refers to the great books or classics enjoyed by all people. H.H. Remak distinguishes the fundamental difference between Comparative Literature and World Literature. According to him, Comparative Literature is governed by the elements of space, quality, time and intensity, that is, it is limited by qualitative and quantitative features. On the contrary, World Literature is bound only by the element of time. World Literature is envisaged as a single synthetic literature which encompasses all individual literatures. General Literature includes the literary trends and theories of a very common interest which are outside the realms of one National Literature. While General Literature deals with multiple literary relations, Comparative Literature deals with binary literary relations.
Cultural boundaries are preferable to the linguistic criteria in demarcating the limits of national literatures. Comparative Literature does not demand that every word, every sentence and every page should be compared. In his seminal work, *Shakespeare and Ilango as Tragedians*, K. Chellappan aptly says: “In a sense Dante can be the most illuminating critic of Shakespeare and one impulse from the poetic woods of Wordsworth can give us more valuable insight into Manickavasakar than all the critical sages can” (1). There need not be a one to one correspondence and it is well sufficient if the intent, emphasis and execution of the writers are compared. Francois Jost indicates some areas of critical investigation in Comparative Literature as “… influence and analogies; movements and trends; genres and forms; and motifs, types, and themes” (33).

At the international level, Comparative Literature as a discipline was first established in France in the second half of the nineteenth century. The French were concentrating on the narrow causative studies. French scholars like Carre have treated Comparative Literature as a branch of literary history and a study of international spiritual relations, for example, between Goethe and Carlyle or Byron and Pushkin. The focus was on the influence, the emitter of this influence and the process of transformation from the emitter to the receiver. The French method stresses the need for factual links and actual connections. K. Chellappan remarks: “The emphasis is on exchange of cultural commodities across national boundaries” (“Changing Paradigms in Comparative Literature: An
Indian Perspective 1. The French influence studies include the key technical terms as “reception,” “influence,” “imitation,” and “literary fortune.” Their approach is centripetal in nature.

With the passage of time, there has been a shift in the emphasis of the term, “Comparative Literature.” The French focused on the word “Literature” while the Americans stressed the word “Comparative.” The American school of Comparative Literature is generous and uninhibited in its approach to the subject. Their approach is centrifugal and the analogy or parallel study of two writers is favoured by them. V. Sachithanandan defines analogy studies as follows:

An analogy is a parallel study of two works without necessarily implying a direct relationship. An analogy or affinity study may involve two writers of two different literatures widely separated by time and place which, when systematically done, may become a study of two cultures of which the writers compared turn out to be meaningful products.” ("Influence and Analogy Studies in Comparative Literature" 32)

The American school brings in literary criticism and evaluation into Comparative Literature through the comparison of related works with affinities in theme, genre, problem, style and culture.

The aim of the thesis is to study the works of Saul Bellow and Indira Parthasarathy from a thematic point of view. Alienation leading to an
affirmation of human values and life is the major theme for both the writers. The study acquires significance as the focus is on thematics.

"Thematology," the word coined by Harry Levin, is one of the most important components of Comparative Literature. The basis of thematology is "subject" which is as old as literature itself. This has always existed as the "subject-matter" of all literature. Themes and motifs are the basic categories in thematology. Motif is recurrent in nature and it can be a situation or a technique. Theme is also recurrent like motif but is related to subject-matter of a work. Modern literary critics have modified the traditional concept of theme. They claim that theme is also related to the internal structure of a work of art. In Oppilakkiyam, V. Sachithanandan analyses the relationship between subject-matter and theme. He asserts: "A theme can become subject-matter. But a subject-matter can never become a theme. Theme is a part of the subject-matter of a literary work. It is projected through a sequence of incidents or images" (139). Theme serves like an undercurrent and connects all the aspects of a literary work and is related to subject-matter qualitatively and not quantitatively.

Raymond Trousson, after his study of the ancient Greek literature and modern European literature, has concluded that the understanding of the Prometheus theme is indispensable to the study of thematology in European literature. He argues that though a theme cannot be equated with a protagonist, it is certainly related to his activities. He explains that the theme of Faust has influenced many writers from Christopher
Marlowe to Thomas Mann. Trousson's research establishes that the origin of a literary protagonist lies in the myths of yore. Trousson also expresses his views on "type," an intermediate stage between "theme" and "motif." It is a character trait and can be treated as a thematic mode. Weisstein states: "Types, then, are more universal than themes and therefore better suited for comparatively oriented analogy studies" (142).

Elizabeth Frenzel, a German comparatist, has done extensive research on the themes in World Literature. In her book, Themes in World Literature, she maintains that themes are related to certain old literatures and to certain protagonists only. Her analysis of themes and motives and their relationship to symbology is a notable contribution to the research in the field of thematology.

Harry Levin, one of the well-known American comparatists, considers thematology as a research tool which helps us identify universal themes in literature. The study of the changes and developments in Western literature in different cultures and different epochs is also facilitated by the study of thematology.

After completing his research on thematology listed in the English and Italian bibliographies, Harry Levin discusses themes on the basis of literary characters. He points out that literary characters are highly individualistic and not types. They also differ from allegorical characters. In course of time, such individual characters become types because of their excellent characterization. Levin states that themes are primary things and that they are the raw materials for a writer. But motives are
basic incidents which help the writer give proper form and order to his literary work (100). The thematological study of characters is of great interest to Levin.

Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, in their book, Theory of Literature, have divided the two components of literature as intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic component includes the structure and stylistics of the work of art, and the extrinsic, the social and psychological pattern within it. Though they have defined the components, this dichotomy between structure and content has been rejected by them.

Ulrich Weisstein, an American comparatist, has done an extensive research on thematology. He distinguishes between theme and motif. His method of research is scientific and he attempts to clear the confusion that theme refers to subject also. Weisstein ignores the theory of the New Critics that content and form are organic parts of a whole and are inseparable. According to Weisstein, style is related to a writer's manner of expression and hence he excludes it from the discussion of thematology. He views theme and motif as content categories and thereby disagrees with Elizabeth Frenzel and Harry Levin for including theme and motif in symbology. Weisstein excludes symbology from his discussion on thematology because "it more properly fits into the realm of meaning," (129) and focuses on the genuine content categories present in, or suggested by, the literary work.

Weisstein also distinguishes between subject-matter and raw material. He maintains that the raw material taken from nature or from
life becomes the subject-matter of a work of art in the poetic process of creation. While the raw-material is external in nature, the subject-matter forms an integral part of a work of art.

Closely following Elizabeth Frenzel and Raymond Trousson, Weisstein states that "motifs relate to situations and themes to characters" (139). And it is the combination of several motifs that decides the nature of the theme. This idea is supported by V. Sachithanandan as he reviews the Don Juan theme. In *Oppilakkiyam*, he points out that the seduction of women, a recurring motif, does not solely constitute the Don Juan theme. There are other motifs with religious overtones like his dangerous communication with the dead, his unwillingness to repent, and the resultant damnation (*Oppilakkiyam* 155). According to Weisstein, the number of themes available is unlimited whereas the number of motifs is limited. He explains that the universality of motifs is limited by various geographical factors.

Prawer classifies five different kinds of thematic investigation. They include the recurring motifs in literature, the recurrent situations, the natural phenomena and man's reactions to them in different languages and different ages. According to him, the study of themes and motifs is of prime importance to a comparatist because it helps him to find out what kind of a writer chooses what kind of a theme or motif and how these materials are discussed in different periods (150). Prawer, like Levin, recommends that thematic studies can focus on the talents of individual writers and on the common spirit of different societies and times.
Thus, Comparative Literature, by bringing two authors together, attempts to provide a better understanding of both the authors. As K.Chellappan says, Comparative Literature is "emblematic of the urge for convergence in the modern world both at the intellectual and the cultural levels" ("Thematology in Comparative Indian Literature" 109). When the whole world is longing for a synthesis of different cultures, Comparative Literature studies will help man transcend the boundaries of knowledge.

Taking into consideration all these important concepts, the Researcher has made an attempt to study the novels of both Bellow and Parthasarathy, focusing on the theme of humanistic existentialism. Here an introduction to the social surroundings of the authors will not be out of place.

The impact of the Second World War on novelists resulted in the emergence of many outstanding talents. The award of the Nobel Prize to William Faulkner in 1950, Ernest Hemingway in 1954, John Steinbeck in 1962, Saul Bellow in 1976 and I.B.Singer in 1978 marked the rise of a new era that challenged the traditional ways of fiction-writing and paved the way for many innovative techniques. The post-war American novelists describe the existential estrangement of the individual in particular and the complexities of American life in general. The primary concern of the post-war novelists was to crystallize human experience with all its complexities. The post-war American fiction is multifaceted and shows the influence of international currents such as European existentialism and Latin American magical realism. The late 1940s witnessed the aftermath

A significant new group of Jewish-American novelists appeared in the 1950s. Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Isaac Bashevis Singer portrayed the life of the Jewish community in the Old and the New world. Preoccupied with European intellectual life and its modernist arts, the Jewish intellectuals were able to identify the dangers of totalitarianism and supported strongly the concept of a new humanism. In *The Modern American Novel,*
Malcolm Bradbury comments on the works of the new generation of writers:

... the books became complex explorations of man’s place as beneficiary or exile in the contemporary world, and were largely conducted as metaphysical enquiries, speculations on the predicament of disorientated modern man in a world of urban anonymity, behavioural indifference, and the totalitarian massing of social force. Humanism was the aim, but it was hard to forge in the face of disjunctive modern experience; the desire was to link the history of single individuals with the larger processes of society, but those individuals were also seen as alienated, victimized, dislocated, materially satisfied but spiritually damaged, conformist yet anomic, rational but anarchic. (131)

Bradbury points out that the Black fiction and the Jewish-American fiction were dominated by a sense of the absurd situation of the self, and at the same time the absurdist theme was tempered by a desire for civility, a desire to bring back the individual in the social circle: “In the new fiction, there was a new tension between the claims of alienation and accommodation, between the victimized, or comic self and a disordered history” (132).

Saul Bellow, the youngest of four children, was born in Lachine, Quebec, on July 10, 1915. His parents were orthodox Jews, who had emigrated from Russia. Bellow moved with his family to Chicago in 1924
and entered the University of Chicago in 1933. He later transferred to Northwestern University from which he graduated in 1937 with honours in anthropology and sociology. He taught at the Pestalozzi-Froebel Teachers College in Chicago for four years and in 1943 joined the editorial department of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, where he worked on Mortimer Adler's Great Books Project. He served briefly in the Merchant Marine during World War II.

Bellow taught English at the University of Minnesota from 1946 to 1948 and was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship. In the 1950s he taught at Princeton University and at Bard College. He received a second Guggenheim fellowship in 1955 and a Ford Foundation grant in 1959. He taught at the University of Puerto Rico in 1961 and was appointed Professor at the University of Chicago in 1962.

Bellow, the novelist, short-story writer, dramatist, essayist, lecturer, editor, and translator, was popular among the American intellectuals who liked both his selection of themes and his craftsmanship. As Geismar says: “Just as J.D. Salinger, by the middle fifties, was the literary spokesman of the college undergraduates, Saul Bellow was the favourite novelist of the American intellectuals”(10). In October 1976, Bellow was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for “the human understanding and subtle analysis of contemporary culture that are combined in his work.”

**Dangling Man**, Bellow's first novel, was published in 1944. It is a technical achievement. Bellow follows the journal form in this novel, which describes what the protagonist writes in his journal from December 15,
1942 to April 9, 1943. Joseph, a Canadian alien, dangles between the civil life and the military life and realizes finally the value of a common humanity: “Goodness is achieved not in a vacuum but in the company of other men, attended by love” (DM 92). This novel is a perfect synthesis of content and form because the journal form becomes a suitable medium to depict the consciousness of the individual, imprisoned in his own mind. In the opinion of Harper Jr.:

**Dangling Man** is a remarkable first novel. It represents a radical departure from the earlier traditions of American fiction; it is much closer to Dostoevsky and Kafka than to Dos Passos, Hemingway, Farrell, Wolfe, Steinbeck, or other novelists whose reputations loomed so large at the time it was written. Because of its emphasis on the problems with which much of our later fiction would become obsessed, it seems almost prophetic. (15)

The title of the novel, **Dangling Man**, becomes significant because it indicates the dilemma experienced by the hero in making the right choice.

**The Victim**, a third person narrative, was published in 1947. It focuses on the obligation of the human being to others. Like Joseph in **Dangling Man**, Asa Leventhal, the protagonist of **The Victim**, begins as a solitary figure, develops a conflict between his self and the world, but learns finally to accept himself and others. As Harper Jr. says: “Leventhal’s experiences are the objective correlative through which Bellow explores the central problem of moral responsibility” (16). **The Victim** is
bureaucrats, politicians, journalists and liberal intellectuals who have failed to observe humanistic principles.

More Die of Heartbreak was published in 1987. It is set in a mid-western city reminiscent of Chicago. Benn Crader, the hero of the novel, is a botanist. His nephew, Kenneth Trachtenberg, is a literary historian. The novel depicts the difference between these two men. Crader lives metaphysically while Trachtenberg leads his life intellectually. The central theme of the novel is that more die of heartbreak than are killed by radiation. Though the novel picks up speed after a hundred pages of chatty exposition, there is nothing new by Bellow standards. Terrence Rafferty correctly says: “This is Herzog without real despair; a tiny moon of Mr. Sammler’s Planet; Humboldt’s Gift in a Cracker Jack box” (89).

Bellow has also written several works of short fiction. In the pieces collected in Mosby’s Memoirs and Other Stories and Him with His Foot in His Mouth and Other Stories, Bellow emphasizes the need for compassion and affirmation of human dignity.

Ravelstein, published in 2000, describes the thoughts of Abe Ravelstein, a brilliant professor at a prominent mid-western university, and his friend Chick during their celebratory trip to Paris. Ravelstein takes pride in training the policy makers of the political circle. His telephone line is so busy that he “must be masterminding a shadow government” (Ravelstein 14). Ravelstein says to Chick: “All these students I’ve trained in the last thirty years still turn to me, and in a way the telephone makes possible an ongoing seminar in which the policy
questions they deal with in day-to-day Washington are aligned with the 
Plato they studied two or three decades ago, or Locke, or Rousseau, or 
even Nietzsche" (14). Many of his students have figured significantly “in 
running the Gulf War” (14-15). Chick suggests that Ravelstein should 
write a book explaining his principles and convictions. Ravelstein does so 
and becomes a millionaire. The novel Ravelstein focuses on friendship, 
love, morality, history and philosophy.

Like Bellow, Parthasarathy has a strong faith in human greatness. 
Both writers share a belief in man’s ability to realize the value of human 
interdependence. Both have emerged from orthodox traditions, yet they 
are not orthodox in their descriptions of human existence. Here a note on 
the origin and development of the Tamil novel and the forces which 
moulded Parthasarathy’s personality is attempted so as to fix him in the 
contemporary scene.

The British rule and the introduction of English in India had a great 
impact on the Tamil literary field. Its effect on the Indian society is of 
equal importance. The questioning spirit was kindled and Indians became 
highly receptive to new ideas and wider world-views. This broadened their 
vision and opened up new vistas in fictional writing. The novel, though an 
alien art-form, started gaining ground in the Tamil soil. The Tamil novels 
published before Independence reflect the social changes brought about 
by the Western influences on the Indian society. Though this was a 
welcome change, there was always a doubt that the new issues and the 
new style might replace the old traditions.
Some of the Tamil novels of this period advocate the abolition of evils in society like Sati, social oppression, etc. The Western impact on Tamil fiction has been emphasized in Encyclopaedia of Tamil Literature: “The modern Tamil prose is the offspring of the Tamil’s awakening to the potentialities of this genre as a result of their exposure to the west. And fictional writing in Tamil, the most alive and living of the prose genres, has been the product of the receptivity to the West, especially to the English” (Samuel and Murugan 508).

The Tamil Novel tradition was begun by Vedanayagam Pillai. He published his first novel, Praṭaḍa Mutaliār Carittiram in 1879. It describes the National tradition, the habits and the customs of the people of South India.

The various movements and different schools of the West had a great influence on Tamil writers. The prominent influences are psychoanalysis, Romanticism, Classicism, Existentialism, Marxism and Realism. There has been a remarkable growth and development of Tamil fiction after Independence. The portrayal of social evils like caste discrimination, superstitions and male domination and the ways and means of eradicating them were the dominant themes of the novels written under the influence of the Dravidian Movement. C.N. Annadurai’s novels are highly realistic and aim at social reformation.

The exploitation of the poor by the landlords and the sufferings of the oppressed are the prominent themes of the novels written under Marxist influence. T.M.C. Raghunathan’s Pañcum Paciyum, published in
1953, and T.Selvaraj's Malarum Carukum, published in 1967, are based on Marxian principles. Ponneelan's Karical and Dhanuskodi Ramaswamy's Tōlar are social satires and there is an appeal for social justice and equality.

There has been a shift in the analysis from the socio-economic problems to the hidden conflicts in the innermost recesses of the human mind. Mankind as a whole faces today the problem of rootlessness which creates a sense of alienation. As Edmund Fuller remarks: "... man suffers not only from war, persecution, famine and run, but from inner problem... a conviction of isolation, randomness, meaninglessness in his way of existence" (3). Through the ages, there has been an intrinsic relationship between psychology and literature. This relationship is seen in Tamil novels too. According to Encyclopaedia of Tamil Literature: "In the comparatively short history of Tamil novel, no other mode of Western thought has a more widespread, more decisive influence on the Tamil novelistic conception than the psycho-analysis" (Murugan 541). Though psycho-analysis is of a relatively modern origin, ancient Tamil literature from the times of Tolkappiyar has a psychological dimension added to it. The Akam poetry is replete with the portrayal and analysis of characters and incidents on a psychological plane. A. Ramakrishnan writes: "Tolkāppiyam and Čankam literature give importance to the inner feelings and emotions of characters. Among Mutal, Karu and Uri, it is Uri, which expresses human emotions, gets the prime importance... The maid is essentially a character created to solve the psychological aberrations of
the heroine in *Akattĩṉai* (234). It is apt to quote Tamilanna here: “The alternative name for Sangam literature can be ‘psychological literature’” (212). [The translation from Tamil into English is done by the Researcher].

K. Chellappan analyses *Tirukkural* and *Cilappatikāram* from an anthropomorphic perspective:

> The essence of Sangam culture is its synthesis of the Dionysian celebration of life and an Apollonian serenity in its equipoise based on human realities. The entire gamut of life was divided into *Akam* and *Puram*, the inward and the outward, the erotic and the heroic and the two spheres were complementary to each other... The center of this universe is Man and this life and the ethical code is not in conflict with Eros and it was based on man’s obligations to fellowmen and brought out in existential terms. ("Sangam Culture As Seen in *Tirukkural* and *Cilappatikāram*" 201)

The psychological motives of Tamil epic poets like Ilango and Kamban are exhibited in the portrayal of characters. According to N.Anuradha: “In *Cilappatikāram*, the good and appreciable qualities of Kovalan are summed up just before his death in order to induce pity in the minds of the readers. Āicchiyar Kuravai, a group song of the shepherdesses of Madurai, is written immediately after the catastrophe to reduce the tragic tension in the mind of the reader and is a supreme model of epic construction” (20-21). In *Cilappatikāram*, the root cause of the tragedy
stems from the inability of Kovalan and Madhavi to understand the feelings of each other.

In minor literary works like Ulā and Tutu, the technique of conversing with birds and inanimate objects, and the ravings of characters indicate the importance of an outlet for the emotions of the suppressed mind. According to Encyclopaedia of Tamil Literature:

... all these belong to what Jung calls the ‘visionary mode’ of artistic creation, a mode the seeds of which lay buried in the timeless depths of human psyche, unfathomable in nature, and whose dimensions exceed the grasp of human feeling and comprehension. They are in essence part of the great continuum of the primordial experiences of the universal man crying for conscious expression. It is, in Jung’s own terminology, ‘collective unconscious,’ an archetypal psychic disposition manifest in the eternally unchanging order of the universe. (Murugan 539)

The Bhakti cult and the devotional songs of Alwars and Nayanmars attempt to train and elevate the human mind. S.Thothathri reiterates that psychoanalysis is not a new phenomenon in Tamil literature: “In Tamil fiction, the urge to probe human psyche and to analyse its various aspects began in the period of Rajam Iyer” (66).

Many Western psycho-analytic theories including Freudianism influenced the Tamil novelists. Jayakantan, T.Janakiraman and Indira Parthasarathy have developed their distinct individual styles based on
psycho-analysis. In *Ricimūlam*, Jayakantan focuses on the psychological imbalances inflicted by oedipus complex. One can trace out the impact of Freudianism in *Çila Nerāṅkaḷil Cila Maṇiṭarkāḷ* and *Oru Naṭikai Nāṭakam Pārkkirāḷ*. In his novels, T.Janakiraman portrays the complex relationship between man and woman powerfully. His *Ammā Vantāḷ* and *Mōka Mulā* have their thematic organizations based on oedipal inhibitions.

Indira Parthasarathy's main focus is on human psyche and he attempts to analyse the cause of psychological and emotional disturbances. He portrays not only the problems present in the materialistic society but also the conflicts in the inner recesses of mind. T.Janakiraman writes: “It is always more difficult for a writer to identify the inner feelings than to recognize the outer manifestations. Indira Parthasarathy visualizes the inner vibrations of man and transforms them successfully into a work of art” (4). Parthasarathy presents different facets of crisis in modern man's life. S.Ravindranathan rightly says: “Indira Parthasarathy is a cultured and dignified writer with multifarious abilities” (73). Parthasarathy's main concern is for character and the tangle of human emotions.

“Indira Parthasarathy” is the pseudonym of “R.Parthasarathy.” He was born in a middle class orthodox family on July 10, 1930 at Mannargudi, Tanjore District, Tamil Nadu. He completed B.A. (Economics) at Kumbakonam Arts College and M.A. (Tamil Literature) in the Annamalai University. During his days in the University, Parthasarathy was a voracious reader and had tried his hand in creative writing. It was
his teacher, Ku.Pa.Raa., who taught him how to select good books for reading. The famous Gopal Rao Library at Kumbakonam provided food for his thought. He had developed a liking for Shelley, Emily Zola and Balzac. Parthasarathy recollects: "In a sudden spurt of interest I read all the works of Balzac that were available in the library" (9). His stay at the Annamalai University broadened his outlook on life. Marxian thought influenced him. Commenting on the personality of Indira Parthasarathy, T.B. Siddalingaiah says that in his student days, Parthasarathy was hurt by and annoyed with hypocrisy, pseudo-religionism, half-hearted rituals and religious practices, political debauchery, etc. In the opinion of Siddalingaiah, Parthasarathy "was an angry young man" (qtd. in Albert 28).

After completing his M.A., Parthasarathy joined National College, Trichy, as Professor of Tamil in 1952. In 1955, he shifted to Delhi as a Professor in the College run by Madras Organisation. Later in 1962, he joined as Professor of Tamil in a college affiliated to Delhi University. Delhi is the locale for most of his novels. Like Manohar Malgonkar, who borrows his major characters from the upper strata of the Indian society (for example, Kiran Garud in Distant Drum and Henry Winton in Combat of Shadows), Parthasarathy deals with the problems of the upper class people in New Delhi. Nevertheless, he portrays the sufferings of the people belonging to the lower strata of society. Though his major characters are intellectuals, powerful officials and big businessmen, he never fails to focus on the ordeal of the downtrodden masses.
Parthasarathy went to Poland in 1981 and taught Tamil to Polish students in the Warsaw University for five years. In 1988, he returned to India and became the Head of the School of Drama of the Pondicherry University. Then he was appointed the Director of Culture and Cultural Relations of the University. Later he served as the Honorary Editor of *Kaṇaiyāli*. Some of his works have been translated into Gujarati, Bengali, English, Malayalam and Hindi. Most of his novels were serialized in magazines and journals. He is the author of fourteen novels, three collections of novelettes, four collections of short stories (numbering over 100), three collections of plays and two collections of essays. His doctoral dissertation focuses on Vaisnavism in Tamil Literature.

K. Muralidharan, in his review published in *India Today* on 10 September 2003 points out the importance of the three documentary films produced by S. Kandasamy, Amshan Kumar and Ravi Subramaniam on Jayakantan, Asokamithran and Indira Parthasarathy respectively with the help of financial assistance from Sahitya Akademi. These films are the first attempts in the history of visual documentation in Tamil Nadu, providing valuable information about the author's background and creative process. Parthasarathy is one of the three creative artists selected for this venture. Ravi Subramaniam's words are worth quoting here: "Indira Parthasarathy's total personality need not be revealed in one documentary film. We can produce many such films showing his personality" (qtd. in Muralidharan 48).
Parthasarathy's first novel *Kāla Veḷḷam (The Flood of Time)*, though written during his student days, was published only in 1968. The title by itself is suggestive. It describes how the changes after Independence affected an orthodox Brahmin family in Srirangam. The course of events in the novel emphasizes the fact that only the word, "change," remains unchanged in the whole universe. Eventually people who are reluctant to accept the passage of time and the subsequent changes are victimized. *KV* also reveals the pathetic plight of women who are denied personal liberty.

*Tantira Būmi (The Land of Intrigues)* was published in October 1964. Parthasarathy presents the hypocritical nature of life in India's metropolitan cities. The fundamental existential problems such as freedom and the dilemma of making a choice are presented here. The character of Meena is an example of Parthasarathy's art of characterization. Sujatha's analysis of this character is significant because it differentiates between subjective outlook and objective point of view: "This is the only character which shines beautifully without artificial screens. It is also a kind of purity. If we look beyond the sensitive flowers which droop even when smelt and the deer which die when they lose their hair, we shall identify the purity of this character" (3-4).

In July 1970, *Vēcaṇkal (Pretensions)* a collection of four novelettes, was published. The major themes are alienation, rootlessness and existential dilemma. The internal conflict of the characters is discussed at
length. All the four novelettes show how deformity causes alienation and loneliness in man.

_Helikäptarkal Kilë Iraňkivittana (Helicopters Have Come Down)_ was published in December 1971. Amirtham, a married man in his early forties, attempts to live his youth again. But he is reluctant to do so when offered a chance. He understands that “society is an unavoidable prison and human life is meaningless. So it is wise to live in this world, imparting some meaning to life” (HKI 144).

_Cutanthira Būmi (The Land of Freedom),_ which won the Tamil Nadu Government Prize, was published in November 1973. It describes the misuse of freedom and the unscrupulous nature of the politicians. The pathetic and shameful state of affairs of the Parliament is satirized in ruthless terms. Parthasarathy communicates his personal experience of political life in New Delhi through his characters.

_Tiraikalukku Appāl (Through the Veils),_ published in 1974, depicts the upper middle-class life in Delhi. The title is symbolic and the novel throws light on the hidden complexities in the lives of highly intellectual and economically secure people. There is great irony in the name of the main character, “Booma,” which is a sharp contrast to Booma Devi, the Goddess of Earth, an epitome of patience. According to N.Anuradha: “The dark complexion of Booma creates an inferiority complex in her. Her marriage, official status and love affair end in failure due to her dark complexion. This intensifies her psychological crisis” (57). Booma is like an active volcano, always seething with anger at others.
Towards the end of the novel, she breaks down for the first time, accepts her drawbacks and attempts to step out of the illusory world. This novel has been translated into English by Lakshmi Kannan as *Through the Veils*.

Indira Parthasarathy's commitment for social transformation and his concern for the underprivileged are revealed in his novel, *Kurutippunal (The River of Blood)*, published in February 1975. This novel is Parthasarathy's *tour de force* and won for him the Sahitya Akademi Award. It was translated into English by K.N.Subramaniam under the title, *The River of Blood*. It is based on the Keezha Venmani carnage of 1967 in which forty two poor Harijans including twelve innocent children and twenty six helpless women were burnt alive in a landlord-peasant clash. Parthasarathy's own experience at Keezha-Venmani enabled him to understand the complexity in human nature. What Henry James says about the writer's duty to "catch the colour of life" (James 1169) in the description of the locale and its people is applicable to Indira Parthasarathy's personal experience at Keezha Venmani. KP shows Indira Parthasarathy's descriptive power and his skill in using the language of the people of a particular area. At the end of the novel, the peasants leave their trance of being passive victims to emerge as active participants in a new revolution. CVG in a review in *The Hindu* remarks: "Dr. Parthasarathy concludes his novel on a note of hope about a new race of men and women coming to life from the river of blood to build a new world" (19). Critics like C.Kanagasabapathy have pointed out that
Parthasarathy has given too much importance to an individual's perverted feelings instead of describing the beginning of a great revolution (63).

Parthasarathy rejects this criticism, emphasising the internalisation of characters and the essence of creative process: “My novel, KP, is about what happened in a little village in Thanjavur District, Tamilnadu.... Apart from the economic, social problem involved in this story, I looked at it basically as a human story. The Communist Party expected the novel to be a manifesto of revolution. They did not bother to note that I had fictionalized the incident, and that historical characters were internalized to become my own projections” (“On Creativity and Responsibility” 65). When Parthasarathy went to Keezha Venmani and talked to the people there, he understood that something was psychologically wrong with the landlord who had put to death women and children. Parthasarathy avers: “I have not exaggerated the aspect. Nature has wronged him and he has done that. Again, this is not the only point in the novel. This is one of the contributing factors. This is not the ‘the’ factor. Some critics say that the revolution is vulgarized. I don’t think it is vulgarized” (qtd. in Albert 248).

Tivukal (Islands), published in September 1976, reflects the life of the upper class in Delhi. The failure to overcome loneliness, which happens to be the curse of modernity, is highlighted here. The necessity to restrict personal freedom for the greater good of the society is forcefully emphasised. The title “Tivukal,” which means “Islands,” is highly suggestive of the loneliness experienced by modern man in the post-war world.
Nilameṇnum Nallāi (The Land Mother), published in May 1978, had been serialized in Tamilnēcan in Malaysia. It is a satire on politics, orthodox values and caste system. Marudur, a small village in Tanjore District, is the locale. Dr. Samuel and Thanjamma revolt against the man-made divisions of economic inequalities, cultural differences and traditional values. The illiterate Thanjamma’s explanations of life and death in the simplest possible terms validates the fact that existentialism is not a philosophy restricted to the intellectuals only but it is a critical situation faced by all men irrespective of their age, nativity, education and economical status.

Ucci Veyyil (The Midday Sun), published in June 1979, is a collection of six novelettes. In 1991, the novelette, UV, was made into a telefilm called “Marupakkam.” It won the coveted “Swarna Kamal,” awarded for the Best Feature Film at the National level. Indira Parthasarathy justifies the title of the novel, UV: “... just as high noon casts no high shadows, in the presence of death, the arbiter of all values, no problem has any significance or relevance” (1). S.Viswanathan remarks that the story is one of the important factors responsible for the success of the film:

The story is a simple family drama depicting the clash between old and new values, which at a different level tells the agony of an old man afflicted with a guilt complex which comes to the surface when history repeats itself in the family... A high drama of human emotions expressed in a
subtle way, the story may mean different things to different people. (1)

Māyamān Vēṭṭai (Hunting the Illusory Deer), published in March 1980, pictures the frustrations of Jayaraman, an Agricultural Economist, who returns to India from America with a great hope of reforming the economic system in India. Just as the title signifies an illusory search, Jayaraman’s efforts turn futile. He experiences an existential dilemma and identity crisis. He is a silent spectator and is made a scapegoat by shrewd politicians. This is a story of political blackmail and corruption. Ethnic and racial prejudices are unscrupulously exploited by those on the run for power. Parthasarathy portrays how muscle and money power, misuse of the machinery of the government and criminalisation of politics could create a loss of confidence in democratic institutions.

Ventu Taṇίnta Kāṭukāḷ (Forests Reduced to Ashes), published in May 1981, portrays the life of the upper class in Delhi. S.Venkataraman says that in this novel, “The husband’s idea of treating his wife his object of possession and pleasure is the main reason for the wife’s mental depression” (28). Deformity is an important motif in this novel.

Akṇī (Fire), published in November 1983, is a collection of two novelettes—Akṇī and Carukukal. It portrays the dismal state of affairs of the present day India and the distortion of basic human values. The use of force to crush truth and justice and the hapless condition of sincere people who question injustice are reflected here.
Écuvin Tölarkal (The Comrades of Jesus), based on Parthasarathy's experiences in Poland, was published in June 1987. This novel is in the first person narrative and has won the Rangammal Memorial Prize. According to Gnani, "ET resembles an absurd play. The pathetic condition of a man, forced to live in an imaginary, dreamy world which offers an escape from the harsh realities of the practical world, is brought out by Indira Parthasarathy through the character of Thoorsky. The disintegration of human values due to the tyrannical control of the government and political parties is described in ET. It is a rare novel which attempts to find out the meaning of history and life" (23).

Cattia Côtanai (Experiment with Truth), published in April 1989, includes two novelettes—Cattia Côtanai and CVC. Cattia Côtanai is a biting satire on politicians. Parthasarathy's central character is Brahmanayakam, a cynic with unmistakable traits of a successful politician. G.S.Balakrishnan commends Indira Parthasarathy for his style in Cattia Côtanai: "... Parthasarathy never becomes coarse or vulgar. Though pungent and powerful like some of the old satirists, the venom and the vituperation which sullied their writings are absent... The dialogue, sparkling with sarcasm, is crisp and scintillating. Indeed, another feather in Parthasarathy's cap!" (3).

Cuțṭum Viḷi Cuțartān (The Flame of the Eyes) is about the efforts of young Aarthi, who crusades against male chauvinism and male authoritarianism. She is the symbol of Indian womanhood waking up from
a dormant state and demanding the rightful share. This novel is also a clarion call, urging intellectuals not to be passive spectators to injustice.

**Ākācatāmarai (The Sky Lotus)**, published in October 1991, reiterates that success in the material world does not guarantee absolute happiness and that the degree of contentment varies with individuals. Dhruv, the hero of **AT**, has all the material prosperity desired by any young man in the post-Independence India. But he suffers from an existential alienation, proving the truth of the statement of Nietzsche that “in a time of peace, the warlike man attacks himself” (qtd. in Klein 28). The characters experience a nothingness once their goals are achieved. But with the passage of time, they feel and realize the wide gap between their vision and the mundane reality. Even then, they do not try to escape from this crisis but they resolve to face it confidently, thereby reposing their faith in humanity. The title of the novel, **AT**, symbolizes the need to adjust with reality rather than remaining in an illusory world. Dhruv is an introvert, a bright star shining miles ahead of others. He is alienated and lives in his own universe. Later he steps down to the earthly level to find meaning in life. **AT** portrays the dilemma of an intellectual whose very existence is a passionate search for “home.” The protagonist, Dhruv, begins more or less with a nihilistic attitude towards life but attains maturity through various experiences. The movement is from turmoil to acceptance, from conflict to self-discovery.

**Vēppattṟu (The Love of the Roots)**, published in 1994, describes the conflict between dream and reality. The story begins in 1946 and ends
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Vērpattra (The Love of the Roots), published in 1994, describes the conflict between dream and reality. The story begins in 1946 and ends
in 1952. The locale is Kumbakonam. The novel has many autobiographical elements, and Parthasarathy himself says in the “Introduction” to the novel: “When this novel was serialized in Kañaiyāḷi, people asked me whether it was an autobiography or a novel” (Vētpattu 4).

Vētapurattu Viāpārīkaḷ (The Tradesmen of Vedapuram), which won the Bharatiya Pārishad Award in 1997, “is satirical of the political corruption and Machiavellian leadership, which can thrive easily under the aegis of hero worship and misplaced loyalties of the masses” (Devarajan 12). Parthasarathy’s intense humanism is seen in his introduction to his play, Ramanujar, which was published in December 2001. The play won the Saraswathi Samman Award, giving him the honour of being the only Tamil writer to win this prestigious award. In the “Introduction” to Ramanujar, Parthasarathy states: “From the ancient times to the present day, the balance which measures the importance of great people in history is humanism. No other religion is so good as humanism” (10).

Humanistic existentialism finds its dimension in Parthasarathy in the form of feminism also. A careful study of the feministic trend in the novels of Parthasarathy shows that it is not a sudden outburst but a gradual process which begins in KV and attains its culmination in CVC. KV portrays the pathetic plight of the Indian women who have been exploited and victimized by the male-dominated societies in India for centuries. The revolt against this exploitation is not fully focused in this
novel. It gets its full emphasis later in **CVC** which shows how the spread of education and the valuable work done by the various organizations pleading for the liberation of women from the shackles of established rules in society have created an awareness of the rights among educated women of the post-Independence era. Aarthy in **CVC** is an embodiment of Bharati’s revolutionary woman.

Both Bellow and Parthasarathy are preoccupied with the complexities of human existence and the helplessness of man in the absurd universe. Both show the condition and predicament of man in existentialist terms, revealing the areas of darkness and tension in man’s consciousness. Nevertheless, they are optimistic chroniclers of man’s activities. They not only describe the helplessness of man in modern society but also focus on the goals to be attained by man. They present the optimistic literature of the absurd rather than the pessimistic. The second chapter shows how both Bellow and Parthasarathy portray the sense of isolation experienced by man who has become the alienated wanderer in the post-war world.