Chapter I:

Towards a Definition of Evil
The Evil: Genesis

Evil on earth is very old; it is as old as Man himself. It started with the creation of Adam and Eve. All forms of evil determine to employ every possible means to destroy Man. From the beginning, Man has been accompanied by evil which became part and parcel of his life and works. The sources of evil seem obscure. Much evil is caused, not by immoral monsters but ordinary people going about their ordinary lives. Evil as an infinite obstruction is more tractable than as a concrete confrontation, if we know how to deal with evil we can limit its effect.

Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary of Current English, 2005 defines evil as:

an adjective linked with what is bad in the world or extremely disagreeable, or bad and cruel. It as noun that indicates a force that causes bad things to happen; morally bad behavior.¹

In tracing the concept of evil, one can refer to the early religions. Every religion offers many rules, ‘thou shalt’s and ‘thou shalt not’s.’ Every religion has something to do with the eternal war between good and evil. In Zorosterianism, the war between good and evil takes the form of war between Ahuramazda, who is the light of the soul and the principle of all goodness, and Ahriman who represents the evil belief. Commenting on this war, Paul Carus said that:

The creation came forth from the hands of Ormuzd, pure and perfect like himself. It was Ahriman who prevented it by his infamous influence, and labored constantly to and overthrow it, for he is the destroyer and the spirit of evil.”²
In religion and ethics, evil is defined as “the bad aspects of the behavior and reasoning of human-beings, those which are deliberately void of conscience, and show a wanton penchant for destruction”, or, as “the absence of good which could and should be present; the absence of which is void in what should be.” This definition is according to The Encyclopedia Britannica. When a mystical concept of evil is introduced, it is supposed to be the result of capricious or malevolent forces or angry gods. Undisciplined spirits can fall into believing that the mysterious powers of darkness are lurking about causing all sorts of mischief. In business, evil refers to unfair or unethical business practices. Companies that have a monopoly are often maintaining this monopoly by using tactics that are unjust. The monopolies have the power to decide the prices which are not socially efficient. Some people consider monopolies to be evil whereas, economists do not; they consider them to be for public interest. The term evil is used widely. Concise Oxford Dictionary defines evil as knowingly, “harmful or tending to harm, and unlucky causing misfortune.”

The concept of monotheism and law introduce evil as punishment for wrong act and for contrast to good, so life does not become very boring. At the first level of human belief, good and evil are inherent inside the creator and also in man. At the second level, evil is not believed to be created by the creator but by the internal adversary to the creation and allowed by the creator unwilling to prevent it. The creator has not provided ground rules to eliminate evil. Evil is embodied in a personal devil, and good is embodied in a benevolent personal deity. At the third level, evil is not seen to be created or allowed by the creator, but is viewed as a
mortal error. This error has no origin. Reluctantly, this false belief is said to have begun as a false supposition. Evil is believed to be a mental influence from which man can gradually demonstrate his freedom. The creator is seen as a divine principle having no association with evil, and man's true selfhood is seen to be spiritual. At the fourth level, the human explanation for evil is that it is spiritually mental empty space. The creator is entirely spiritual and good, and has no opposition, real or imagined. The explanation for this view is that our awareness of sublime spiritual creation is not much. As thought develops, however, evil and good are increasingly less balanced in the scale of man's beliefs. As man's sense of spiritual good becomes more tangible, “his sense of evil becomes more ethereal; since evil and good are logical opposites.”

The most important idea is whether evil has a reality in itself or does it simply means a collection of attitudes, behaviors and consequences that fundamentally diminish trust in God and one another. The fundamental question is whether there is a universal, transcendent definition of evil, or whether evil is determined by one's social or cultural background. C. S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man*, writes that:

there are certain universal actions considered evil, such as rape and murder. On the other hand, it is very difficult to find any action that is not acceptable in some society.  

A loose definition of evil describes it as death and suffering; it may be man-made or result from other natural causes, such as earthquakes or starvation. In other words, it is not merely the intention to do evil, but to harm others that is evil; sometimes
referred to as natural evil. Some philosophers have observed that
this is an inappropriate use of the word evil as it is without intent.

Evil may be said to be shadowy, mysterious, covert, and
associated with night, darkness, and secrecy. It is a force acting to
destroy the integrity, happiness and welfare of normal society. It is
at once the cause of misfortune, and of the wretchedness of human
existence. The Anthropology of evil discusses the problem in the
context of different societies and religions; Muslim, Christian,
Buddhist, and Hindu. It also provides unusual perspectives on
questions such as the nature of innocence, the root of evil, and the
notion of individual wickedness. For a long time, the problem of
defining the nature or characteristics of evil has been discussed.
Some argue that evil has an essence that remains constant, whereas
others say its interpretation depends on time and place. However
many religious and secular interpretations of evil have changed the
human search, for sense and meaning, never ends.

Morally evil is bad and wrong. The social evils of poverty and
injustice cause suffering, destruction, harm, and pain. Simone Weil
points out that:

Evil is neither suffering nor sin; it is both at the same
time, it is something common to them both. For they are
together; sin makes us suffer and suffering makes us
evil, and this indissoluble complex of suffering and sin is
the evil in which we are submerged against our will, and
to our horror. 7

So in many cultures, evil is seen as subjectively harmful deeds that are
contrasted with good. In Western philosophy, evil harms man. Socrates
argued that, “what we call evil is merely ignorance and that good is that
which everyone desires.” 8 Benedict de Spinoza observed that the
difference between good and evil is merely one of personal inclinations:
so “everyone, by the highest right of Nature, judges what is good and what is evil, considers his own advantage according to his own temperament....”

The Devil is often described as:

a little creature that is red, with horns on his head and a tail, carrying a pitch fork. Once a fallen angel, now the Devil fights the good who has cast him down from heaven.

The name Devil is derived from the Greek word diabolos which means ‘slanderer or accuser’. In Christianity the Devil is known as Satan and sometimes as Lucifer. He is an angel who rebelled against God and has been condemned to the Lake of Fire. He is described as hating all humanity, opposing God and weakening the souls of mankind. In Islam, the Devil is referred to Iblis who was created out of smokeless fire. The only power he has is the power to spread evil into the heart of mankind. In Buddhism, The Devil is Mara. He is the one who tempted Gautama Buddha by trying to seduce him with the vision of beautiful woman. Many legends said that the woman is Mara's daughter. Mara is considered the death of the spiritual life as she prevents man from seeing the truth. So Mara is a part of man's own being that has to be defeated. It is very clear that for Buddhism, evil is an aspect of suffering which is caused by ignorance. Once man is aware of himself, he will recognize evil easily. Compassion is a main tenant for Buddhism, since evil exists in the world; it gives chance for compassion to those who suffer. For Hinduism, evil has no real existence; it is part of the continuity of life.

According to Christianity, the Devil refers to bad people, evil spirit, while in various other religions the Devil resembles a hideous creature who torments human beings. The Bible gives the
idea that Satan has a very limited time on earth. The Devil does not know about his end, but he will not live in the Apocalypse era. The term Satan may mean a very harmful being. The Devil may be called by other names in languages other than English which point to the same essence of evil. They are the Devil, Lucífer, fallen angel, evil spirit, and Satan. The devil ever since had disguised himself as a snake and tempted Eve with an apple, he has been every one’s favorite villain. In certain religions, the Devil is believed to be a powerful, supernatural entity that is the personification of evil and the enemy of God and humankind. For Abrahamic religion, the Devil is a rebellious fallen angel that tempts humans to commit evil deeds. Other religions regard the Devil as “an allegory that represents a crisis of faith, free will, individualism, wisdom, and enlightenment.”

The origin of the Devil can be inferred from the notion that he is the evil spirit or the fallen angel who has refused to obey God in heaven. Belief in the existence of the Devil is found in many cultures in the world like Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Hindu, and Persian. For instance, one very old belief in the Devil was in the Persian religion called ‘Zoroastrianism’. The Zoroastrians believed that there were only two kinds of gods, they were angels and devils; the devils would fight the angels, in order to dominate both Heaven and Hell.

During the Christian era, there was a belief in witchcraft which was demonstrated in Europe during medieval times. Evil may be described as a thing that existed in the universe and opposed the desire and the needs of man. Thus evil, from man’s welfare point of view, ought not to exist. The nature of evil is three folds, physical, moral, and metaphysical. Physical evil includes all
that causes harm to man, whether by bodily injury, or by thwarting
his natural desires or by preventing the full development of his
powers throughout the order of nature directly, or the various
social conditions under which mankind naturally exists. Physical
evils are death, sickness, accident, etc. Poverty, oppression and
some forms of disease are instance of evil arising from bad social
organizations. Mental sufferings, such as:

remorse, anxiety, and disappointment, does not
hinder man from understanding his community, they
are congenital forms of evil each varies in degree and
character according to natural disposition and social
circumstances. 12

Moral evil is understood as the difference of human desire
and the action which results from the deviation. The moral evil is
not only boundless to circumstances of life in the natural order, but
it also involves the religious domain, whereby man's welfare is
affected in the supernatural order and the precepts of which,
depend ultimately upon the will of God. Metaphysical evil is “the
restraint imposed by the various component parts upon the natural
universe.” 13 Hence, through this mutual limitation natural object
are prevented from attaining their full or ideal perfection, by the
constant pressure of physical circumstances.

All evils are looked at as being essentially and completely
negative. It is in the loss of something so important for perfection
and not in the achievement of anything. Pain, which is the test of
physical evil, has indeed a positive, though purely subjective
existence as an emotion; but its evil quality exists in its troubling
effect upon the sufferer. Thus evil is not a real entity; it is relative.
What is evil in some relations may be good in others; and possibly
there is no form of existence which is utterly evil in all relations. Hence it has been thought that evil cannot exist at all and in reality is nothing but a less good. This thought does not seem to consider the human experience; though the same reason may hurt one and give happiness to another.

Both pain and happiness as ideas are equally private. The question about the origin of evil leads to a considerable variety of ideas. The problem is metaphysical one it cannot be solved by a simple study of the definite situation from which evil arises. Schopenhauer's question is concerned with the hidden and essential cause which had made the manifestations of evil probable and important rather than with the evil's different detailed manifestations in nature. He admits that evil exists in relation of man to his society, or it arises in relation to one another. He further continues that “metaphysical evil may be only a method of nature, involving nothing more than a continual redistribution of the world's materials.”

Individual agony and bad behavior are against the general system of the progress in life.

Christian thought attributes moral and physical evil to the action of free will. Man has himself brought about the evil from which he suffers by transgressing the law of God, and showing no obedience upon which his pleasure depends. The probability of defects and the mistakes of human beings are the reasons of moral and physical deforming. Evil from which man suffers is only the imperfection of goodness, so moral and physical evil are due to the fall of man. Both, problems of the origin of Evil and the origin of Being appeared at the same time. Moral evil is due to error and gradually it is eliminated when man knows exactly how to improve
his situation to be better. Pragmatism “is the new system that considers evil as an inevitable part of man’s experiences which are identical with truth and certainty.”\textsuperscript{15} With the progress of experience, evil may disappear, but some evil may remain as the origin of evil is like, the origin of other things.

**Some Philosophical Views on Evil**

There are different views of evil since the mystery of God's creation. Theologians, such as, St. Augustine of Hippo (A.D.354-430) stated that evil came from the original sin committed by Adam and Eve. Evil is only curable through God's grace, it is a deprivation of good just like dark when there is no light at all. Evils, such as injustice, discord, and loss of life are negative types contrary to the good. Evil will fill in any gaps if one is not totally pure. Evil has been a notion recognized throughout history, as St. Augustine said that “the most monumental of all efforts in Western thought is to grapple with the question of evil.”\textsuperscript{16}

According to St. Augustine, evil is the absence of good as darkness is the absence of light, so man has free will to choose evil. Whereas St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) said that evil is due to man's mistreatment of God giving free will. God creates human being with a rational nature and a free will, who can choose good or bad. Philosophers like Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788) is credited as the first to treat evil as a philosophical problem. Evil is not in man's nature, or God's will, but in the corruption of society. The psychologist, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) rarely used the term evil. He argued that “brutal acts arose from the unresolved conflicts in human psyche.”\textsuperscript{17} Kant is the first philosopher who
secularizes the concept of evil; considering it as a human failing, “a deviation from the acceptance of universal moral maxims.” For him evil springs when self-love holds control over moral sensibilities. Edward Feser, in Religion and Evil, said that the problem of evil is often thought to be a peculiarly theological problem, in at least two respects. First, evil is a philosophical problem only, as “its existence seems difficult to reconcile with the existence of an omnipotent God.” For those who do not believe in God, the evil things that happened in the world remain a practical problem, not an intellectual one. Second, the concept of evil seems theological, essentially linked to such other theological concepts for example sin.

Due to his moral responsibility, Plato argues that what we call evil is merely ignorance and good is what every one desires. He feels the need to present a treatise that illustrates the kind of idealistic life in a country where evil does not exist at all. His book entitled The Republic consists of Plato's ideas in the form of a dialogue between two persons; in which he argued that “good is merely that which everyone desires while Evil is merely ignorance.” He observed that there are few means to do good, but there are many means to do evil which affects man's life and other humans' lives greatly.

With Aristotle, evil is a necessary aspect of the constant changes of matters, and has in itself no real existence. The Stoics concerned evil in a somewhat similar manner, as due to necessity; the Divine power harmonizes the evil and good in changing the world. Moral evil proceeds from the folly of mankind, not from the Divine will, because evil is significant and influential factor among
people; it affects their destiny, and many important aspects of their life. Philosophers, thinkers and even literary men try to think of sound means to destroy it. Most of them think of the utopian society which has no room for this unwanted entity. The philosophical problem of evil is most simply stated in the question; why does evil exist in the world? Death, disease, and sin are often included in the problem. Christian doctrines ascribe evil to the misdeeds of man to whom God has granted free will.

One explanation of evil is dualism. The optimistic point of view shows that evil is treated as more obvious than real. One familiar philosophical use of the term evil is just contrary to good. Man's misuse of his live is considered evil as it is bad. This is the sense of evil that is used in posing the traditional theological problem of evil. It is necessary to differentiate between moral and natural evils. Moral evils are those that are caused by moral agents such as war and crimes. Whereas, natural evils are like “earth quakes, hurricanes and other weather conditions.”

Evil is bad, morally wrong, causing harm, pain, and misery. According to western societies, evil is often thought of as a moral antagonism to God. This force is the source of sin and it is attached to the soul. For Hindus, evil is not a conscious, dark force, such as Satan. It is situational rather than ontological, having the basis in relative conditions, not in reality. Evil springs from ignorance and immaturity. It is within soul and resides in the principle of judgment of intellectual acts. The evil- doer is viewed “as a young soul not knowing the value of right ideas and acts, and does not have the ability to live in the world without becoming entangled in Maya-intrinsic evil.” Some philosophies believed that man and
the world are by nature imperfect or evil. Hinduism believes, on the contrary, that there is no intrinsic evil and the real nature of man is his divine soul, which is goodness. What is morally bad, intrinsically corrupt, destructive, inhumane, or wicked is considered evil. However, the definition of what is considered as evil varies widely in many cultures and individuals.

Some philosophers do not accept the idea of evil. Benedict de Spinoza, a critic, said that the difference between good and evil in only one of personal inclinations: “Such thing as please us, dominate us.” Many cultures discussed the duality of good versus evil. Those who believe in the duality theory of evil believe that evil cannot exist without good, nor good without evil, as both are objective states and opposite ends of the same level. In the world of the Greek epics, the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, for example, there are recognized human virtues like honor, truthfulness, and revenge which later was considered a sin in Christian belief.

The Gods do as they want, reward the humans whom they like and punish those whom they dislike for reasons not based on good and evil. In Christianity and Judaism, evil is the cause of dissociation from God's will. Judaism concentrates on what is written in Torah, that one must obey God's laws as it is. In Christianity, the matter is different, as some belief in God's laws that must be obeyed by everyone, whereas others emphasize Christ's statement that law is to love God and your fellow man and others stress the thought that humanity within itself is evil and needs absolution. Some cultures think that evil can arise without meaning. Christianity does not hold this belief, it believes that God is responsible for everything including evil. Some Christian leaders
concentrate on a very important belief that “all have sinned and sin separates Man from God.” This belief means that no one is more evil than any other individual.

The nature of evil has two opposite types. First, moral absolution, states that God, nature, and morality establish evil and good as fixed beliefs. Second, moral relativism, holds that local culture and the injustice are responsible for good and evil. Therefore, Moral Universalism is the effort to reunite absolutist view and the relativist belief. Universalism claims that morality is flexible and one can decide what is good or evil by observing the evil that exist among human beings. Bernard Gert, a philosopher, observed that: “to avoid evil is more important than promoting good in formulating and performing moral systems.”

Some human cultures consider the unpleasant circumstances as evil. Natural evils are diseases, accidental deaths, and other misfortunes, although some cultures consider these occurrences as a healthy part of the natural order. Moral evils include “treachery, and antisocial behaviors against others that are considered immoral behaviors in most cultures, starting from small vices to big crimes.” These beliefs are related to the methods and laws of community that is to punish the wicked humans. In addition to that, there is a concept which states that, no person is evil, but his acts are.

In some Abrahamic faiths, evil is personified as Satan, a challenger of the law or will of God. Satan is defined in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek writings collectively as the devil, the adversary, false accuser, slanderer, the counterfeit, a lair, a murderer, one with no truth, the serpent, the evil one, and the
tempter. These faiths also teach that spirits or demons may possess humans or animals and tempt them to do evil. So evil is related to the concept of sin.

One can recognize that neither good nor evil exist outside human personality. Humanist morality can be anchored in the sociological realities of the natural world. In the wide sense, there are two essential dispositions for action: one that enhances human life, the other that destroys life. Our creative potential is to nurture, enhance and enrich life the desire to give happiness to others and celebrate in their pleasure. The opposite disposition is our destructive potential to threaten, harm, deprive, and destroy that which sustains life. Such destructive potential arises out of an essential wish for self-preservation to protect ourselves from material deficiency or the harm others might cause us, whether physical or emotional. Some philosophers have considered it the 'will to power', a desire to control other people as if they are a mere physical objects in our environment to be manipulated solely for our personal satisfaction. This will to power is expressed in self-centeredness and an indifferent attitude to the pain of others.

Some sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists and neuroscientists have attempted to give scientific explanations for the development of specific characteristics of 'antisocial' personality kind, called the sociopath; which is typified by lack of conscience as well as inability to accentuate and harm others. However, a diagnosis of antisocial or sociopath personality disorder is, “sometimes criticized of being no more scientific than calling a person evil.” 27
In Buddhism, the conflict between good and evil is represented by Nirvans, the spiritual state as the good belief. The other sensual tendencies are the evil principals which avert man from reaching Nirvans. Although in the ancient Greece, the struggle between evil and good did not take the form of a religion, the war between these two forces was presented in the philosophical arguments of that time. Socrates focused on the importance of being cautious about the reality of evil. According to Plato, evil can never pass away, for there must always remain something which is antagonistic to good. In Judaism, there is a fight between good and evil. The Book of Genesis stated that there are two trees, one represents the tree of life, whereas the other represents the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and “since the fall, evil is born in the heart of men and always remains at the heart of history as an inevitable force in human affairs.”

No system of ethics is exempted from the struggle between good and evil. The existence is basically evil; which is the active principle of the world, and good is no more than an illusion. This is the main theory of Buddhism which regards happiness as unattainable, and holds that there is no way out to flee from misery.

The concept of evil cannot be discussed without relating it to human nature, techniques from psychological approach will be used to understand the psychological state of man when he faces evil. The social approach will be needed to determine the social factors. Evil has long fascinated many psychologists, philosophers, novelists, and playwrights but it had remained incredibly difficult concept to talk about. Evil disturbs lives of human beings. What is evil, and what makes people do awful things? If we can explain
evil, can we explain why people indulge in it? Can we imagine the mind of a serial killer, or does such evil defy description? Does evil depend on a contrast with good, as religion tells us, or can there be evil for evil’s sake? Adam Morton argues that any account of evil must help us understand three things: why evil occurs; why evil often arises out of banal or everyday situations; and how we can be seen as evil. Morton argues that:

evil occurs when internal, and mental barriers against it simply break down, reminding us that understanding human actions brings us closer to understand evil.\(^{29}\)

**Christian, Islam, and Hindu Concepts of Evil**

The concept of the evil in religion is the most important problem in the world. Peter Kreeft conceives the problem of evil as a confusing issue. “Most people have abandoned their Christian faith because of the problem of evil than for any other reason, for it is certainly the greatest test of faith…..”\(^{30}\) Christians believe that the seven deadly sins [Pride, Envy, Wrath, Lechery, Avarice, Gluttony, and Sloth] are the true source of evil that springs from the nature of mankind.

Christian religion sees evil as a touchstone and the direct conflict with evil causes suffering. Christianity depicts evil as having a personal identity and its source is, “a being that has fallen from good status due to the disobedience.”\(^{31}\) In Christianity, the presence of evil has always been a disturbing problem. According to Lance Parkin, the emphasis placed on evil in the early Christianity was so real that the mission of Christ was defined in terms of it. The problem of evil was a lifetime obsession for St. Augustine, one of the great Christian thinkers who confirmed the
presence of evil in the world although he believed that “evil will be eliminated from the world after the creation is complete.”

According to Schopenhauer, Freud, Nietzsche, and Jung, evil has been a serious reality. In recent times, many scholars emphasize upon the problem of evil; among those are, Carous, Reicour, and Renouvier. The latter believes that a thinker is the only one who can resolve the problem of evil.

The Christian tradition holds that evil exists in human beings, it is not endless. Its origin is in the universe of angels, individuals and irrelevant beings having free will. One of these, Lucifer, revolted against God's order. Milton in the *Paradise Lost* said that Lucifer pledged, ‘Evil, be thou my good.’ and Old Testament described this fall as the vanity cause: “Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to earth: I made a spectacle of you before kings.”

According to Christian view, God does not create evil but it is the distortion of God's creation. Evil posses a diminished nature which makes Satan and other dark angels try to ruin God's plan along with human beings. Their existence is far away from good and God gives Satan a very limited authority and permits evil to mark itself in order to rouse people from spiritual indolence. Friedrich Nietzsche has a philosophical anti-Christian attitude concerning evil. For him Christ is the main enemy of evil. In his book *Beyond Good and Evil*, he states that the new morality differs from the slave morality;

Whatever a master commands becomes good from the mere fact that the master commands it. The weak sheep have a morality of obedience and conformity.
Masters have natural right to do whatever they please.\textsuperscript{34}

Many intellectual controversies have discussed how evil is constructed and why it is committed. For example, in the theology why Almighty God permits evil to exist in this world, if God is so strong? The answer to such issue varies according to religious beliefs. To Hinduism, the phenomenal world with all the evils is a delusion and it confirms that evil is merely a false belief. As pointed out by Ahura Mazda and Agra Mainya, “they distinguish with the dualism exemplified in ancient Zoroastrianism with its opposed good and evil deities.”\textsuperscript{35} Manichaeism introduces this view which confirms that the world is a struggle between two forces of light and darkness that are responsible for the creation of this universe, good and evil, very powerful force as compared to good. These pagan beliefs show that despite the strength and power of evil that affect one's life, man is satisfied with evil. Liliane Frey -Rohn, an analyst, rightly remarks that:

\begin{quote}
Evil is a phenomenon that exists and has always existed only in the human world. Animals know nothing of it. But, there is no form of religion, of ethics, or of community life in which it is not important.\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

Islam, Christianity and Judaism confirm the doctrine of God as an absolute power who created this universe. If one asks why does evil exist? The answer is in the Quran: that the people wrong themselves and not God, as He is fair with his creatures. God created different kinds of creatures, who by nature make error. God created good for its own sake and created evil for the sake of good that is together with it. Man is free to decide which way he will choose; “meaning God's side or devil’s.”\textsuperscript{37}
In Christianity, the traditional Augustinian theodicy stated that God is the only ultimate reality in the world. And the first line of this theodicy shows, evil as corruption of something good. Always “evil is sponging upon good and has no free existence, whereas good has extensive organism.”38 Some forms of Christianity, as well as Judaism, do not personify evil in Satan; these Christian sects instead consider the human heart to be inherently bowed towards treachery, although human beings are responsible for their choices. Whereas in Judaism, there is no prejudice in man's becoming good or evil at the time of birth. In Judaism, Satan is viewed as one who tests us for God rather than one who works against God, and evil as in the Christian denominations above, is a matter of choice. The Greek word used in the New Testament for evil can just as well be rendered as a wrongdoer' or even as 'the evil one'. This ambiguity means that a passage in the Sermon of the Mount has been translated “Do not resist evil and do not set yourself against a wrongdoer.”39 Both Judaism and Christianity focus on individual repentance requiring the forgiveness of the injured party.

Psychologist M. Scott Peck describes evil as ‘militant ignorance.’ In this it is close to the original Judeo-Christian concept of sin as a consistent process that leads to failure to reach one's true goal. According to Scott Peck:

an evil person projects his evils and sins onto others and maintains a high level of respectability and lies constantly in order to do so and is consistent in his sins.40

He also considers acts of criminal and state terrorism to be evil. Evil is something never inclusive. Although evil comes into the
world through the guilt desire of man; his sin is regarded as evolving from the elevated good.

St. Augustine of Hippo said that evils, like sickness are holy, intended punishments of man’s fall. This view points to two kinds of evil, sin and the penalty for sin. The original sin of man, his fall, is the foundation of St. Augustine's belief that man's desire to do evil is incomplete and its cause is unidentified. The aesthetic concept of evil is the other major idea of St. Augustine’s theodicy that is derived from Plotinus' *Enneads*. This view states that in a world the isolated evil is an important factor as world is shown as completely good. In this state good becomes more radiant an opposite of evil:

Since there is happiness for those who do not sin, the universe is perfect, and it is no less perfect because there is misery for sinners......so, whatever a soul may choose, ever beautiful and well ordered in all its parts in the universe whose Maker and Governor is God.41

He also states that:

evil manifested itself as a human limitation......If I choose wrong, then I shall be justly punished for it. Is that not true, my Lord, of whom I am indebted for my temporal existence.42

St. Thomas Aquinas supports St. Augustine's belief that evil is an outcome of human limitation and according to him it is within our capacity to avoid evil.

In the mid nineteenth and during twentieth century, German philosopher, Friedrich Schleirmacher influenced many British theologies. Schleirmacher's view about religion is that, religion shows God's whim in the disadvantaged and the immoral, a whim
that sees how the best factor can asylum the evil. Evil as a religious belief is “a product of spiritual corruption and psychological incompleteness.”  

Ricoeur, in his book *The Symbolism of Evil*, discusses the salvation of man and the myth of evil which includes both etiological and ontological presuppositions;

the etiological side illustrates the origin of evil since the beginning of history until its condemnation;

while the ontological concerns about the condition of human nature.  

In the cultural history, evil has three signs: defilement, sin and guilt. Defilement, the first sign of evil, is internal and external like a disease. It refers to a ritualistic universe in which men, acts, and things are unpolluted, some dirty and some spiritual. In addition it is not concerned with man's intentions. Man knows that punishment is something inevitable, so his subjective condition is moral when he breaks the taboos. Sin is the second sign of evil known through God's messengers, who tell the people that God wants perfection and obedience. Guilt, the third and the last sign is different from sin; as man becomes his own judge. It is the lonely ‘I’ who commits sin and he must feel sorrow and come back to God.

There are four kinds of myths with which evil is identified. The first one, evil is identified with confusion and good is above evil in order to keep the social order. The second myth is the fall of Man when he obeys the evil and due to that he is forced to leave heaven and lives in a world of suffering. The third type is the Greek mythology which shows man's conflict for greatness in order to put himself outside the order in his conflict. Orphic myth is the fourth one concerned with exiled soul; believing that soul is good.
whereas the body is evil as it is the source of temptations. But the soul is punished “as it is jailed in the body due to evil practices in another life.”

The main reasons of social disorder are poverty and unemployment which are considered as very important economic factors.

Evil becomes political as morality is just a general idea and community is broken into a struggling group. We must save ourselves from evil as it is all around us. Through behavior, evil presents itself which make us suffer. One believes that evil is an odd entity which urges man to show destructive behavior. The absence of good which can be destructive causes that disturbs others. The most important thing is that we have to know evil in order to understand goodness in human behavior, to know how to counter the injustice and change the society for the best. Humanists should not neglect offensiveness and should not concentrate on goodness in human behavior. Moreover, we have to know that evil is in the world and we must defend ourselves from it, as both evil and good exist inside human being.

Some people consider evil “as an act for only egotistic acquisitive causes, such as wealth or power.”

Due to this consideration of evil, if one commits immoral act for good reason, he will not consider it as evil, although most people refuse to accept this.

In the nineteenth century, Nietzsche said in his argument of ‘Master Morality’ that society is a collection of either opposing social classes, or opposing interest groups. These classes or groups are strong to build a morality in order to support their benefits, against their opponents' interests. So the strong people use their morals to dominate weak people and keep them in their poor
condition. The political world shows this obviously in the international law which is used to keep the interest of strong countries. Most of the political resolutions are due to the technological reason and require competence. To survive, the country must progress technologically. For example, when the atomic bomb was used against Japan, the reason was to end the war and to examine the American dominance. The sabotage of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is a means to control the world by the American state. Many liberal democratic societies connect evil with politics especially tyrannical regimes and leaders, such as in Germany the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler which caused the mass genocide of Jews, war crimes, as well as political and cultural execution. The Second World War and the post war years which offer liberal democratic societies consider Hitler as a symbol of social and political evil in the modern world. Also many western liberal democracies regarded the Communist regime of the Soviet Union as evil, especially during the time of Joseph Stalin because he executed many politicians, many religious and educational men who opposed him. Hitler and Mussolini depended on the writing of the Niccolo Machiavelli, a political writer. His book *The Prince* is regarded as a source of evil, which neglects morality for authority, as ‘the ends justify the means.’ Niccolo Machiavelli prefers a prince who frightens his people instead of depending on their help; insisting on the idea of using cheating and exploitation to achieve supremacy. He confirms that only by using this means a prince can lead his people. For him it is not only the end justifies the means:

But the means justifies the ends, in the sense that one end is worth pursuing only if there are practical means to attain it……in that sense he was an anti-moralist. And the world consists mainly of vulgar
people and the few who are honorable can safely be ignored when so many vulgar rally around the prince."\textsuperscript{47}

Niccolo Machiavelli, writes about the international relations theories of realism which are sometimes called real politic; they explicitly reject absolute moral and ethical considerations in favor of self-interest, political survival, and power politics, which they hold to be more precise in a world they view as visibly dangerous. Political realists usually justify their perspectives by asserting to higher moral duty specifically to political leaders, under which the greatest evil is seen to be the failure of the state to protect itself and its citizens. Niccolo Machiavelli sarcastically writes:

\begin{quote}
the prince need not worry about incurring the disgrace of those vices without which it would be difficult for him to save the state, for if everything is carefully considered, it will be found that something which seems a virtue would, if practiced, become his ruin, and some other thing, which seems a vice, would, result in his security and well-being.\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

Sociologists disagree about the source of evil, considering that it is in society or in human. If society is seen as a collection of individuals, then evil is ever lasting as it is in the individual. But if society is considered as a higher system, above and beyond individual, then evil exists in the system which is bad politically and socially. The main sociological theories are: Social Darwinism, Marxism and Functionalism. These theories show the life of society as a free system of its classes that are in a different way born, grow, work and die; they had spread widely in the west during the nineteenth century. When nationalism becomes essentially a political power, it urges the people to be with their nation more than with their society. Social Darwinism focused on “scientific
foundations for wrong and right, which became the standard of evolutionary development.”

According to this view, man's malfunction to acclimatize to his community is evil, so his life is only a struggle for survival. Thus, the evolutionary progress is moral, mental, and biological. For this theory, good means how man adopts himself with his society. The evolution of social organism is in two stages: the military and the industrial. In the military stage, society has military qualities to defeat its enemies. War took place among various societies and conflict is in all places. Because of the defeat, societies become larger, all become one society, this is found in the industrial society. Spencer, a social believer of Darwinism, planned a utopia in which man will be free and cooperate with others. But other social Darwinists reject this view as such utopia cannot be found in this world.

Marx does not believe in the moral development, on the contrary, he believed in the technological progress saying that the division of work is the cause of evil. According to Marx, the exploitation increased with the division of labor. But this exploitation can be stopped in a communist society in which there are no personal possessions and no division of work. Functionalism is the last type of modern sociology. Durkheim presents society as a system, saying that the activities which develop this system are functions, whereas the harmful are not functions. Evil to Marx is “capitalism, for it destroys motivation to work, family, religion, liberty, education, beliefs, and whatever things that are good for human lives.”

Jean Paul Sarter, focuses on awareness of evil and human perversity, stating that:
We have learned to take evil seriously........ Evil is not an appearance ........Knowing its causes does not dispel it. To choose to be this or that is to affirm. At the same time what we choose is valuable because we can never choose evil.\textsuperscript{51}

August Comte, in the nineteenth century, believed in the development of man’s thinking and society by using technology. For him, when society comes into the optimistic stage of man’s progression that focused on religious and rational authority, evil could be prevented easily. To August Comte, there are three overlapping levels through which mental progress could be passed: a theological, a metaphysical, and a victorious level. At the first level, religious beliefs govern all thoughts and man uses good or evil to different forces; whereas in the metaphysical level, the religious conceptions are used in hypothetical forces. Finally in the victorious level, man uses mental maturity.

In the eighteenth century, the English empiricist, David Hume said that reason cannot help man to differentiate evil from good. He thinks that man's beliefs concerning good and evil in the world that is created by God and based on scientific laws cannot be protected. David Hume's moral theory states that the right or wrong judgments are like the rational judgments. For him reason is the slave of passions, man can face the external influences that is against him by his will. Evil treats people as things to which it exerts its power. Goodness, as contrary to evil, is found “in correct and moral perfection, whereas evil can be found in many things such as, self-defense, envy, cruelty, ungratefulness, social and moral limits.”\textsuperscript{52}
Evil resides in human consciousness and although it appears to be physical, it originated in human intellect and causes emotional or mental suffering. To defeat the evil in life is to develop one's individuality and self-assertiveness. Consequently evil means a deviation from the norm. Evil that existed in the external circumstances, works upon man's intuition of self-defense and affects his behavior. Man fights these circumstances in order to return to the normal situation of humanity, which is the feeling of regret for committing sin. And during his conflict with the circumstances around him, he can recognize the ethical principle in this life. If man can adopt himself with his society, he can defeat evil; means returning to God by freeing himself from worldly pressures.

Many concepts were changed in the early Victorian time which started with the Reform Bill dictates of 1831 and extended to 1885. This event marks the technological progress of the new age. Although this period is a time of change it is also a time of crisis. Social and political evil control man but through social reforms and education, evil can be defeated. The evil in the commercial world leads to differences and families are separated. The circumstances rule man who is the victim of change. Man does not accept his natural fate and fights the life force that is not in accordance to his ambition in order to achieve his aim.

In the twentieth century, many terrible events happened and the most harmful events were the Two World Wars that caused many social upheavals, like unemployment and poverty. It was a time of social development as well as of imperial decline. Many political movements appeared to reform society, such as the Fabian
Society that seeks the development of socialist morals without revolution. According to new political system, many concepts of evil emerged. Evil took the form of political excuses to enlarge hostilities among European states. Due to these hostilities, “innocent blood of common citizens is the price to be paid for a wrong stupid political conflict.” The enemy of the habitual order is terrorism and the new weapons of mass destruction, in addition to the revolutions that caused more horrible political crimes.

Evil lurks all around us. It takes the form of political torture, genocide, terrorism, and assassination. It also exists within the special sphere, in the form of domestic violence, child abuse and sexual abuse. Our popular culture is saturated with images of evil and brutality; with psychopaths, sociopaths, and serial killers. Theologians and philosophers have pondered over the problem of evil and religious thinkers have asked how God can tolerate evil and suffering and whether evil serves some particular purpose or whether it is utterly inexplicable. When the philosophers have explored the nature of evil, they ask whether man is responsible for evil acts committed as the result of unconscious drives or whether rational explanations of evil decrease human responsibility.

In the twentieth century, secular explanations have mostly replaced religious one. According to Marxists, evil is attributed to exploitative classes, whereas, Psychologists consider evil as a mental disease, and past abuse. Sociologists associate evil with social, demographic, economic, and political dislocations.
Poets, Novelists and, Dramatists’ Views on Evil

In different times and different cultures, evil had taken various forms. For centuries, from Beowulf until now, evil has been defined by human beings and it has been mentioned in English Literature. Through history, literature, drama, philosophy, and religion, evil acquires wide analysis. Robert W. Butler points out that “evil and its consequences are topics of perpetual interest since the days of mankind’s earliest myths and religions.”

During Medieval ages; evil was mentioned in the epic poems. *Beowulf* is an epic poem filled with violence, vengeance, and death. The context of the poem is filled with a strong sense of doom, targeted at the fate of the characters' lives. Beowulf centers on the pagan belief of predestination and also on the Christian belief that God protects the good and, not the evil. In Beowulf which is the greatest epic in Anglo-Saxon literature, evil seems to depend on external appearance and actions. His author describes the supernatural evil, Grendel as a fearsome monster. Grendel’s mother is also considered evil although, she only wants to avenge her son. Dragon is the last evil in the epic that kills the Geats people and burns their houses with his breath of fire.

The age of Geoffrey Chaucer (1324-1400) presented *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of short stories in which he shows evil not as a beast, nor an external power, but a thing that existed with goodness. Chaucer in *Pardoner’s Tale* illustrates that the source of evil is money. He presents three rioters who decide to overcome Death and deliver it up on one another. Chaucer pictured dreadful black death and social disturbances. The Prologue realistically depicts “the social corruption of the church in which the monks
were required to serve God, and not the world." He presents the state of things which existed in religious world of his own time.

John Milton’s (1608-1674) *Paradise Lost* is a Biblical story of the temptation and fall of man at the hands of Satan. It is an epic poem describing the concept of evil. It is about the fall of man; how Adam and Eve were driven out from Garden of Eden after falling a prey to the temptation of evil. According to Milton, Sin was Satan’s daughter which was described as a beautiful woman, but was an evil serpent. Due to the incestuous relationship with her father, she had a son named Death which was described in the poem as a threatening figure which carried a dart as a weapon and even he threatened his father with it. With the relationship between these three characters, Milton showed the sick perversity of evil. In this poem, he focused to show good; saying that God is the true symbol of all good in the world. The mighty power of God has true ability as a ruler that fights only for the well being of good and virtuous in Heaven. God has control over man. Milton was politically active during the time of the English Civil war which is the time of turmoil, confusion, and frustration. He was concerned with many difficult theological issues, such as fate, predestination, sin, death as well as Satan.

C. S. Lewis, in his ‘Preface’ to *Paradise Lost*, refers that “perversion arises when conscious being becomes interested in himself. This is a pride that leads easily to tyranny.” Man has been driven by Satan’s temptation; as a result he becomes the embodiment of evil. Milton said that grace and virtue can overcome all evils. He reveals Satan’s ways to deceit, jealousy, and destruction through various dreadful acts. He insists that Satan confuses people about the truth, and he is the true cause of our earthly pain and
suffering. For him God is not the instigator of pain but rather Satan in his bitterness for revenge, is the one who brings the world much strife.

William Blake (1757-1827) in his poem *The Sick Rose*, personifies the rose as human being. He says it is sick because the invisible worm has intruded into the bed and is trying to destroy it, adding that:

the worm is a stalker with intentional and earthly purpose for the sick rose. Its intentions give off the same vibe similar to a murderer entering a woman's home and taking all her valuable things. 57

The worm is like a greasy and dirty thing that nourishes on death. It is considered as a symbol of evil for its association with the powers of darkness; whereas the rose is considered as a symbol of innocence. Therefore, the poet refers to the everlasting struggle between innocence and evil or the conflict between the powers of good represented by the rose and the powers of darkness represented by the worm. The worm intrudes into the bed of the rose and manages to destroy it. The idea is that evil and beauty cannot co-exist, hence evil must destroy beauty or vice versa. In this poem, Blake refers to the darker side of human nature. He wants to say that intruders are destructive, cruel and vicious. For him, the power of darkness can be triumphant at certain times during specific circumstances; but one can discover evil through the experience of living, as life is full of it.

Dante Alighieri’s (1265-1321) *Divine Comedy* is a moral comedy that is intended to make the readers think about their own morals. The poem could have been used as a guide for what to do and what not to do in order to be in Heaven for the medieval people. Dante takes the readers on a journey through the afterlife to impress their minds what could happen to them if they follow evil. *The Divine Comedy* is an epic poem in which the author takes a
visionary journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. The purpose of Dante’s visit to Hell is to learn about the true nature of evil. He is guided in this journey by the ghost of the Roman classical poet Virgil, who is as wise in the ways of the spirit as he can be, he cannot go to Heaven because he is not Christian.

Dante shows us that evil is not only stupid, but self-destructive as well. It is the personal and vivid story of soul’s journey through salvation. In the first lines of this poem, Dante says that “In the middle of journey of our life I came to my senses in a dark forest, for I had lost the straight path.” 58 This is the typical stereotype of today when man becomes lost or consumed in sin; the sinful life is dark life. Losing the straight path symbolizes losing the holy, and pure life. Darkness is more or less a symbol of evil whereas, light is a symbol of good. Dante depicts hell as an evil, dark, and scary place that is full of fire. He explores the ideas of good and evil, and his journey through the many levels of Hell is just meant to see the different punishments that sinners must endure for eternity. Dante values the health of society over self. This becomes evident as the sinners against society experience suffering greater than those who suffer for sinning against themselves.

During the period in which Romantic literature appeared, society was in a conflict by the Age of Reason, particularly England was plagued with economical and social collapse. As a result many writers attempted to escape from their troubles by writing about fantastic and unexplained tales. Some poets of the Romantic period also presented evil in their poems. Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) in his poem Christabel, views evil as having damaging effects
on innocent people. The evil woman Geraldine used her magical curse upon Christabel and spread the sense of horror and ambiguity. The evil spirits of Geraldine is “in true tradition of Vampire.” Coleridge used the gothic motifs in this poem to represent the image of vampires, decayed castles, and dark moonlit nights which are the elements of evil. He delineates both the innocent and evil qualities of the mysterious lady Geraldine.

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) addresses himself to the nature of evil, salvation, and damnation of the soul, and the individual’s power against the forces of history and fate. In his system evil is an important force of change, and knowledge of evil is necessary for the achievement of Unity of Being. In The Countess Cathleen, sin is seen mainly from a religious standpoint, the more encompassing portrayal of evil in its moral and social aspects. The cruelty of the beloved and the ignorance of the lover are the two essential ingredients for a tenacious passion. The evil here alluded is then seen as both the genesis of passion, an important characteristic of the hero, and as a source of adversities to be overcome, which is the other facet of evil. He states “evil is that which opposes Unity of Being.” For Yeats the vision of evil is seen as the complementary opposite of good, one that must be faced in order to achieve a complete understanding necessary for transcendence. Evil can be seen as an obstacle to be conquered and therefore a chance for a soul to evolve. We find this kind of evil in The Countess Cathleen, the heroine is evil that brings out the best in her that leads her to final sacrifice.

Victorian people believed in the rapid industrialization, material, and commercial growth. They had put aside their faith in
God and substituted it by faith in machinery. During Victorian era, industrialization took place; factories and industries distorted green fields, and destroyed man’s spirituality. Many writers of this period wrote about the concept of evil. Charles Dickens (1812-1870) was born in a time when England was in process of a gradual, but gigantic social transformation. England was divided by a rigid class structure, the rich and the poor. He drew the black image of London as the city and symbol within the fabric of English society. In his novel, *Hard Times*, he sympathized with the desolate, exploited, and the oppressed people. He showed the rigid and hard system of education and the bitter edge of materialism. Dickens rejected the economic system that forced the little boy to work in a warehouse. He criticizes the rotten working of the social system in every major institution of society. Dickens is concerned for the workers lives and about the effect of utilitarianism. His satire is directed against those who think in figures and averages, and against the exploitation of the weak people. He wants to revolt against the whole industrial order of the modern world. He attacks the violence of the industrial capitalism which he considered evil as it ignored the human values and destroyed the society.

J. K. Rowling’s (1965) novel *Harry Potter* portrays the conflict between good and evil; the inner conflict between man’s reason and passion, and the external conflict between man and the life. The writer presents the good one, Dumbledore, an old wise wizard who guards the oracle of the novel’s hero, Harry. Both represent wisdom, and eternal ideals. Rowling emphasizes the idea that:

evil might be hidden even in children’s textbooks, seeking to change their way of thinking. For her evil
The authoress used magic in order to reveal the nature of good and evil. This novel is considered a synonym for teaching methods that can affect the child during his growth for good or bad.

William Golding (1911-1993) believes that the horror of Second World War is the real evil. In his novel *Lord of the Flies*, he warns about the evil nature of human beings; saying that “we are evil and only the law of society can prevent the people from committing evil actions that harm others.” Golding emphasizes man’s depravity but his emphasis on the dark side of human nature is aimed at making the people more conscious of the reality of evil and its perils. Golding in his treatment of evil is not only influenced by the Christian doctrine of fall, but by the events of his own time, especially the Two World Wars. He traces the defects of society and man’s brutality back to the human nature.

For him man’s egoism is the source of evil which leads society to moral bankruptcy, chaos, and self-destruction. Egoism is mostly manifested in Jack, who has been called the instrument of evil and leads the society of the boys to degeneration and self-destruction. Ralph’s humanity, his opposition to Jack, and his plan to save the boys are futile because Jack has turned the boys to savages. Piggy is the voice of reason, but he cannot use his wisdom for the benefit of the boys. He symbolizes one who recognizes evil but is unable to fight it. This novel presents a society based on justice but turned into savagery as a result of moral emptiness which is considered as evil. It stresses the importance of ethics as a significant force in shaping a just and cultured society. Ethics is a
rule of existence without it man is subject to self-destruction. The eventual aim of this novel is to make man conscious of the reality of good versus evil and to enable him to counter evil through reducing his selfish tendencies.

Golding wrote this novel just after the end of the Second World War, an event that caused Europeans to re-examine themselves as being civilized. The boys in his novel try to maintain their civilized standard and resist the threat of external evil. The title *Lord of Flies*, is used as a synonym for Satan; it becomes a metaphor for power struggle in a disordered condition. He wrote this novel to demonstrate that evil is found within ourselves and not in others. Golding uses children as characters to show that they are supposed to be innocent and unsophisticated. It is ironic that while he focuses on such fundamental themes as conflict between good and evil, he discovers in this lonely island many complex problems that afflict society in the great cities of the world. The snake Golding uses intruding here is not the devil but the threat of evil as it injects fear and confusion into the balanced world.

Golding’s aim is to trace the problems of society back to the sinful nature of man. He criticizes the political system for not taking into consideration the defects of human nature which is exemplified through the characters of Jack and his hunters. He said that the shape of society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system. Here Golding shows that men are inherently evil; if they are left alone, they will go back to the savage roots of their ancestors. They revert to brutality, savagery, and barbarism. He associates the instinct of civilization with good, whereas the instinct of savagery with evil. He wants to discover the evil powers that lurk under the surface of civilized behavior.
Joseph Conrad’s (1857-1924) *Heart of Darkness*, was written in 1898. In this novel, the author challenges imperialism which is considered evil. He shows the conflict between good and evil and other issues of man like alienation, loss of faith, and morality. The protagonist of this novel, Marlow, a sailor whose journey is through the African Congo to relieve Kurtz, the most successful trader in ivory working for the Belgian government. The journey reflects upon the evils of the human condition as he has experienced it in Africa and Europe. Marlow’s journey forces him to confront not only Kurtz’s corruption but also those evil elements within himself that are subject to the same temptations which affected Kurtz. It is a psychological insight into the human mind and the realization of the hidden, dark and evil side of both, Marlow and Kurtz. The latter represents degradation, and horror in what Europeans in the Congo called progress; means the exploitation of the natives by all variety of brutality.

The author reveals the rape of Africa at the entrance of the twentieth century, when exploitation of colonies was still widely spread and the problem of abuse of natural resources and native inhabitants was largely ignored. It exposes the weak material that holds civilization together and the brutal horror at the center of European colonialism; showing the effects of colonialism upon man’s soul. An evil side lies within every man, but this evil remains repress if it is prohibited to arouse. Through his journey, Marlow learns great things about imperialism.

To express the concept of evil, Conrad uses the theme of darkness, to identify social and intellectual elements and to compare the barbarisms of the African community with the light of
the European civilization. The darkness means evil and the vagueness of moral issues. For Conrad the power is the source of evil. Through the narrator Marlow, the author uses the theme of light and dark to distinguish the civilized with the savage. Marlow is shocked and angered at the horrible treatment of the black workers. Conrad always alters common symbolic conception of light and dark. Thus, “white is not synonymous with good, nor black with evil, but rather both symbols are interchangeable.” 63 White and black characters are alternately used as examples of sharp suffering, civilized dignity, and violence signifying that no race is wholly good or evil. For Conrad darkness represents evil, mystery, sadness and fear; so the inner conflict is a man’s struggle with his own morals and his battle with his hidden evil. According to him racism is evil; it is not a social problem that will gradually disappear. The only cure is to understand that evil is real. He said that one must see and control darkness, otherwise it will dominate him; man has not to ignore the presence of evil in order to learn from it.

E. M. Forster’s (1879-1970) last novel A Passage to India is “a perspective and sympathetic treatment to the main problem of Anglo-Indians.” 64 It examines racial tension between the British colonizers and the Indian people at the time of the British Raj. It also asks a philosophical question about the nature of human relationships in general. Forster intends to express his skepticism about British imperialism in India and its devastating impact on human relationships. He wishes to overcome gaps of social and racial separation in order to unify the different races. The relationship between Dr. Aziz who is Indian and the British Mr. Fielding fails at the end of the novel as the latter thinks that he
belongs to a distinct group. Any personal relationships cannot be established under circumstances of occupation and suppression which are evil. Adela is an evil woman as she accused Dr. Aziz of something he never did. The trial in the novel seems to concern the prosecution of Indians in general then of Dr. Aziz. The trial is not only about the specific injustice against Adela quested, but about the relationships among the ethnic groups in India; it is about the humanity as a whole. Both Dr. Aziz and Adela are merely objects in the struggle between the two ethnic groups. Forster views the political and social forms of British colonial India and how the laws keeping those forms create a terrible conflict between Muslims, Anglo-Saxon, and Hindu morals and rights. For him both colonization and imperialism are evil as they destroy whatever good is in the society.

John Ronald Tolkien (1892-1973) in his novel *The Lord of the Rings* focuses on the evil nature of power, the cruelty of technology, and the war as a destructive force against mankind. He was an officer during the First World War alluding the destruction and oppression of war. Through his fiction, he wants to show the horrors of the war and his hatred of the modern warfare. He regards war:

> An evil job, for we are attempting to conquer Sauron with the Ring. And we shall [it seems] succeed. But, the penalty is, as you will know, to breed new Saurons, and slowly turn men and elves into Orcs.65

This novel presents an imaginary world, about a fight between good and evil. Frodo Baggins, the hero struggles with a burden against the evil. He must carry a ring and cast it in the fire mountain. The hero tries to overcome his own desires and his darkness. Sauron is the dark lord who wants the ring to give knowledge and strength in order to defeat
all the resistance. The wizard knows that any attempt to use the ring for good purpose will be ruined as the ring is evil. The hero manages to surpass the evil in his heart and thus ends the suffering of all humanity. For Tolkien, the people who are evil natured have authority just like Melkor who corrupted Sauron. So Tolkien is against those who have the authority and deprive people from living better lives. He regards technology as a source of evil for polluting the environment and destroying the countryside; which is against the cycle of nature. The evil people use machines to dominate and destroy the nature around them. Here the author presents the rings as emblems of technological corruption. One can understand that this novel is concerned with the decline of morals.

Nathaniel Hawthorne’s (1804-1864) novel The Scarlet letter was written in 1849 during the age of great moral reform. Many social and political questions were raised in America during the 19th century. This was a period that gave rise to questions on slavery, the industrial revolution and the women’s rights. During this period the political situation of America was instable. Some people believe that the nature of mankind is evil, others feel that man has good intentions but those intentions can be overrun by the devil. In this novel, there are three main characters who commit evil and sinful acts, but each act is at different degree of sinfulness. The characters are Hester Prynne, her husband, the doctor, Roger Chillingworth, and the priest Arthur Dimmesdale. All of them are sinners in the eyes of the Puritan community. Hawthorne believes that evil is the nature of man but that there are different magnitudes of evil, some choose to fight it, like Hester, and some choose to give in, like her husband, Chillingworth. The Puritan community believed “extramarital sex to be inherently evil
and influenced by the devil.”66 Because the child, Pearle is a product of her mother’s sexual affair, she is considered evil as she was born from what the Puritans conceived to be an immoral and sinful union.

Hester is the victim of her husband’s stupidity because he sent her to New England by herself, while he remained in Europe. She is also the victim of fate as she does not know if her husband is dead or alive when the Indians capture him after he arrived in North America. Arthur Dimmesdale commits adultery with Hester. Then he insisted on his sin by keeping his dark secret in his heart which according to the Puritan is the greatest sin. They believed it darkened the soul and turned man into an evil. Dimmesdale is an evil because he is a man of God but he cannot find the strength to admit his sin. His weakness is the reason that makes him more evil than Hester. It is better for him to reveal the truth just to expiate the sin. In this novel Hawthorne discusses the theme of adultery, which juxtaposes culture and religion and is sinful and evil. When Hawthorne refers to sin, he assumes the force of evil so pervasive that it does not need to be embodied in anyone or in any particular act. In his writing, he criticizes the teaching of Puritans, seeking to expose their hypocritical doctrines which teach that all men are inherently evil and they strive to make each person realize his sinful nature. However, Puritans present themselves as pure, holy, righteous, and moral, they are fueled by sin and evil. Hawthorne is more concerned about the discovery of evil, and the true nature of man rather than believing in the pervasiveness of sin.

The dramatists also focused on the theme of evil in their dramas. For example, Greek dramatist, Sophocles, in his play Oedipus (5th century BC) the king of Thebes, attempts to cleanse his city against an evil that is plaguing it, later on he learns that this
evil is found in himself. This terrifying self-knowledge changed him from a proud heroic king into a tyrant then to a fearful condemned man, humbled by his sad fate.

The medieval playwrights presented the impulses which drove man towards evil. These impulses known as the Seven Deadly Sins: Pride, Envy, Sloth, Intemperance, Avarice, Anger, and Lust; are against the Seven Moral Virtues: Faith, Hope, Charity, Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Faith. So man's life is a war between these different influences, a war which goes on within man rather than without. According to Christian belief, man has free will to choose between good and evil. These two elements are in man, good and evil, each one wants man to be on its side.

The literature of the Pre-Elizabethan time also focused on the concept of evil especially in the morality plays, one of which is Everyman which personified evil as in the characters of the seven deadly sins. In this play, evil is clarified throughout the conflict between good and evil, between virtue and vice challenging to gain the soul of man. Every man is an allegory of human preparation for death. The characters are abstractions which represent evil forces in the world affecting the human soul. The main message of the play is that evil deeds cannot redeem a person from eternal damnation.

The same can be said of Christopher Marlowe's (1564-1593) play Dr. Faustus which tells the age-old legend of the man who sells his soul to the devil. Faustus gains much significance when he is seen in the light of the renaissance thirst of knowledge. Since evil has committed the first sin, man has suffered a loss of innocence and he is always threatened by destructive forces which arise from his contaminated nature. Instead of blaming external
factors, man should blame the beast within for his miseries. Marlowe, in his famous play *Dr. Faustus*, presents the temptation of evil for a man who seeks knowledge and power. Marlow clarifies that evil lies in the ambition for infinite knowledge and authority. The hero of the play is “disillusioned by the discovery that all his studies have nugatory results.” For earthly learning, and earthly power, Faustus goes down to horrible and everlasting perdition. Faustus is a wretched creature who for lower and evil values gives up higher values. The story of Dr. Faustus represents the conflict between good and evil. Faustus represents those that choose to stoop to a lower level in order to get what they want. The good angel and the bad angel are the morals that can pull Faustus' soul apart, forcing him to take a decision that can affect his future. Faustus is a man who is desperate for power and control, ultimately he becomes just an evil.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) has also been fascinated by the concept of evil. For example, in his play *Macbeth*, he treats evil within the people successfully. This play analyzes the soul of the mature, greedy ruler who sacrifices everyone to satisfy his personal ambition. Macbeth is a good man but he is corrupted by evil forces like the witches. Macbeth is changed, he goes from a heart of good to a heart of evil, and thus he becomes evil. The three evil witches tell him that he will be a king. Shakespeare portraits the character of Macbeth to present a larger view of evil’s operation in the world. Power is the source of corruption in Macbeth that has the ability to destroy one’s nature. Thus making one capable to do many things he would not normally do, without power. Once Macbeth realizes
that he has power, he becomes corrupted. The power he attains allow him to commit many sins in order to become a king.

Macbeth is motivated by his wife to kill the king. She is made to act as a means in her husband’s evildoings. She is responsible for influencing her husband to commit both crimes; she unleashes the dark side of him and motivates him to become an evil and horrendous man. His wife is a wicked woman; she begs the evil spirits to help him to get rid of the king. His own evil ambitions with the encouragement of his bad wife incite him to kill the king and to be in his place. In the play, the three witches represent darkness, chaos, and conflict; their presence communicates treachery and the coming doom. During Shakespeare’s time, witches were seen as worse than rebels. They were political and spiritual traitors. The play abounds in situations in which evil is depicted as good, while good is rendered evil. The witches do not directly advise Macbeth to kill the king Duncan; they use a fine form of temptation when they inform him that he is destined to be a king. By placing these evil words in his mind, they guide him on the path of his own destruction.

To understand Macbeth’s descent into hell, one must define evil and have an idea of how the process of evil affects the honest. One may relate and consider the process of evil to a virus. Evil is a word that has been used for hundreds of years, yet the meaning is ones interpretation of what is evil. The criteria for an evil act has changed over the years also. Shakespeare said that “his interpretation of evil is a very bad or ill act against a person, animal, or God; so Macbeth was a dead butcher and evil man.”
T.S. Eliot’s (1888-1965) *Murder in the Cathedral* is a liturgical drama dealing with the assassination of Thomas Becket, a twelfth century saint and a well-known person in the history of the cathedral. Eliot shows the politics, both temporal and churchly which represents the archbishop as a man torn between acting and suffering. Eliot tries to establish the contact between God and man to give lesson of good and evil. He is much influenced by the spiritual, economic, political, and social dilemma of the 1920s. For Eliot, the martyred Becket was a “symbol of Christian witness and fortitude in the time of public violence and political corruption.”

Eliot’s unhappiness at the situation of the spiritual emptiness suffered by modern man and the political violence, manifested itself by the appearance of Communism and Fascism which are the real evils that threaten the whole world. The play shows the victory of the higher spiritual values and moral strength over the more secular materialistic evil values.

Samuel Beckett’s (1906-1989) *Waiting for Godot* is primarily about hope, waiting and meaning in our lives. The characters are two tramps, and the scene depicts the constantly deteriorating state of mankind and a sense of futility. The characters continue to suffer through their physical disabilities. Their hope of recovery shatters as they decide to commit suicide as a means of escaping their pointless existence. Beckett shows that the essence of human existence fluctuates between hope and aspiration, frustration and disillusionment. He reveals the meaningless universe in which human values are irrelevant as evil dominates whatever good is in the world. There is Christian symbolism in the play. The tramps and their misery symbolize the fallen state of man, and the tree on
the stage stands both for the Tree of knowledge of good and evil. The two tramps are waiting for mysterious Godot to come. Whoever Godot might be, good or evil; he seems to be tremendously important to them since they invest so much hope in his arrival.

The play shows the meaninglessness and absurdity of reality and the dreadful destiny of man which is no more than a scrap of life surrounded by death, a something encircled by nothing. It also presents, “a decadent world ruined and gray, populated by human but barely human.” The dramatists of the absurd theatre focus on the problem of being itself which is considered a metaphysical problem, the problem of the nature of man and his position in the world. This play views that social space is completely absent, the social relationships are missing, and brotherhood is meaningless. Modern man's suffering is an extended process of waiting for something which never comes. The misery of human existence is a common theme in Beckett's work. Man has no choice in life; he has no other choice but to live endlessly, meaninglessly, and hopelessly.

John Osborne’s (1929-1956) Look Back in Anger expresses the state of mind of many young intellectuals and their desperate anger in the face of a society that seemed to have lost all sense of communication; a society in which there was no longer any good cause to fight for. This play talks about the social changes that originated from the outcome of The Second World War and reflects the real issues of people who suffered the consequences of the war which is regarded a real evil and the immediate change of the society after the war. Jimmy the protagonist of the play sees the dreary mechanized
materialism what he calls the American Age. He angrily looks back and sees “the Edwardian values exposed as hypocritical, and the Socialist ideals betrayed, his values begin of despair.” The play portrays the human suffering and the human struggle against the evil forces that emerged after the end of the war, as the social condition of the people was so miserable and there was no hope to change for the better.

Henrik Ibsen’s (1828-1906) *Ghosts* discusses the relation between past and future, the relation between the race and community on one hand, and the individual on the other. Ibsen shows how the principles of the society may degenerate until they destroy the individuals, the social system is created to protect and nurture. He insists that these ghosts, meaning the old beliefs must be re-examined, otherwise the society’s children will face destruction. Every generation must continue the struggle against the chains of convention as they are evil. Captain Alving, the minor protagonist, is the source of the hereditary flaw which destroys his children. His presence pervades each scene of ghosts. He is presented as an individual whom society has wronged. When his wife realizes how she has destroyed his happiness of life, she knows that her dead husband is no longer a ghost but a humanized victim of the social conventions. Her submission to ancient social standards destroys her daughter in addition to the creative mind of her artist son. Through Manders, the main protagonist of the play, Ibsen projects the society which without knowing destroys individuality and encourages dishonesty, illness- physical as well as mental health of the youth. Manders sacrifices individual integrity and freedom of expression to keep empty social standards. He speaks for all society and represents its evil.
The symbol of ghosts are the damaged ideals and principles of law and order, they have no real importance. Ghosts are the lies about the past, which will trouble the future; they are “the actual and symbolic diseases of heredity which destroy the joy of life in the younger generations.” In the twentieth century, people would be much forced to define evil. In our secular world, evil has come down to something that hurts people and not Satan as Medieval Christian believed. We have taken evil out of the hands of Satan, and placed it in the hands of man. In doing so, we have made it less absolute, and less real. On the other hand, in the earlier times, evil was not only real but obvious.

**Shaw's Idea about Social and Political Evil**

Almost all modern writers in some way or other, have attempted to define evil in their work according to the nature of social and political realities of the modern times. These writers propose alternatives that might change the overwhelming ones in order to construct and reconstruct the modern society. George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) stands as a giant amongst the modern playwrights. He was born in Dublin of Irish gentry, his family was poor and his education was irregular because he hated any organized teaching. After working in an estate agent’s office, he moved to London during the 1870s where he became a leading music and theatre critic in the eighties and nineties. He began his writing career as a novelist and journalist, but gained his great fame as a dramatist and critic. He decided to write plays in order to illustrate his criticism of the English stage. He produced more than 59 plays, three volumes of music and drama criticism and one main volume of socialist commentary. He was also a novelist,
wrote five unsuccessful novels. He had the honor of being awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1925 and an Academy Award for writing Adapted Screen play in 1938 for *Pygmalion*.

Shaw became the legend in his life time, his death marked the end of an epoch in modern literature. Although his sharp writing and satiric attitude against conventional beliefs won him many enemies, he was generally recognized during the last quarter century of his life to be England's greatest writer. By writing pamphlets for the Fabian society, he became the first socialist in England. His journalistic criticism enabled him to express his thoughts to all the people. By writing plays, Shaw discarded the rules of drama and used the stage as a medium for his political and religious thoughts. His eagerness for the good of man's nature is joint with his inventive opinions. He rejected “the painfully sluggish movements of a free society, and always motivated people to think for themselves.” He read the theories of Jean Baptist, Lamarck, Darwin, and Samuel Butler who wrote about the human evolution. He also read Arthur Schopenhauer's theory of will.

G.B. Shaw's world is universal, it contains all kinds of life: religion, economy, politics, science, and philosophy. He joined all sorts of societies. He began his philosophical journey with Heretical society, which he joined in 1879. This was a society whose members disputed religious and scientific matters. Shaw is very much concerned with the economic doctrines and problems. For this reason, he read the book of Henry George, an American writer, *Progress and Poverty* (1879), in addition to Karl Marx's book, *Das Capital* (1867), French edition, which changed him into a socialist. Also Henrik Ibsen influenced Shaw very much; from him
he knew how to arrange the stage with a modern background and scenes. Ibsen is the one who encouraged Shaw to reshape the English stage with sophisticated comedies that presented what he considered important social problems. Shaw advocated the new theatre of Ibsen.

Shaw declared himself as a socialist in 1882. In 1884, he joined the Fabian society which was a socialist political organization dedicated to transforming Britain into a Socialist state, not by revolution as Karl Marx suggests, but by systematic progressive legislation, and educating some men that had the political power to make a substantial difference. The Fabians believed that those few men could reform the whole society, because of capitalism, an unjust and disorganized society of possessions existed. They also believed that the reforms which society struggled to achieve were the social rights of monopolies, property and wealth should be equally distributed among all the people. Shaw wrote about the goals and promises of Fabians and emphasized “the importance of class structure and economics which was the basis of community.”

From his childhood, Shaw considered himself skeptic and began to criticize many things in his life, such as the church rituals, considering its teachings as illusion. He regards “most of the religious ideas of his time as incorrect and revolts against them, matching his revolt against the society.” During the early years of his life, he diagnosed the miseries of his society and considered the existence of social organizations as abnormal and unreliable that made him lost his confidence in them. He had spent all his life focusing on the illness of modern man's life, as all the values are
deteriorating. He said that “property is robbery; that is found on poverty is blasphemy, marriage on property is prostitution.”

Shaw believes that what makes life unhappy is the loss of values in society. Even its legitimacy is ruined by its laws, and its existing establishments caused its conflagration. He said that the wrong politics, which he criticizes seriously, is the reason of the overwhelming wars from which people still suffer.

After reading Darwin's views about evolution, Shaw said that it has no moral importance as it concerns with part of evolution having no principle. But through reading Samuel Butler's work, he finds many positive aspects. Samuel Butler greatly affected Shaw's theory of evolution. Shaw, in his ‘Preface’ to Major Barbara (1905), refers to the influence of Butler upon him saying: “I produce plays in which Butler's extraordinarily fresh, free and future-piercing suggestions have no obvious share.” From that we understand that principles and will, which means a will to live, are the very important factors in Shaw's philosophy. Shaw much prefers Lamarck's view of evolution that was published between 1809 and 1822. The theory states that the children during their life time inherit their parents' characteristics. But Shaw focuses on the theory part that said the creatures change as they want that. He relates this to Schopenhauer's book, The World as Will and Idea (1819). According to Shaw, “the heavenly force behind evolution is a will to live.” For Shaw the dominance of will is as important as action believing that the force behind evolution is vitality with a direction, expressing itself in will. In this regard he said:

The will to do anything can and does at a certain pitch of intensity set up conviction of its necessity, create and organize new tissue to do it. It seems
reasonable to believe that an equally earnest and convinced philosopher could put up brain. Both are directions of vitality to a certain end. Evolution shows us this direction of vitality. 79

The most important fact is that, Shaw embraces the philosophy of the ‘Creative Evolution’, for; it is the solution of the modern community as he seeks to reform society by getting rid of all bad institutions, organisms, political and social systems. He believes that civilization could not be developed unless it is freed from traditional religion especially twentieth century religion. He realizes that evolution solved the religious dilemma of evil; when progress is a matter of trial and error, the world must be full of its failures. Undoubtedly, Shaw was born a rebel, a revolutionary and a social reformer. He wanted to build a new society and a new social order after completely demolishing the old ones. For him the social and political institutions hindered and blocked the natural process of evolution and progress, therefore he revolts against them. He also attacks fake morals, economic order, capitalistic system of production and distribution of wealth, injustice, suppression of free will under the name of social justice, and authorization.

Shaw is recognized as a prolific playwright who had a direct influence on most of the intellectuals of the 20th century. Shaw has achieved his target of dramatic accomplishment through his infallible wit, biting humor and incisive satire. His enthusiasm to improve humanity has largely inspired his art. He believed that theatre can fulfill an important social role by teaching. He puts forth a clash of ideas and urges the audience to apply their mental powers and arrive at the end. His conception of art and artist is similar to that of Plato who considered philosophy as a medium of ethical reform and assumed that
to be merely an artist is just like an idle dreamer. He cannot be taken as seriously as the artist philosopher. So it is very obvious that Shavian drama for Shaw is the means of prophecy and medium of expressing his radical views. He rejects the kind of drama which is not devoted to the advancement of ideas. His plays attract the attention to many problems such as class snobbery, the folly of war, the evils of capitalism, and exploitation. In order to expose the problems of society he does not present a hero versus a villain, or good against evil, but he instead tries to create people who are a mixture of good and evil.

It must be noticed that, Shaw finds many follies in life and he decides to cure them not by serious problem play but by changing our social state. He points to the moral side of life and wants the people to see it. Therefore, his works are comprehensive as everything comes within the field of his drama, medicine, art, religion, politics, and social structure. In our modern age, he is the great destroyer of evil, and he wishes the people to have newer and positive ideas. His view about himself is:

I am a moral revolutionary, interested not in class-war, but in the struggle between vitality and the artificial system between capitalistic and proletarian, but between moralist and natural historian.  

This indicates that Shaw is a reformer and a moral revolutionary, not a political thinker nor a moral economist.

Shaw’s plays became known for their brilliant arguments, and their challenges to the conventional morality of his own time. In his plays he presents characters from different slices of society, so his plays are interesting, not boring. The audience are pleased by the ideas presented in these plays which make them to think logically about their problems. One of the problems posed on the
stage is that the industrial revolution results in prosperity and welfare of the owners of factories and other capitalists that brings misery to common people who though get many opportunities of work, their happiness never increases. Thus, the ordinary people have no ability to prosper despite all the scientific progress. As a matter of fact, religious, social and political institutions are involved with the raising of many social evils. Various forms of vices rise in the unsanitary slums, mines, workhouses, and unsafe factories. Most ordinary people work hard like animals for the benefit of the rich.

The most important fact is that many artists and politicians oppose the vice of community and call for reformation; Shaw always tries to uncover and attack evils of society in all his writings; especially in the drama of ideas which discuss grave social and economic problems. The writers of the period in which drama of ideas appeared become aware of social and personal problems, such as the problems of religion, and poverty of workers. Shaw said that:

In order to get a hearing, it was necessary for me to attain the footing of a privilege lunatic with the license of jester... My method is to take the utmost trouble to find the right thing to say, and then to say it with the utmost levity. And all the time the read joke is that I am earnest.81

In his article, the journalist Benedict Nightingale concludes that there is only one word for Shaw ‘evil’. Calling people evil suggests that there is no explanation for their beliefs and that they are a product of the devil. People are not evil; “rather they are a product of the influences which surround them and the choice they make.”82 As a matter of fact, the purpose of Shaw’s plays is a means
for a social reform. With an acute sociological perspective, he rebukes the Victorian social structure and questions its morality. His downright condemnation of the Victorian society qualifies him as a dramatist who writes satiric and problem plays. He is a radical socialist, a social reformer, who remained active until his death. Both as a man and as a writer, Shaw is a sympathizer of the poor. The sight of poverty hurts his sensitive soul so much that he becomes a most determined enemy of poverty. He has sympathy for the underdogs of society.

Shaw believes that socialism is the only way which could cure our social ills. He rebels against social surroundings dominated by the capitalists. He is the enemy of capitalism accusing it of all the social sickness, especially the poverty. He believes that art and literature must fulfill their social obligations. He refuses the theory of ‘Art for Art's sake’, saying that the great art must have faith and purpose behind it. His aim is to reform the society; so his writings are not for the sake of art but for the sake of community.

Shaw has a powerful and penetrating sight to present a variety of important subjects that affect and sabotage the society, such as, prostitution, slum-landlordism, professional delusion, paradoxes of conventional society, and war. He wants to deliver his message through his dramas that were performed on the theatre. Once he said that: “I am not ordinary playwright. I am a specialist in immoral and heretical plays.” In England, Shaw has been called the father of the theatre of ideas. He is more a preacher and moralist rather than an artist. He believes that no man can reform himself unless society is reformed. By exposing his views,
Shaw wants the people to be aware and change the social customs, conventions and institutions. He enhances impulses of perfection that existed inside each human being and stimulates him to accomplish that; insisting that man “should work for the prosperity of his people and society, and not for himself alone as egoistical figure.” His motto is to work for the good of society, and the whole world.

It may be suggested that according to Shaw the artist has a vision to see what is good for society and what is bad, and through his deep insight, he would reform society and improve its conditions. The artist's mission in life, according to Shaw, who is so much concerned with the people's contentment, is to reform his society. There is no doubt Shaw's aim is to build up a society which is free from hatred, war, hypocrisy, and all the evil impulses inside man and society. Shaw hates war as it is a crime against humanity. Commonsense about the War, (1914) illustrates Shaw's strong refusal of the First World War. Being a humanist and a socialist, he opposed this war, and in his opposition, he refers to the cascading follies that resulted in this horrible and sabotage war. In addition to that he protests against the executions of the leaders of the Easter Rising. Most of his views changed after First World War.

Shaw could not believe that well-educated, serious people in the world would succumb to perverse the war fever, fears, hysteria, and hatred. The war inflicted the most intense physical, economic and psychological assaults on European society in its history. Not only Britain experienced the devastating effects on its national, moral, and other aspects of society, but almost the entire world. Destruction, fear, deterioration of morals, death, diseases,
stretched widely and affected the life of all the people who suffered greatly.

Shaw takes up war for a satiric treatment. He considers war as a weapon and accuses the capitalistic civilization of inventing such weapon in order to spoil human life. Competition, personal jealousies, and national animosities are the main motives that give rise to wars which he considers as a biological absurdity; willing to save life rather than destroy it. For Shaw, war is a means to invent engines of destruction. He incurred the displeasure of his countrymen by protesting against the Pseudo-Patriotism that gave birth to war. For this reason, he condemned both England and Germany for carrying on war which was responsible for the destruction of many lives. For Shaw, neither Germany nor England is his enemy but capitalism and imperialism, so his condemnation of those two countries is because they are the branch of capitalism. Therefore, he never admired war heroes; indeed, he makes “cowardice rather than courage, regarding the soldiers' risks of no meaning in comparison with those of a mother in child-birth.”

Shaw declares that in our world it is not the disorder but the order that is horrible; and not the criminals but the magnates that are robbing and killing us. He adds that there are no more villains and heroes, but only oppressors and victims, oppressing and suffering, and the poor people suffer in this world.

Shaw continued to write as a social reformer, as Earnest Reynolds points out that:

the English Drama was an ostrich unwilling to draw its head out of the comfortable golden sands of force, pageantry and poetic melodrama into the rational area of discussion and intellectual progress. It is only
due to Shaw that this unwilling ostrich compelled to breathe this fresh air.  

Shaw’s aim in life is to reform the society, Charles Nichol has observed that, “the key notes to Shaw’s works are rationalism and critical rebellion. He was a social reformer but his socialism is not of the emotional kind but a rational one.”  

Shaw focuses on using laughter as an important weapon to achieve his intention. He considers fun as a better means to look for political, social, and religious problems. He seeks to improve the conditions of the poor people whose lives are very miserable. He strived to eradicate poverty from the world he considered it to be the cause of all the evils in society. Poverty, he believed, would force people to transgress, to violate the social, moral and religious codes of conduct. Or else, poverty may also lead to a helpless submission to an authoritarian system. As an intellectual playwright Shaw waged a war against all sorts of evil. And it is his invincible creative and critical zeal that propels him to ransack all the social and political institutions and makes devastating statements on the personal, social and institutional evils like prostitution, exploitation and oppression, poverty, war and even capitalism that leads to sophisticated kinds of appropriation and imperialism.
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