CHAPTER - 5

Exploring Convergences and Divergences between Existential and Literary Comprehensions of Being
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The present chapter proposes to analyze the styles of representation of the three authors discussed in previous chapters. While doing so, it aims at mobilizing the philosophical discourses centring the phenomenon of partition of being and relates it to styles of these three authors in a comparative, intertextual and intercultural context. The primary questions are two, one, how an understanding of the state of existence involve the ‘transformations’ of the being and the self that finds its representation in language and two, how these authors, in a comparative context redescribe the human condition that Existentialist thinkers have espoused in a systematic manner. In pursuing this, the question of ‘style’ assumes central importance both in philosophical and literary sense in this project of exploring ‘convergence’ and ‘divergence’ between these three authors.

Before making an effective comparison, one has to understand the meaning of ‘styles of representation’. It is here that philosophical notions of style become
significant. Generally, 'style' in philosophy does not mean prose style or verse style; it has nothing much to do with 'composition', rather it has to do with the intricacies of philosophical claims that are presented in the process of philosophizing. It is worth remembering here that Wittgenstein suggested a cure for 'philosophizing' and that was 'throwing away' the philosophical ladder in order to understand, interpret, analyze and develop an idea. In the case of literature, such a notion of style of ideas is embedded in the very representational machinery of literary texts. Therefore, notions of textuality turn out to be an important component of the question of style.

Literary and philosophical texts do share a set of common characteristics such as their claims about representation and the way fit themselves to reality. In the context of understanding Partition as an event, it is the full impact of the event that must be shown in literary and philosophical texts. The more complex question that arises here is about the distinction between literary and philosophical texts. Such a generic distinction at the conceptual level brings into focus distinction between 'reason' and 'imagination' that runs parallel to distinction between ontological categories and fictional categories.

Understanding Partition in terms of the ontological category of being versus understanding Partition from
the fictional accounts of experiences and its cascading effects on history and culture cannot be mutually exclusive. Rather they are so inclusive of each other that seemingly the genre distinction between philosophy and literature collapses to facilitate an interplay between the ontological and fictional. The present chapter aims at deciphering this interplay.

**Interplay between Being and Experience**

Heidegger’s statement that the world transcends the being-in-the-world finds its existential reckoning in Sartre, Husserl and others. Dasein or human being’s relation to the world in terms of an equipmental being includes the human condition. Such an inclusion of human condition involves ‘representation’ of its own conditions in the world, which is reflected in Dasein’s possibilities. Representation assumes an equipmental sense, which is a combination of its three senses, the senses of ‘for-the-sake-of’, ‘in-order-to’ and ‘in-the-face-of’! This equipmental sense of dasein’s relation to the world is affected by events such as its factical possibilities shaped by the human condition. Dasein’s situations are co-disclosed, as it is essentially connected with others as well as it is different from others. This double relationality of Dasein in terms of its relation to the world and with others. Similarly Emmanuel Levinas articulates
a notion of saying prior to the thematization of the said. Such a notion of saying is a signification to the other that is prior to one’s proximity with others. Levinas emphasizes on this character of human relationality that establish articulation of signifyingness of the Other. What Heidegger describes in an equipmental sense, Levinas gives it a prior place before setting a relationship with the other. For Heidegger, world is the context, while for Levinas the signifying-ness of the world is the pre-context that gives rise to human relationality. A philosophical style has to accommodate such diverse features of thoughts on human existence, human condition and human relationality before it goes to understand the complexities of representation.

Representation of human miseries and partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 produced a grave context of investigating into the state of human relationality that needed to re-establish the very human condition. The situation found its representation in the Kafkaian understanding of human relations as reflected in the transformation of Gregor Samsa to an insect. Such transformed nature of being has been a subject of a continuous emergence that marked a situation.

**History and Literary Comprehension:**
Heidegger stated that the Being is the abyss, the groundless ground of being. This very condition of Being
for Heidegger is an experience of abyss. Further, the abyss affirms itself in the very overcoming of itself, which is a negation of the Very Being that it affirms. Heidegger conceptualizes such an ineluctable opposition in the difference between ontic and ontological, distinction between facticity and historicity and finally he attempted to overcome these oppositions in what he calls 'the bottomless chessboard of being'. Heidegger conceived language as a mode of experience of standing in the openness of the existent. This is a marriage between ontology and hermeneutics such that the interpretative and the representational aspects of language are grounded in the groundlessness of Being. This is an overcoming of the abyss that lies at the heart of being and the ontological gulf between reality and representation. Following this line of thought, the task before us is to explore how negativity and negative capability go together in the experiential dimension of the being.

A configuration of multiple possibilities of being in the forms of forgetting and remembering within a singly Ontology of being necessarily calls for an overcoming of metaphysical closures such as being or non-being. Such a configuration can be spoken of, described and properly presented only within the linguistic and interpretive acts of radical separation between the subject and its
exteriority that is accomplished only through an excess over the literal. In other words, the subject who is embodied as being undergoes a linguistic re-configuration in the experiential dimension of the representational content of its self-recovery. This whole linguistic rendering of the being in its experiential dimension takes the form of a transition from first person experience to a third person rendering of the first person experience in the literary mode. In such a transition within the literary comprehension of being, there is a need to bring in the fundamental partition within being. As Kafka says,
For we are like tree trunks in the snow. In appearance they lie sleekly and a little push should be enough to set them rolling. No, it can't be done, for they are firmly wedded to the ground. But see, even that is only appearance.²

This experience of groundlessness or mere appearance of a ground acts as only a threshold, beyond which all is imaginary (Diary entry for 21st October, 1921). Language incorporates this imaginary dimension of experience by exploring the links that the subject has with the world. In Kafka's notion of imaginary vs. real there is an unlimited field of immanence that creates for an excess of representation. Such an excess is carried further in metamorphosis that acts as a substitute for loss of self-
identity, which further stands in a breaching relation with the assemblage of others in the world and thereby it opens up the world of indifference, breach and trauma. In Ghosh’s narrative exploration, the first person experience of the Subject is always an entry point to the unmapped world of experience for the subject, who no longer remains the same. Gradually projected to the future possibilities the subject stands in difference to itself in the process of erasing itself against an event of loss. In other words, the metamorphosis must retain its negation within itself, or better still, it must retain its suspension in order to be apparent and meaningful. It is only by suspending its being and by positioning it on the threshold between animal and human. Butalia heightens such a transition from self to the other through the inner realizations of a subverted self.

The philosophical notion of Partition we are referring to is brought about by a redefinition of the open (the world) as the locus of a blissful ignorance (la grande ignoranza), resulting from a process that disables the historical and cultural determinants of being through an access of memory. In that suspension, society is reconstituted in terms of experiential loss of the self. In Philosopher Maurice Blanchot’s eyes suspension, which he also called “waiting,” “the neuter,” is also the beginning of productive creativity, and correlates with, is in fact
complemented by a sense of astonishment in the face of what is taking place, and in the language that gives tangibility to production. In What is Philosophy? Heidegger defines astonishment thus: "In astonishment we restrain ourselves. We step back, as it were, from being, from the fact that it is as it is and not otherwise."³ It is at once philosophically significant and poetic that Heidegger chose to define astonishment as an act of self-restraint where, and here lies the beauty and the importance of this statement: restraint is the active resistance to accept that which is pre-arranged and pre-ordained, pre-packaged, arbitrarily complete. Instead, Heidegger invites us to break this artificial, un-philosophical and un-poetic reading of life, to “destroy” it (in the sense that destruction means in Heidegger) in order to pave the way, the path, to seeing it and to saying it “otherwise.” It is in this sense that “suspension,” as I have articulated so far discussing Kafka’s texts, must be understood. Therefore, suspension is not an idle temporality devoid of energeia (intended here in the Aristotelian sense of “actuality”), but rather the opposite, that is the will to suspend our unproblematic acceptance of life, indeed to destroy it. If for Blanchot suspension was the necessary beginning of literature and life, for Heidegger suspension is the unavoidable step to take in order to enter a new ontology of being.
In terms of Levinas, to be being is to be in a state of being persecuted by the other and for Heidegger, being-in-the-world never attains authenticity, as it can never attain its true essence. This ontological failure of being is taken to be the constituent of the very human condition that does not allow the being to attain its true nature, i.e., the desired freedom that eludes being. Existentialist gave freedom a messianic image, which is always an 'yet to come', a forever waiting to make it happen. As it never comes, the agent or the subject of such messianic consciousness attempts to make this happen through their expectation and wait, i.e., they try to create another world in which it happens, an apocalypse that is conceptualized in terms of freedom and plenitude. Subjects surrounded by such existential incompleteness seek an escape route in events that are apocalyptic by their very occurrence, as if such ever-awaited moments of happening would transform the very human condition.

**Crisis of Being in Post-Colonial India**

Crisis of Being can be paradigmatically understood from the fundamental features of Transcendental critique of Being, which is epitomized in Heidegger's proclamation that Reason destroys its own grounds. For our purpose here, it means that outside the objective character of
reason, there is a realm of imagination that does not need grounds of truth and objectivity. In Existential and Phenomenological traditions, such imaginative understanding of the reality is considered as a mode of appropriation of the pre-reflective consciousness of the world. Such appropriation turns out to be a surprising revelation of the experiences of pain, loss, joy or any other such state of existence, *all of which become the potent source of literary narrativization*. It is not only that the reflective consciousness of the world is modified by the pre-reflective in the form of a transformation of pre-reflective into reflective, but it also produces a phenomenological datum within any expressive, metaphorical, rhetorical and literary rendering of the experiential as well. Subjects of Reason undergo such a transformation in the realm of Literature only to get reconstituted by self and other referring expressions that re-establish the link between the imaginary and the real. This whole process needs to be understood demonstratively. In Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, the transformation of Gregor Samsa from human to an insect bring in various self-referring expressions. Unable to know what Gregor Samsa has himself has become, he merely realizes that how he is looked upon by his close family members. His own consciousness becomes an anathema to himself, as he completely loses his human
past in his present state of existence. There is a play of two layers of consciousness: on the one hand, consciousness that is human tells him that he is no longer what he is and on the other, the transformed consciousness of being an insect acts as a witness to Gregor Samsa’s worlds of relations falling apart, or rather, how his own relations are expurgating him out of the same world inhabited by him and his family. Gregor Samsa suffers because of this seemingly asymmetric and mismatching contradiction within his being, his being is rather ripped apart between a human past and the present of non-relational world experienced as suffering. Kafka makes a literary rendering of Gregor Samsa’s states of being, which evolves towards a teething sense of no-thingness in which Gregor Samsa loses his self-identity and become an ‘insect’, an other of the human. What Kafka sensed, and actually captured for a moment, is precisely the taking place of that event in which humans catch their essence by suspending their “humanity.” It is by forcing the remembrance of what he really is (a creature that can do less) that Kafka at once comes close to the animal (the reversal to the world of nature before acculturation) and departs from it through the contemplation of his pure potentiality. The significant question that one can ask is also the great ontological problem confronting humanity today: would we find us
by forgetting our humanity and becoming, like animals, those magnificent beasts that can do only wondrous feats by reifying the same; or would we find it by pausing and remembering that we can also do less, that we can also do otherwise? Similarly, in *Hungry Tide*, Amitav Ghosh proposes a radical review of the anthropological machine not so much to invite a naïve return to nature, invoking a generic embrace of the animal in us, as to draw attention to a new modality of being that must pass through the suspension of being, which is also the result of a new understanding of the relation between animals and humans. Sunderban, being the site for the novel, a constant negotiation between humans and crocodiles, humans and tigers, settlements and tides open up a rapidly changing landscape as well as mindscape of exile and homelessness. Once again a freeplay of imagination in the form of continuous displacement within Sunderban that forces renegotiation with the world of nature, especially with tigers and crocodiles and that is how Anthropological and Existential converge with one another. What Kafka showed as a transformation of the human to the non-human with an essential split in human consciousness manifests itself in the Existential and experiential dialectic between homelessness and search for home in Amitav Ghosh’s *Hungry Tide*. Fokir as a
character is a wanderer in the new world of Sunderban, displaced from the mainstream narratives of post-partition settlement and often facing the existential crisis of protecting his self-identity from being a victim of eerie circumstances. The travails of Nirmal, Fokir, Piya, the dreamers, who experience that in the tide country ‘to stay is to be nowhere’, that is, when it is ebb, the inhabitants of a pool move in and when it is tide, they all move out. This moving in and moving out sequence of tidal country of Sunderban in many ways than one explains the travails of Fakir or Kanai. The question before life is, how one survives the tide, as if the being of the self depends on tide that washes out, erases and makes one re-live what has been washed out both in memory and real life. Tide acts like a metaphor of segregation and fracturing the continuity of lived experience, although one lives in the same place, but re-lives everyday with the past wiped out only to pave way for another episode of experiencing the wiped out present in some future settlement. This quietness of persistence change is sweeping as well as self-subsistent without settling down to something that is permanent. This freeplay of erasure and re-inscription of the being as well as in the beingforegrounds continuity and change with an inherent rupture in the consciousness that stalks into what it was and what it would be. This is a
metamorphosis of a sentient human consciousness, which only preserves a being without being able to hold onto it. This is a partitioning of being, a becoming of its own other and getting further partitioned into a non-being and being. One can also see a close parallel between Kafka’s notion of metamorphosis and Ghosh’s notion of tide, both break and partition the being, the agency of which is sought out outside in the fracturing of relationships and in an almost destined experience of alienation. This is a move of transcendental critique of being to a fictional recreation of an experience of inner partition- a move from reason to magic to animism and then again back to the narrowly true and real world of lived experience. As Amitav Ghosh says about Fokir in the novel that he hunts down facts in the way a magpie collects shiny things, when he strings them all together, somehow they become stories. Literary representation can circumscribe this journey into magic and fantasy as it is lived by Subjects of the everyday weight of the world.

How this non-being acts the “other” of the being in a situation of a constant partitioning of the unity of the Being is also the thematic of Urvashi Butalia’s “The Other side of Silence”. The public memory of violence and trauma, according to Butalia remained silenced as the being of the victim always undergoes staggering faultlines
of definition and redefinition. In her inimitable words, You had to partition your mind and close off all those areas that did not fit the political division around you. Other things rendered the experience indescribable: for many, in this uncertainty created by Partition, violence became one of the few certainties. Ordinary peaceable people were forced to confront the violence within themselves. Victims became aggressors, aggressors turned into victims and people began to partition their minds: it was all right to kill if the person you were killing was the 'other'-but in order to obliterate the aggressor in yourself, you had to cast yourself as the victim, and so, often you had to live a lie, a pretense that you had not killed. (...) it is perhaps precisely for this reason, that in some ways so many people who see themselves as victims, are complicit in the violence of Partition, that there is such a reluctance to remember it. (OSS:361)

This deliberate forgetting creates a landscape that is forgotten in the institutional and mainstream rendering of memory, places like Sunderban and the multiple voices of Dalits and the refugee Women of Partition as in Butalia's narrative. The most interesting question is, how is this capability of obliteration of the killer/aggressor self is necessarily linked to deliberate forgetting
or Aletheia and how this state of forgetting is the ground of reasoning for aggressors as victims? Butalia's answer is, of course, a conscious partitioning of the self. But such portioning is an essential devise to cope with the violence and trauma that one suffers from and that one inflicts on oneself as a consequence of being a party to violence. Further a certain mode of othering and partitioning of one's own self from inside are necessarily connected by way of a conceptual role given to the notion of Partition, but Butalia finds the notion inadequate as she asks, "How could a simple word, a word invested with the literalness of geographical division, even approximate the many levels of experience that people lived through? Where would you find the words that located, that identifies the violence not only 'out there' but inside you?" (OSS: 361) In other words, although the location of the word partition is neither inside nor outside the self, it marks what Butalia later calls 'there is nothing at the border that marks it as a place', the experience of non-being violating the being in a grey zone of consciousness, where consciousness is simply out of place, partitioned between the physical and mental partition.

**Existence: A Philosophico-Literary Excursus**

The question that becomes significant at this point is, What is the function of the concept of "Existence" in
understanding the being of a victim? As a correlate to this, one can ask whether the existentialist notion of being and non-being could be the basis for understanding the historical transformation of identities at the individual and historical level. Taking into account the existentialist discussion on the nature of being, the thesis would raise a further question, how to identify the *datum* for being in the case of a large number of people being the sufferer of upheavals of history? Taking into account the literary representation of existentialist celebration of the paradox of being and no-thingness, one can ask a further question, how is freedom realized by subjects of history? Taking the case of India in point through the literary representations of formation and transformation of self-identity constructed through historicization of being in concrete and imagined events, how does one understand the impact of partition in our definitions of ourselves? Or is it an existential realization of non-being or a being craving for freedom in a tryst with destiny that reaches its abyss in positioning itself as post-colonial? In a slightly different vein, trauma narrated in Butalia and the illusion of belonging to real and constructed landscapes and memory-scapes of Ghosh have the same ontological origin in an existential absurdity inhabiting our knowledge of our selves as in Kafka.
In order to inquire deep into the philosophical nuances of this whole existential crisis and the crisis following from Partition, an analysis needs to be conducted on the narrative structuring of experience and their interpretations by the subjects themselves. In cases when the subject as a dehumanized other loses voice and consciousness, the thesis would examine how the authorial voices of Kafka, Ghosh and Butalia in their divergent styles filled up the absent narrator. It is worthwhile to examine how these authors create an alternative self as the ‘center of narrative’ in the shifting planks of identity and its transformation. Whether they succeed in creating an ‘emancipatory principle’ or a moral and political will that go into enacting the role of partition victims as subjects of an emerging history? The most important question comes about the status of their identity: Whether they lose their voice in a haze of existential despair or they turn mute to the process that interpellates as subjects of literary texts? Is there, therefore, an abyss that awaits the victims at the end of their construction of history, selfhood and memory? Does existentialism as a precursor to writing of post-colonial genres of literary texts pre-figure the human condition in the realization of non-being?

Kafka’s *Metamorphosis* posits the problem of freedom in a paradoxical manner. Gregor Samsa's transformation
 into an insect from a human being analogizes the inherently dehumanizing state of existence from which there is no exit. It's a negative essentialization of being with a pointer that freedom is elusive and in fact there is no freedom. Instead what could be attained is a kind of relative freedom in terms of representation of one's true personality instead of a banal attempt to put on a mask of social conventionality. But the paradox is that true personality means such a transformation that makes one totally unrecognizable. Further, one remains a victim of both of one's genuine self-identity and the identity one pretends to have.

Amitava Ghosh's *Shadow Lines* narrates how memory reconstructs the pride and shame of subjects who are displaced by an event like partition. How one enters in the memory archive of such subjects is a matter of reconstruction that gives rise to layers of identity, none of which are actualized. Like Kafka's portrayal of Gregor's mental states, such layers of identity constantly recalls the lived past and contrasts it with the real and the imagined present and future. Identity through displacement over time and event gets temporalized and what remains is only a trace of being, a mark without an outside. Victims of national emergence and transformation in Ghosh's *Glass Palace* move from memory to reality only to find them displaced from their
home in search of a new home. This is what Kafka’s metaphor of gatekeeper in *Before the Law* does by constantly asking about the homeland of the man who seeks entry. Further Ghosh’s optical illusion in the multi-textured and multi-colourd *gamcha* of Fakir in *Sunderban* gives Piya a sense of *diachrony* between belonging and the landscape to which one belongs to. The *Hungry Tide* does not allow fixity of locale, but creates a landscape of time and timelessness for the displaced. In a sense Ghosh turns displacement into a metaphor of illusion and reality and thereby make it a predicament of sub-continental subjects of post-colonial reason, who chase their vanishing traces everywhere. It’s a Kafkaesque in which one does not know when the hungry tide washes one’s own place and in the optic of one’s mind the illusion of memory washes away the self-identity. As Kafka shows how one is implicated before one knows and one never know before one is implicated, Ghosh’s narrative presents subjects of such displaced history before the crossroads of a global panoptican and the local culture.

As existentialists point out that the ontological nature nothingness as consciousness is often mired in the ontic reality of self and other, Butalia’s *The Other Side of Silence* marks the absence of speech in the erasures of victims in the course of the event of partition. On the other side
of his silence, among the survivors what survives is a story of transition from a holocaust. The violence inflicted upon the being of the survivors, Butalia shows exceeds the plight of the dead and the murdered as they live to tell the stories of betrayal and survival. How living as past subjects of violence and brutality create a loss of being in the present among those who live draw a sharp contrast between assumption of being in the living from those who live with memories of loss of being. This is a negative existential state of being that cuts into the assumption of a present being, howsoever false it is. Butalia points out that the fact of masking oneself with a being is also eroded in case of victims of partition. What emerges are two pictures: a passive forgetfulness of being and an active recounting of a story of its loss, between which lies the no-thingness of the self and the ontic identity of being a victim of partition. This is an ‘identity under erasure’ quite like Ghosh’s Fakir or the émigrées of Shadow lines and Glass Palace held by the same existential plight as Gregor Samsa’s victimhood. This is the story of partition on the Western frontier, while partition in the eastern side, for Butalia is a ‘forgotten partition’ reimposed by the agencies of the States of India and Bangladesh. In her poignant notion of The Nowhere People, she narrates the misfitting claims of citizenship of immigrant Muslims and displaced
Hindus, who in no way can assume a self-validating identity. She talks of one of her respondents Bir Bahadur, who is a victim of partition, but who also had taken part in attacking the Muslim in the following:

Memories of violence clearly do not go away easily. Bir Bahadur is not the only person I have spoken to who has, for more than half a century, carried within him the memory of that time. But along with the memory of the violence, Bir Bahadur also carried a desire to offer some kind of reconciliation, and this too is not an uncommon phenomenon. To Bir Bahadur specifically, what mattered most was that he finds a way to return to Saintha and seek forgiveness from his friends, to restore trust, to somehow make amends, to extend again the hand of friendship. Having done so, he felt able to get back to his own life, to be at peace with himself.4

There is a thin line here that memory draws between friendship and enmity, almost like the Shadow Lines of Amitav Ghosh. The shadowy representation of what happened in the past in which the actor himself is a part allows him a great degree of flexibility in seeking to correct the wrong. But the question is, can historical wrongs be corrected without entering into another round of conflict? Seemingly, one Partition impacts another in a vicious cycle of forgetting and remembering without any possibility of return to truth.
How truth can be sought from an event that assumed the proportions of holocaust? Fictionalization could be one important mode of truth seeking that produces a distance between the uglier aspect of being violent and the aesthetic aspect of seeking friendship and peace. Amitav Ghosh's fictionalization of locales in contrast to experiences of life such as racism and cultural difference generate a certain existential crisis. For example, Ila, an important character in the novel the Shadow Lines suffer from the racist prohibition in settling her relationship with her friend. While Shadow Lines depict a flight of memory from Dhaka to London to Kolkata, the events of Partition and the everydayness of relationships do not assume a similar trajectory of mobility. Some of the relationships and experiences get materially so constrained that the act of fictionalization closes upon itself. Butalia draws a contrast within the very acts of memory,
Partition is difficult to forget but dangerous to remember. Today, when Partition memories are surfacing in different kinds of explorations—whether academic or otherwise—this difficulty is more evident than ever. Some of these memories are extremely painful; often they bring back a sense of loss, of anguish; sometimes they bring back resentment. Equally, the danger of remembering has
never been greater for this surfacing of histories is taking place at a time when India is going through a resurgence of ‘nationalism’ – this time an ugly, majoritarian nationalism, and there are ways in which such memories are being drawn into the service of this nationalism.\textsuperscript{5}

Butalia’s critical underpinnings about partition find its echo in Ghosh’s narrative stance towards historicity. In a globalizing world, the identity of the locales such as Sunderban comes vivid in what it offers to a researcher, to a visitor like Piya. Ghosh’s epilogue in the \textit{Hungry Tide} tells us,

Having lost her own clothes, Piya had perforce taken to wearing saris-colourful reds, yellows and greens-for Moyna had given her those of her own clothes that she herself would no longer wear. What was more, Moyna had also cut off her hair, in keeping with the custom, so it was now as short as Piya’s.\textsuperscript{6}

It emerges that both Piya and Moyna share each other’s styles and outfits, which is an example of global-local mix up, an instance of hybridity of cultures that crosses boundaries in a fictional realization of sharing of grief of the death of Fokir. In a sense shared moments and events bring characters from different shores together to bridge up the gap between locales. But such bridging up cannot overcome the essential negativity that lies at the heart of unsettling events.
The essential negativity that exists in an ontological sense takes us repeatedly to events of loss of life because of externally constituted reasons. Such reasons come in a manner of production of a discourse that determines and gives rise to possibilities that are embedded in human condition. One can talk of an inherent incommensurability between unfoldment of events and the direction in which human lives move. The reason for this incommensurability lies in existential notion of being human as a manifestation of an absolute and infinite negation in the very existence as human *rather than in the existence and manifestation of a being in the world*. The larger reason that existentialists such as Sartre gave was this: being-for-itself could never regain its' consciousness once it manifests in the void that arises in existence and hence, *it lacks being*. Contrastingly, being-in-itself is consciousness of its own fullness, which human beings can never attain in their state of existence as a creature which is never there in its' own being. Philosophical project, therefore, is to retrieve being from this dualism of plenitude and void *manifested* in the form of being and nothingness, as it is disclosed in human consciousness. So, philosophical inquiry is driven towards discovering the essential structure of being and consciousness by avoiding the pitfalls of self-abnegating character of human
consciousness as determined by the human condition. It is the state of negation of any construction of self or subjective identity that acts as the 'constitutive element' of any objectification of one's consciousness. In other words, the very desire to become, that is, truly being no-thing endowed with non-egological consciousness is a 'being without becoming', which is the true character of freedom. The effortlessness of spontaneity is selfless and therefore is not based on an act of choice in order to be just aware of 'what is' by way of getting rid of the egological self and its physical functions. It is a state of freedom as the self is freed from the burden of choosing and the being is freed from what is given. This de-facto is transcendence from the known to freedom of being. In a sense Existential notion of self-overcoming is not caught within the metaphysical cycle of being, as it is not mere overcoming by means of determination; but it is beyond being by first negating the being and then by affirming a sense of reflexivity fundamental to constructions of self and world. It is a reflexivity that decenters itself from will to overcoming and from overcoming to eternal recurrence that never ends in a determinate totality. This is breaking the hermeneutic circle of Enlightenment reason giving rise to partitions. The styles of these three authors follow a route that is more novel than radical skepticism. In all determination
of truth and reality it talks of a process of overcoming by determining the limits of a metaphysics of being. Heidegger' is seen in engaging himself in deciding these limits, while Derrida’s gives a contemporaneous answer to attempts of reading skepticism in the notions of erasure of being. Literary representations remains contrapuntal by deliberately deviating from such attempts of appropriation and counter-appropriation, rather frees itself by decentring against any such protocol of determination.

With this kind of an ambivalence in the very center of the self, there is a phenomenological division of the self, a part that does not recognize the other part, a transition in memory and time, only to be reconstructed on the tenuous stilt of a forgotten place like Sunderban or on the being of a forgotten Gregor Samsa confronting the indifference of the world around. There is a many-layered play of memory: without being remembered by others, one only remembers oneself and without being remembered by others one tends to forget, while one is conscious of the self as the agency of this play with oneself as well as with others. Within the phenomenological rendering of such a memory of play, one follows the literal and the obvious world of the sensible in order to partition it according to one's idea of the self or the being. This is a symbolic re-constitution
of the subject or the object of the world, on the one hand it separates and excludes a segment of being and on the other supplements the void and the abyss created at the heart of the being. Gregor Samsa’s transformation into what he is not and Fokir’s wanderings in the wilderness of Sunderban are respectively the experience of the void at being excluded and the supplement of forgetting and remembering, while Butalia keeps both these ends in a live tension by interrogating possible meanings of the term partition.

**Endnotes:**


5 Ibid.